

Delegation from the Republic of Austria
Position Paper for the United Nations General Assembly

The topics presented before the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) are Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the International System and Cybercrimes and Human security. The Republic of Austria delegation is honoured to collaborate with other Member States to tackle these issues and enhance global cooperation.

I. Artificial Intelligence and the International System

In October 2023, United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres discussed the dangers of AI during the formation of a High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence, discussing the threat AI poses to democracy. United Nations University published an article in 2023 looking at nine key challenges the global community needs to address with the rising development of AI. These challenges included understanding AI's decision-making process, cross-border data flow, AI application, the effects of AI technology such as deepfakes on politics, data privacy and collection issues, AI's impact on the economy, and its use in war. The development of AI has been rapid, leaving a gap in regulation as governments have yet to be able to comprehend issues that come up in time. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has emphasized the considerable benefits of AI technology in different fields. Nevertheless, it has warned that AI could potentially reinforce current biases and discrimination without appropriate ethical frameworks, worsen societal divides, and risk essential human rights and freedoms. As a nation dedicated to fostering innovation and sustainable development, Austria recognizes the importance of tackling Artificial Intelligence issues and the possibilities associated with its development to foster innovation for the global community.

Austria firmly believes that Autonomous Weapons Systems (AWS) should be under significant human control and regulated by international law. AWS has been crucial in different military operations, such as conflicts involving Israel and Gaza and the confrontation between Russia and Ukraine. The international community must not allow algorithms to make life-and-death decisions. Austria organized a two-day international Conference to maintain human control in AWS to address these concerns in 2021. In September 2022, the United Nations Human Rights Council unanimously adopted resolution 51/22, addressing the human rights implications of new and emerging technologies in the military sphere. The resolution was co-proposed by Austria and Panama. In December 2022, a cross-regional statement on autonomous weapons systems, supported by 70 states and coordinated by Austria, was approved in the UN's First Committee of the 77th General Assembly. In a significant move, Austria led the way by introducing the first resolution on autonomous weapons systems in the First Committee of the UN's General Assembly in 2023, garnering support from 164 States. In October 2023, the UN's Secretary-General established the High-Level Advisory Body on AI. Its mandate is to conduct analysis and provide recommendations for the global governance of AI. An Advisory Board on the Ethics of AI has been set up by the Austrian Commission for UNESCO to implement the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of AI. This recommendation guarantees that algorithmic systems prioritize the common good, explicitly focusing on sensitive aspects of life like the environment, education, and gender justice. It is crucial to ensure that the advancement and implementation of digital technologies, such as AI, align with human rights principles and support the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Austria strongly supports international legal frameworks to regulate AWS. In 2024, Vienna is set to host an international conference focused on addressing this critical topic. Austria strongly supports initiatives to bridge the digital access and knowledge gap between countries, particularly those focusing on building skills and transferring technology. Assisting developing nations in obtaining and utilizing AI technologies will help foster more equitable and environmentally friendly global progress. Even with all the positive potential AI brings to the global community, Austria recognizes its dangers. It wants to work within European values to achieve progress for the common good of all. Austria is working on the Artificial Intelligence Mission 2030 to conduct an in-depth analysis of the developments in AI technology for society. The goals of the Artificial Intelligence Mission Austria 2030 are diverse: Encourage the broad acceptance of AI that supports the common good, based on fundamental human rights, European values, and upcoming European regulations, position Austria as a central location for AI research and innovation, with a focus on key sectors and areas of specialization and boost Austria's technological and commercial

competitiveness by developing and utilizing AI technologies. Austria's dedication to using AI's potential for societal improvement while carefully navigating ethical and regulatory frameworks to guarantee responsible and inclusive advancement.

II. Cybercrimes and Human Security

There is no official definition of cybercrime internationally however, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) describes cybercrime as cyber-dependent offenses or cyber-enabled offenses and gives specific examples of online child sexual exploitation and abuse. As stated in General Assembly resolution 66/290, human security is described as an approach to help countries address various threats to the well-being and dignity of their people. It highlights the importance of implementing responses that prioritize individuals, consider all aspects, are customized to different situations, and concentrate on prevention to improve the protection and empowerment of individuals. The UNODC highlights that cybercrime perpetrators and victims can be located in several regions, and its impacts can affect societies worldwide. This highlights the need for a swift, flexible, worldwide strategy to tackle the issue. Austria recognizes the importance of equipping nations with the necessary tools and knowledge to protect themselves from cyber threats along with creating an international framework that protects the world's most vulnerable from perpetrators.

Austria highlighted the changing nature of cyber threats affecting countries internationally, recognizing the creation of the European Cybercrime Center (EC3) by Europol in 2013, which has played a vital role in fighting cybercrime across EU member states. The text highlighted the significance of engaging prosecutors at the beginning of cybercrime cases and setting up specialized networks such as the European Judicial Cybercrime Network. Austria emphasized the importance of international cooperation, highlighting the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime as a valuable model. Austria was against creating new international instruments and supported keeping the Expert Group on Cybercrime at the UN until at least 2021. Austria suggested that the UNODC and member states concentrate on specific areas to combat cyber threats effectively, including improving police and law enforcement skills through training, offering technical support to developing countries, identifying gaps in international cooperation, advocating for public awareness campaigns to prevent crime, enhancing operational mechanisms such as the 24/7 Network, gathering information on cyber threats, and acting as a hub for best practices and case studies in fighting cybercrime. The General Assembly 2023 Summary Report highlights the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)'s focus on the intricacies of creating policies that can effectively tackle cyber crimes' dangers while protecting civil liberties and human rights. Austria emphasized the need for collaborative actions at both national and international levels to tackle the complex issues presented by cybercrime.

Austria is an avid supporter of establishing the Global Digital Compact, as outlined in the Secretary-General's report "Our Common Agenda," to reach a consensus at the Summit of the Future in September 2024. Austria is working on a revised edition of the Austrian Cyber Security Strategy, highlighting its dedication to strengthening digital defenses. Furthermore, by following the European Network and Information Security (NIS) Directive, Austria is ready to establish its national cyber security framework, including procedures for handling cyber emergencies. Austria fully supports the co-facilitators guiding the intergovernmental process on the GDC, as well as the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology. Austria highlights the importance of involving various stakeholders such as governments, private sector entities, civil society, grassroots organizations, academia, women, youth, and the UN system. The GDC emphasizes bridging digital divides among nations and within societies, utilizing expertise across sectors, and combating cybercrime, especially its disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups. Austria highlights the importance of strong protections in the digital sphere, including privacy, data security, and gender-responsive measures. Austria supports a comprehensive digital policy framework that prioritizes human rights, transparency, and sustainability, aiming to utilize the internet as a driver for global development that includes everyone. Austria prioritizes a human rights-centered strategy in the digital realm, ensuring the protection of privacy and data and tackling possible prejudices in developing technology.