

Humanitarian Recommendations

for Austria's Membership on the UN Security Council

Humanitarian Congress Vienna

The organizing bodies of the **Humanitarian Congress Vienna** have been pleased to note that humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and development feature in Austria's programme priorities for the **UN Security Council** from 2027 onwards. These priorities are in line with Austria's long-standing commitment to international law, human rights, peace, justice, and stability. At present, the **devastating cascading effects of the climate and environmental crisis, armed conflicts and political tensions** are exacerbating the plight of people in conflict and crisis zones around the world. Furthermore, parties to conflicts are increasingly violating International Humanitarian Law: they are using hunger as a weapon, attacking healthcare workers and medical facilities, and obstructing people's access to humanitarian assistance. They are destroying food supplies, water infrastructure and agricultural livelihoods. New technologies such as autonomous and AI-supported weapon systems raise further questions regarding human control and accountability in wars.

In response to these pressing humanitarian challenges, the organizing bodies – **DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS, GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY, CARITAS AUSTRIA** and the **AUSTRIAN RED CROSS** – have put forward **four humanitarian recommendations** for Austria's membership in the UN Security Council:

Hunger is not a natural disaster – hunger is man-made

Austria should use its seat on the UN Security Council to uphold the right to food. The use of starvation as a method of warfare, as well as the destruction or rendering unusable of food, water and agricultural resources, must be prevented, and violations must be effectively prosecuted.

Ensuring human control over autonomous weapons systems to protect the civilian population

Austria should advance a legally binding international instrument on autonomous and AI-supported weapons systems. Decisions on the use of force must remain under meaningful human control; responsibility for compliance with international humanitarian law and the protection of civilians must not be delegated to technical systems.

Enforcing international humanitarian law and protecting medical aid

Austria should use its seat on the UN Security Council to consistently demand compliance with International Humanitarian Law from all parties to conflict, without political double standards, and advocate for the international community to take consistent action when International Humanitarian Law is violated. Medical facilities, health workers, patients, and humanitarian workers must be protected, and humanitarian access must be ensured.

Build on existing commitments and ensure coherent engagement

Within the UN Security Council, Austria should advance the implementation of international commitments and resolutions, including the **UN Women, Peace and Security Agenda** and relevant UN climate commitments. In this way, Austria ensures a coherent global commitment and strengthens its role on the international stage, as well as its resilience – the ability to withstand crises. To that end, we also refer to national commitments, such as the **Austrian Strategy on Humanitarian Assistance**. It places particular emphasis on the rights and needs of especially vulnerable people, as well as on dialogue with implementing partners in conflict situations or climate-related crises. Austria should provide the necessary funding for this and, in collaboration with civil society, implement it credibly and consistently.

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