

Austria - Concluding remarks by Amb. Alexander Kmentt

First of all, let me echo previous speakers and highly commend Norway for this very successful conference and thank Norway for its leadership and hospitality during this Conference.

The past couple of days have been very important in reminding us or teaching us to what extent the consequences are global in the event of NWs being used. They are truly global and would seriously impact all of us. We clearly see the need to continue this facts-based and informed debate. As it became clear, this is a human security debate that needs to include all relevant stakeholders. Austria commends Norway for having adopted such an inclusive approach. This humanitarian narrative must prevail.

Given these devastating global consequences of NWs, it is increasingly unacceptable that such an existential threat to all humankind continues to be handled by a few states as a national security matter. And it is clearly an anomaly given the fact that all of our global affairs and relations become more and more interconnected.

However, the discourse on NW issue can no longer be limited to security policy and to security policy circles. There should be a much broader international risk analysis, weighing the policies and arguments by a few states possessing NWs against risk of inflicting unacceptable humanitarian consequences on all humankind.

How we deal with nuclear weapons is a litmus-test for the international community. It will clarify whether we are capable to resolve a fundamental global challenge to our very existence through international cooperation. The only responsible approach under the prerogative of the protection of civilians – is prevention. We must ALL accelerate our global efforts towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

We thank Mexico wholeheartedly for the announcement of a follow up conference. Austria stands ready to support Mexico and to work with all other stakeholders to deepen the humanitarian approach to NWs.

A nuclear weapon detonation is not at all a utopic scenario; it may become the reality of tomorrow. Therefore we have to act now.