

Position Paper

Country: Austria

Committee: United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

Topic: Establishment of a (NWFZ) Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East.

The delegate of Austria would like to clarify its position on the issue of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East. **Austria believes that the NWFZ in Middle East would serve multiple purposes:**

1. The zone would strengthen the **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)**.
2. It would also help to achieve peace in the Middle East by acting as a substantial confidence-building measure.

The idea of a **NWFZ**, and later a **WMDFZ** in the Middle East, has existed for over 35 years now. In principle, all states in the region have expressed support for **Nuclear Non Proliferation**, but in practice no progress has been made. The process has been so tedious because of the complex political dynamics and lack of diplomatic relations between countries in the Middle East.

Austria fully supports NWFZ as a significant step to achieve a Nuclear Free Middle East. Austria's de facto also meets the key legal requirements of NWFZ. Austria has also been an active actor in the Middle East Peace Process and in establishing a NWFZ in Europe itself.

Recommendations:

Austria recommends the following measures to facilitate and possibly expedite the process of building a **Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (NWFZ)** in the **Middle East:**

1. Israel's taking steps to unofficially bring its program into line with **NPT** provisions and deeper involvement in related international bodies would signal to Arab states its desire to conform to international nonproliferation and disarmament norms.
2. Establishing a **Middle East No First Use of WMD** agreement should be considered and explored.
3. Work to promote parallel **Arab-Israeli peace negotiations** and wider disarmament talks.
4. Regional states should consider negotiations on comprehensive negative security assurances, backed by non-use pledges by all **NWS**.
5. **NFU** declarations by Middle East regional parties would be useful confidence and security building measures and would signal their intent to develop momentum towards a **WMDFZ**.