

AUSTRIA

Statement by

H.E. Mr. Alexander Marschik

Permanent Representative of the Republic of Austria to the  
United Nations

at the United Nations Summit of the Future

New York, 22 September 2024

Excellencies,

So this is the Summit of the Future. It feels much like the present.

Permit me at the outset to convey greetings from Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen, as well as his sincere regrets for not joining us today. As you know, Austria, along with our neighbors has been grappling with the consequences of unprecedented floods. This, of course, demands the President's full attention and solidarity back home - but his thoughts are also with us here today.

Summits hold special significance in Austria - a land of many mountains. Every hiker knows, a climb to the Summit can be arduous but reaching the top feels sublime. But: you also have to get back down. We went up but reaching

Getting to this Summit of the Future was not easy. The negotiations sometimes felt very much like an uphill climb.

But with the determination to shape a better future for all, we succeeded. Even with the unnecessary distractions this morning, the adoption by acclamation of the Pact today made two things clear:

1. First: The leaders of the world are committed to bringing about positive change together. And
2. Second: They will use this organization – the UN - to address the challenges of today and those we expect in the future.

The Pact adopted at this Summit will make processes and institutions more effective and responsive to our needs.

There is much we agreed today:

The groundwork for global cooperation on digital technologies, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity.

Using the immense potential of space as a driver for sustainable development.

A new focus on achieving the SDGs and accelerating climate commitments.

Concrete steps to reforming the Security Council and the will to address reform of the wider international architecture.

The Actions in the Pact speak for themselves. They show determination to take bold steps for our planet and for future generations.

Some highlights in the Pact reflect Austrian priorities that we will pay particular attention in the implementation of the Pact – the descent from the mountain so to speak.

Such as:

Strengthening the rule of law and human rights and our commitment to the universal principle that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

On disarmament, we must ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again and that new technologies empower future generations, not dehumanize them. We need legally binding prohibitions and regulations of autonomous weapons systems.

Regarding peace operations: we appreciate the recognition of a new era that is more targeted, flexible, and collaborative. We welcome a holistic review of UN peace operations across the entire peace continuum: from prevention and peacemaking to peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Strengthening synergies between the UN and regional organizations, such as through regular meetings, is essential to establish a real networked multilateralism.

Finally, on global governance: the Pact contains a  
commitment to a meaningful reform of the Security Cou0034.116(a.)

As the Secretary General said, this constitutes the strongest language on SC reform in a generation and the most concrete steps to Council enlargement since 1963. This augurs well for future efforts to reform the Council.

Excellencies,

Austria strongly believes in multilateralism, that the solutions to global challenges lie in cooperation, dialogue, and partnership. It is in this spirit that we are a candidate for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council at elections in 2026.

In closing, let me thank Secretary-General Guterres for bringing us together today. The Pact for the Future shows that there is so more that unites us than divides us. As the Summit of the Future becomes an event of the past, let us set out for the future with optimism and humility.

Multilateral diplomacy can only work with open minds.

If we come to the UN not only to speak but also to listen.

If we show respect for others and believe diverse views are positive.

If we engage in the spirit of compromise.

If we put acting together first in and through the United Nations.

We need to do this not only for ourselves, but above all for our children and future generations. Thank you!