

# Austria – 2019

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Mr. Unter

## UN Youth Delegate Programme

Original: UN Doc. A/C.3/74/SR.3, 2 October 2019, p. 6

Youth Delegate Search: <https://youthdelegatesearch.org/austria-2019/>

33. **Mr. Unter** (Austria), youth delegate, said that the climate crisis had led to one of the biggest mobilizations of young people in history, and the marches in Austria had driven the national Parliament to declare a state of climate emergency. Austria had strong youth political participation, with a voting age of 16 years and a legally established national youth council, which meant that young people were involved in making decisions that affected them. Unfortunately, that was not the reality worldwide, and he called on Member States to foster greater youth political participation, especially in the context of climate action.

34. Environmental and climate concerns were a matter of equity: everyone's actions impacted the quality of habitats around the globe. Action must be taken to change the fact that eco-friendly products and services were much more expensive than those produced and offered without consideration of their environmental impacts. For instance, by supporting sustainable local agriculture, people would not only reduce carbon dioxide emissions but also improve living conditions in other countries. It was important to foster research into alternative materials, so that single-use plastic consumption could be drastically reduced. If plastic production and consumption patterns remained unchanged, by 2050 there would be more plastic than fish in the sea by weight. That would hugely harm, in particular, those societies that depended on the sea's resources. That was merely one example of the clear link between research and innovation on environmental protection and the protection of fundamental human rights.

35. Young people were alarmed by the situation, and they knew what needed to be done. But action was needed now, and young people must be recognized as key stakeholders in relation to climate change, so that they could act to protect their future and the future of generations to come.

