

Peace and human rights in Switzerland's foreign policy

**2007 report on measures to
promote peace and strengthen
human rights**



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

**Federal Department of
Foreign Affairs FDFA**

Publishing Details

Design:
Atelier Bundi, Boll

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Summary

Peace promotion and the strengthening of human rights are two of the principal objectives of Swiss foreign policy. The measures it carries out in these fields as an active player and as a donor contribute to protecting individuals against political violence, war and arbitrariness. In regions affected by armed conflict, as well as in its bilateral and multilateral relations, Switzerland sets out to build bridges between differing positions, to promote mediation, dialogue and the appreciation of mutual interests instead of pursuing power struggles and isolation strategies.

In 2007, Switzerland spent some CHF 53 million on measures to promote peace and strengthen human rights. Successes were achieved in its main thematic priority areas. Thanks to successful diplomatic initiatives such as the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development and the institutional consolidation of the Human Rights Council, it was able to make a significant contribution to global political efforts to strengthen human security. And through its involvement in the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Switzerland again underscored the importance it attaches to humanitarian action, law and policy, as well as to Geneva as a world humanitarian centre. In addition, Switzerland was able to strengthen its knowhow in the areas of business and human rights, protecting human rights defenders and migration policy.

In the year under review, however, most of the ongoing regional peace processes in which Switzerland was directly involved either stagnated, as was the case in Colombia and Sudan, or suffered a reversal, as has happened in Sri Lanka. 2007 was also a difficult year for its human rights dialogues with China and Iran.

It is by no means unusual for peace processes and human rights dialogues to go through phases of stagnation, hardening of positions or setbacks, though generally speaking these interruptions tend to be temporary. The fact that such problems occurred more frequently last year is to some extent attributable to the sharply increased polarisation between East and West, between industrialised and developing countries, and between Western and Muslim countries.

Nor was the overall political climate in 2007 particularly favourable for pursuing a policy on mediation in peace processes or for a constructive human rights policy. In view of this, we can be all the more encouraged by the successes to which Swiss diplomacy was able to contribute. These included the human rights dialogue with Vietnam, which is yielding positive results, the peace processes in Burundi and Northern Uganda where significant progress has also been achieved, and in Nepal where it appears that there has been a breakthrough in the political deadlock. Furthermore, the UN Human Rights Council adopted its agenda and implemented a new and very promising procedure known as the universal periodic review, in which all States are required to report on their achievements relating to human rights.

Over the coming four years, Switzerland will have a solid financial basis for its activities in the areas of civilian peace promotion and strengthening human rights. Parliament has approved the credit facility requested by the Federal Council in 2007. With a credit facility of CHF 240 million¹ over a minimum duration of four years, Switzerland will be able to pursue and intensify its successful commitment to human security in 2008.

In accordance with the relevant OECD criteria, approximately 90 percent of Switzerland's activities to promote peace and human rights are classified as official development aid (ODA).

Trend in the commitment of financial resources for civilian peace promotion and strengthening human rights (annual draw-downs from the credit facility in CHF million)

	2004	2005	2006	2007
Contributions to project costs	29.8	32.1	37.0	37.3
Secondment of experts abroad (personnel costs)	14.8	13.9	10.4	12.9
Personnel costs in Bern	1.3	1.9	2.6	3.0
Total	45.9	47.9	50.0	53.2

A credit facility has been available since 1 May 2004. As planned in the Federal Council's Message to Parliament and in keeping with the 2000 Foreign Policy Report, the resources for measures in civilian peace promotion and strengthening human rights have continually increased.

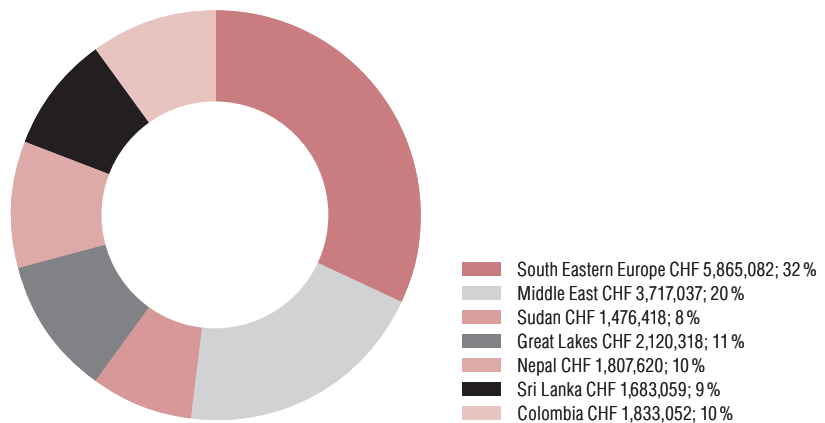
¹ Message to Parliament from the Federal Council dated 15 June 2007 concerning the Credit Facility for Civilian Peace Promotion and the Protection of Human Rights.

1. Outline of Switzerland's activities in civilian peace promotion and strengthening human rights

1.1. Focus on seven countries and regions

In 2007, Switzerland concluded a process it started in 2004 of focusing its activities on countries or regions where it is able to provide significant added value and where synergies exist with other activities of the federal government, in particular in the areas of development co-operation and military support operations.

South Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Burundi/ Great Lakes Region and Sudan were the focal areas of Switzerland's peace policy. As planned, Switzerland handed over responsibility for its commitments in Guatemala to local organisations in 2007. In 2008, it carried out studies to identify intervention options in some regions bordering on its focal areas, especially in French-speaking Africa. In addition, in 2007 it pursued bilateral human rights dialogues with China, Iran and Vietnam, as well as human rights consultations with Russia and – for the first time – with Cuba.



(percentage of credit facility draw-downs: regional commitments in 2007)

In 2007, 76 percent of the geographic budget (19,299,994 Swiss francs out of a total of 27,541,193) was spent on the programmes in the seven priority countries/regions and on the human rights dialogues with China, Iran and Vietnam (as well as on commitments in Guatemala, where the programme was concluded at the end of 2007). The largest amounts were spent in South Eastern Europe – especially in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina – and in the Middle East.

The remaining 24 percent of the geographic budget was available for local interventions in other countries, in particular Angola, Ivory Coast, Tajikistan, Georgia and Indonesia.

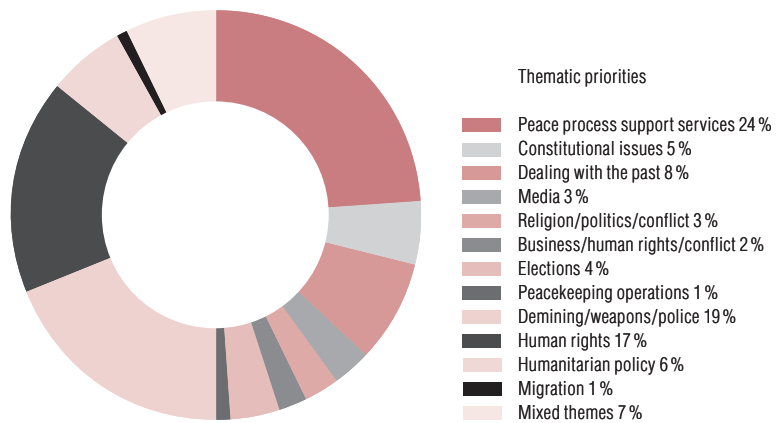
Expenditure by country / region:

Priority countries / regions	Expenditure in CHF
South Eastern Europe	5,865,082
Middle East	3,158,436
Sudan	1,476,418
Great Lakes region	2,120,318
Nepal	1,807,620
Sri Lanka	1,683,059
Colombia	1,833,052
Guatemala	1,356,011
Total	19,299,994

In 2007, a number of significant events and trends occurred in the priority regions (cf. chapters 3 and 4). However, thanks to the flexibility permitted by the credit facility, Switzerland was able to respond quickly to events and to exploit opportunities (e.g. Nepal), as well as to learn lessons from delays and setbacks (e.g. Sri Lanka).

1.2. Priority thematic areas

In addition to its geographic focus, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) is also developing expertise in specific aspects of human security, or themes, and its instruments for promoting peace and strengthening human rights are also undergoing improvement. For the FDFA's Political Affairs Division IV, supporting peace processes by providing good offices as well as mediation and facilitation services remains a central priority (cf. chapter 3.1.).



(Percentage of total expenditure in 2007 [CHF 53,173,326])

In 2007, the proportion of the FDFA's budget allocated to promoting human rights increased to 17 % of total expenditure (up from 14 % in 2006), and if the amount for the commitment to business, human rights and conflicts is included, this figure increases to 19 %. 68 % of the draw-downs from the credit facility was used for civilian peace promotion, and 15 % was spent on other areas of human security, notably migration and humanitarian policy, including efforts to combat trafficking in human beings².

Expenditure by area of activity:

Areas	Expenditure in CHF	In %
Human rights	9,094,453	17 %
Civilian peace promotion	36,117,803	68 %
Human security	7,961,070	15 %
Total	53,173,326	100 %

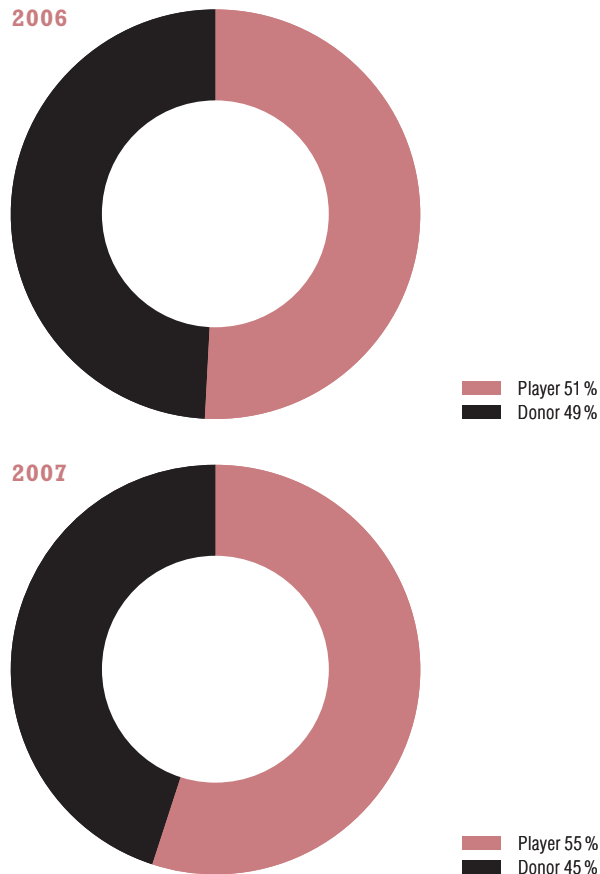
² 1 percent of the budget was spent on the following peacekeeping operations: UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO); Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research (HPCR) Security Management Initiative; Bosnia Office of the High Representative; OSCE Kyrgyzstan.

1.3. Switzerland as an active player

According to an internally accepted definition, Switzerland is an active player if it initiates or implements a project itself; it is defined as a co-player if it makes a decisive commitment as a partner; and it is a donor if it finances an activity in which it does not participate directly.

The credit facility permits Switzerland to participate as an active player or as an influential co-player in the areas of peace promotion and human rights policy. During 2007, Switzerland spent 55 % (29.6 million Swiss francs) of its budget for activities in which it was directly and actively involved. This represents an increase of 4 % versus 2006. The secondment of experts, provision of good offices and mediation activities, and programmes relating to civilian peace promotion accounted for the biggest item of expenditure in terms of financial and human resources.

With the aid of the credit facility, Switzerland is also able to finance a variety of institutions at home and abroad that pursue the same objectives: in 45 % of these cases it acts as a donor.



(Switzerland's role as player or donor in percentage of all draw-downs from the credit facility for civilian peace promotion and strengthening human rights [2006, 50.0 million Swiss francs; 2007, 53.2 million]).

Example 1: Peace process in Nepal, 2007

Active player (CHF 1.1 million, 61%): The activity of the Swiss peacebuilding adviser and the secondment of observers to the two UN missions in Nepal, supplemented by smaller actions (constitutional law seminar in Thun, delegation of politicians, etc.) and support for the Nepalese government Peace Secretariat that was established on the basis of a Swiss initiative and conceived as a platform for activities relating to conflict transformation.

Donor (CHF 0.7 million, 39%): Financial support for the observer mission of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, established on the basis of a Swiss initiative presented to the Commission on Human Rights in 2005, together with a number of commitments to smaller civil society organisations.

Example 2: Small arms policy, 2007

Active player: In the struggle against the proliferation of illegal small arms, the main focus in 2007 was on the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. Mandates to support this initiative included the Small Arms Survey, the United Nations Development Programme and the Quaker UN Office.

Donor: The strategic partnership with the Geneva Small Arms Survey (SAS) accounted for the highest expenditure. Co-operation with the SAS forms the backbone of all Swiss initiatives in this area (marking and tracking small arms, Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development).

2. Peace policy

2.1. Good offices, mediation and civilian peace promotion

Africa

The peace process in Burundi has been at a standstill for several months, and the last-remaining armed rebel group, Palipehutu-FNL, is now in the immediate vicinity of the capital, Bujumbura. The partner financed and supported by the FDFA, "Initiative et Changement" (I&C), is now the only institution to maintain regular contact with the Palipehutu-FNL. A meeting between I&C and the political representatives of the rebel organisation, that was held at the end of December 2007, paved the way for talks between the South African mediators and Palipehutu-FNL for the first time in a good six months. The talks were scheduled for the beginning of 2008.

In 2007, Switzerland began to prepare for a stronger commitment in French-speaking Africa, where it can make use of the fact that French is one of its national languages and take advantage of the network of member countries of the International Organisation of Francophonie.

One of Switzerland's priority regions is central Africa, where the inter-related conflicts in Chad, Central African Republic and Darfur are threatening the overall stability of the region. The impacts of these conflicts are also being felt in Cameroon. In December 2007, Switzerland conducted a workshop for co-ordinating efforts to resolve in the conflicts in Chad and Central African Republic, which was organised in Yaoundé together with the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa.

The Sahel and Sahara zone is also a priority region³ where uprisings in northern Mali and northern Niger, together with the delicate problem of maintaining a balance between the different communities, as well as the existence of many smuggling operations, are causing a considerable instability. Switzerland began to support peace efforts in this region in 2007, and plans to pursue them in 2008.

The situation in Sudan and particularly in Darfur continues to be a cause for serious concern for Switzerland as well as the entire international community. The impact of the conflict was felt throughout the region again in 2007. In view of this Switzerland resolved to contribute more actively to efforts to establish peace by sending a peace policy adviser to reinforce the staff of its embassy in Khartoum and to help develop and consolidate initiatives in the Darfur region, including those of international mediators of the UN and the African Union.

³ This region forms a new link between north and south, between the African, Arab and European worlds. Events in the region also affect Switzerland (e.g. migration, smuggling, havens for terrorist groups, hostage-taking).

In Juba, southern Sudan, Switzerland pursued its involvement in the efforts of the regional authorities to mediate between the government of Uganda and the armed opposition movement, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). This mediation effort, led by Africans for Africans, succeeded not only in halting an uprising which witnessed acts of extreme cruelty but also in persuading both parties to sign a comprehensive peace agreement in spring 2008. Switzerland's involvement was decisive, especially in the preparatory stage and during the early round of negotiations.

In view of the importance of traditional structures in the life of the various communities in southern Sudan and the role played by tribal leaders in resolving local conflicts, Switzerland also continued to support the integration of these structures into the formation of the young administration in southern Sudan.

Middle East

In the conflict between Israel and Palestine, no notable progress has been made in negotiations at government level, which makes civil society initiatives all the more important. Switzerland therefore supports the continued development of the *Geneva Initiative* (www.geneva-accord.org). It has also succeeded in establishing relationships of trust with entities from both sides of the conflict across the entire political spectrum and at different levels (including members of Parliament and other influential figures) and is actively promoting dialogue between the involved parties. Through its programme, Switzerland is helping to lay the foundations of a peace process that will incorporate all parties. This programme includes Switzerland's commitment to the *Temporary International Presence in Hebron* (TIPH). In addition, Switzerland is supporting the *Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces* in reforming Palestinian security forces.

In the year under review, Switzerland also entered into a commitment in Lebanon in which its representatives conducted an ongoing dialogue with the leaders of all the country's main political forces to help build confidence and bring the parties closer together. Switzerland supported the efforts of ASDEAM (*Association Suisse pour le Dialogue Euro-Arabo-Musulman*), organising three roundtable discussions in Switzerland between influential representatives of the various Lebanese movements. This dialogue process was the only forum to involve all parties and to continue throughout the entire year.

Asia

The peace process in Nepal suffered from a variety of tops and starts in the course of 2007. The Maoists temporarily pulled out of the government and the implementation of the peace agreement came to a halt. The election of the Constituent Assembly was postponed twice, but was finally held in April 2008. Switzerland mediated between the political players, advised them in the search for constructive solutions and encouraged them to place their confidence in the peace process. It was also a driving force in encouraging the ongoing debate on federalism. In addition, personnel from the FDFA's Swiss Expert Pool for Civilian Peacebuilding and the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sports (DDPS) supported the UN mission in Nepal (UNMIN). Switzerland is continuing to pursue these efforts in 2008, and has already made an important contribution towards the organisation of the recent elections.

In Sri Lanka, the army and the Tamil Tigers (LTTE) engaged in heavy fighting in 2007 despite the ceasefire. The human rights situation has deteriorated significantly, and international humanitarian law was treated with absolute contempt. The government is regarding international peace initiatives more and more as interference in its internal affairs and is increasingly rejecting them. In view of this, the FDFA focused its efforts on persuading the involved players to respect human rights as well as on supporting groups campaigning for peace. In January 2008, the government announced it was terminating the ceasefire, and this put an abrupt end to the related observer mission. The chances that the peace process will be revived in the near future are very low. Switzerland plans to proceed with its discreet efforts in 2008, if to a reduced extent, due to the deterioration of the situation in the country.

Southeast Europe

In 2007, Switzerland's main activities for South Eastern Europe (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Kosovo and Serbia) remained dealing with the past and transitional justice, the rights of minorities and their integration into society, decentralisation, political dialogue between representatives of minorities and majorities, and humanitarian demining. Switzerland's overall objective is to contribute to the stability of this region (which has numerous links with Switzerland) and to re-establish trust between the different communities as a way to advance the process of reconciliation.

In 2007, Switzerland participated in the "process" negotiations on the status of Kosovo. It focused on themes such as dealing with the past and reconciliation, and prepared a report ("Dealing with the past and the negotiations on the status of Kosovo") from which the UN mediator, Martti Ahtisaari, adopted a number of points for inclusion in his proposal. Since Kosovo declared independence, this proposal has served as a reference plan and the main guide both for the Kosovar government and for the international monitoring mission responsible for supervising to the process of decentralisation and for protecting minorities. In addition, Switzerland continued to place police experts at the disposal of the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to assist with the reform of the security system. The process of political dialogue, that was initiated in 2007 to bring together the various population groups, is to be continued in 2008. It is especially important to ensure that communication channels between Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo remain open.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Switzerland continued to support truth and reconciliation efforts (in particular the search for, and identification of, the approximately 13,000 people still missing as a result of the conflict), as well as efforts to combat impunity and promote the rule of law. It also supported the State Court and its division responsible for dealing with war crimes. In addition, Switzerland is working closely with non-governmental and media organisations active in raising awareness about the State Court and the debate on its duties, as well as dealing with the past and the question of transitional justice in general. It is also providing financial support (CHF 500,000) for the process of demining in the vicinity of Sarajevo, with the aim of improving the situation for vulnerable groups living in the area.

In Macedonia, Switzerland is maintaining contacts with all parties and population groups in order to fulfil its role as an impartial mediator in anticipation of the revival of the Mavrovo Process. This political dialogue process was initiated in 2001 in response to the outbreak of the crisis.

Colombia

In 2007, Switzerland was again involved in all ongoing peace dialogues.

Together with Norway and Spain, it supported the discussions between the government and the National Liberation Army (ELN) with the aim of bringing about the conclusion of a preliminary agreement on principles that includes a ceasefire and an agenda for a definitive peace agreement. This process has been blocked since the end of 2007 due to fundamental differences regarding the conditions for a ceasefire.

Together with France and Spain, Switzerland provided its good offices to facilitate a humanitarian agreement between the government of Colombia and the FARC rebel movement, which would include the release of hostages held by FARC. In the second half of the year, the Colombian government announced that it preferred to entrust the government of Venezuela with the task of facilitation, though this move proved to be rather short-lived. Switzerland continued to work behind the scenes for the unilateral release of the hostages. In January 2008, the government of Colombia announced that it wished to reactivate the facilitation activities of Switzerland, France and Spain. Switzerland recommenced its discreet activities in consultation with the other two countries to find a humanitarian solution, and at the same time asked for sufficient room for manoeuvre and the guarantees of independence that are required for a successful outcome. A humanitarian solution would be a first step towards a genuine peace process in Colombia.

Switzerland also supported the authorities responsible for initiating a genuine process of transitional justice and dealing with the past. For this purpose it organised conferences and seminars and supported the activities of the *Grupo de Trabajo su la Memoria Històrica* (a workgroup focusing on *dealing with the past*.)

2.2. Political development and diplomatic initiatives

Armed violence and development

Switzerland is pursuing its initiative to integrate conflict prevention measures and campaigns against armed violence into its development programmes. A variety of studies have shown that countries in a situations of armed conflict or exposed to endemic criminal violence figure near the bottom of the Human Development Index. Since the adoption in 2006 of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, Switzerland has been co-ordinating a group of 14 countries that have set out to urge all signatory states to implement by 2015 measures on reducing the disastrous impact of armed violence on socioeconomic and human development. These measures focus on three levels: promotion of know-how and identification of the related problems in as many countries as possible; implementation of specific projects in countries affected by armed violence; measurement and quantification of the damage caused by armed violence throughout the world. 71 countries had signed the Geneva Declaration as of April 2008⁴.

Alliance of Civilizations / religion, politics, conflict

In 2007, the Alliance of Civilizations (AoC) was established under the auspices of the United Nations on the basis of an initiative taken by Spain and Turkey (www.unaoc.org).

Switzerland contributed to this development by supporting politically and financially the newly appointed AoC High Representative, the former President of Portugal, Jorge Sampaio, and the secretariat of the new organisation in New York. Switzerland became a preferred partner of the Alliance due to its neutrality and broad acceptance by other states as a mediator. Its experience in the area of religion, politics and conflict and the extensive know-how it has acquired as a result of its involvement in projects to promote trust between parties in religious and political conflicts are widely acknowledged and appreciated. On the basis of a comparative study of activities in this area, the secretariat has drawn attention to three ongoing Swiss projects as examples, as follows:

The first example concerns a dialogue between secular and Islamic elite groups in Tajikistan. In 2007, the participants in this dialogue developed a standard curriculum for private religious schools (madrasas), that are not part of the public education system. The objective is bridge the gap between the two previously separate education systems by incorporating elements of secular and civic education into the curricula of the madrasas, while enhancing the quality of religious education so that religious influence from abroad can be reduced. The pupils educated at these schools can thus transfer to, and teach in, secular schools. This process of dialogue is yielding valuable results which would clearly benefit states where a secular government and a majority Muslim population have to co-exist.

⁴ For further information, please visit www.genevadeclaration.org

The second example concerns a project known as the “Montreux Initiative”, which focuses on co-operation with Islamic charity organisations. This Swiss initiative came into being as a result of the general mistrust that has been shown towards Islamic charity organisations since 11 September 2001. The project sets out to improve the level of transparency in particular of financial flows, thus eliminating obstacles faced by these organisations and creating an atmosphere of trust and co-operation.

The third example concerns a project in which Switzerland has been supporting a dialogue initiated in 2006 between a Protestant charity organisation in Switzerland and a Muslim charity organisation in Egypt managed by women. The main aim of the project is to promote a better understanding both of the role of women in the Islamic world and of the work carried out by charity organisations led by Muslim women.

3. Human rights policy

UN Human Rights Council

The phase of institutional consolidation of the Human Rights Council was completed in 2007 with the agreement of the member states on the Council's agenda and its working procedures. This brought to a satisfactory conclusion the difficult negotiations that had been dominated by the bloc dynamics. One major success has been the implementation of the universal periodic review, a process according to which each state is required to submit a report on its domestic human rights situation and on the state of compliance with its obligations. Switzerland played a very active role in this process.

It was elected to the Human Rights Council for a term of three years in May 2006 and was represented at the Bureau of the Council in the form of one of the Vice Presidents. It has successfully mobilised the necessary resources to function as a credible human rights advocate and to strengthen its position as host country to the Human Rights Council.

Switzerland supported the President of the Human Rights Council by placing two human rights experts at his disposal (a Swiss national and a representative of the developing countries) to assist him with his tasks. To ensure that the new institution got off to a good start, Switzerland also assisted with the creation of a reception and information centre designed primarily to help the numerous delegations from non-governmental organisations which do not have a logistical base in Geneva to participate in the Council's sessions.

Switzerland attaches great importance to ensuring the visibility and transparency of debates at the Human Rights Council, and for this reason financed their direct transmission via the Internet (in the form of webcasts). It also supports the *Tribune des droits humains* produced by the press agency, InfoSud. By supporting the distribution of independent and critical information about debates at the Human Rights Council, Switzerland wants to encourage both the domestic and foreign media to report on human rights, provide the general public with information about human rights debates, and lead a dialogue on human rights within civil society. All these activities are necessary to enable the Human Rights Council to be able to perform its function to the maximum degree.

Another of Switzerland's priorities concerns the support of civil society through education, information and co-ordination. For example, in the margins of a session of the Human Rights Council it organised a conference on the role of NGOs in the new institution.

Switzerland also provided the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights with a valuable tool for use in the framework of the universal periodic review, namely an online database known as the Universal Human Rights Index (www.universalhumanrightsindex.org). The Index makes it possible to gain instant access to information on human rights from the UN system on all countries.

Within the Human Rights Council, Switzerland steadfastly campaigned for respect for international human rights law and the promotion of dialogue. It is firmly convinced that the best way to promote the cause of human rights is not through futile confrontation between blocs of states but through building bridges between states and looking for ways to reconcile different views.

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Switzerland supported numerous activities and projects of the OHCHR during 2007. In particular, it financed OHCHR offices in Nepal and Colombia and its activities in Darfur. Through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Political Affairs Division IV, Human Security, Switzerland contributed USD 2.2 million and is now the twelfth-largest donor to the OHCHR. As a result, it has earned a special role as a preferred partner within this key human rights institution.

Human rights dialogues

Constructive dialogue is Switzerland's preferred method for addressing human rights issues with other states, and thus for promoting their implementation.

In 2007, Switzerland worked to hold a new round of its human rights dialogue with China, and the idea of maintaining a human rights dialogue with Switzerland continues to interest various circles in China. However, the Chinese authorities were not ready at that point in time to enter into another round of discussions with Switzerland, although it was possible to pursue and deepen the exchanges of experts on the topic of respect for human rights in the penal system.

The development of the human rights dialogue between Switzerland and Vietnam was very positive in 2007. In May, substantive discussions took place during the fifth round of the dialogue, in particular on the application of the death penalty, the problem of conflicts between penal law and freedom of expression, and the protection of the human rights of minorities. In addition, the dialogue was supplemented with a number of projects, for example on women's rights and the prevention of torture.

The third round of the human rights dialogue with Iran took place in February 2007. Although these talks have always been held in an open and constructive atmosphere, they have so far not resulted in the initiation of any specific projects. Demarches concerning serious human rights violations are periodically submitted to the Iranian authorities. A new round of dialogue is to be held in 2008. This was one of the main topics that Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey discussed at the meeting with her Iranian counterpart in April this year.

In 2007, Switzerland also held human rights consultations with Russia.

Political consultations between Switzerland and Cuba, with a focus on human rights, were initiated in 2006, and the talks took place in an open atmosphere. Another round of dialogue is planned for 2008.

Human security and business

In the year under review, Switzerland devoted a great deal of time and effort to raising awareness and informing private sector companies about human rights issues and conflict. One of its main activities was to set up, in collaboration with the Sustainability Forum Zurich, the "Global Compact learning platform for Swiss small and medium-sized companies operating abroad". Switzerland also launched projects to help clarify the role and responsibilities of companies in particular with regard to private security firms recruited to carry out military activities. It also supported the "Realizing Rights: the Ethical Globalization Initiative" launched by the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson. The 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will be celebrated on 10 December 2008, and with this in mind Ms Robinson wants to harness the support of the private sector companies for the promotion and implementation of human rights.

In the area of economic, social and cultural rights, Switzerland campaigned strongly for greater recognition and broader implementation of the right to water, and in particular supported the conference held by Alliance Sud (Swiss Alliance of Development Organisations) with the title "Water – a public good". Switzerland also wants to have the right to property recognised as a human right and as a development aid for the alleviation of poverty. In addition, it supported the activities of the Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor, the first universal initiative to aim to achieve access for everyone to property, economic activity, work and justice as a means to development.

Human rights defenders

On 8 December 2007, Switzerland initiated a patronage project, together with the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) for the protection of people actively involved in defending human rights. The project aims to set up links between a patron (i.e. prominent person from the worlds of business, culture or education) in Switzerland and a human rights defender suffering persecution in his or her own country. This form of patronage is intended to demonstrate respect for the actions of human rights defenders and offer them a certain degree of protection. In 2007, twelve patrons agreed to participate in the scheme, and it is hoped that this promising start will lead to the more effective protection of human rights defenders in the course of 2008.

4. Humanitarian and migration policy

30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

Switzerland made a significant contribution of CHF 1.5 million to the 30th Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, the most important event for the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. In addition, it placed a Swiss ambassador at the disposal of the Conference as commissioner with the task of overseeing the preparations for the Conference at the diplomatic level. The Conference was held in Geneva from 26 to 30 November 2007.

The *leitmotifs* of the Conference were to reaffirm the applicability and relevance of international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles, determine the direction of the activities of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement for the coming four years, and to strengthen the special role of Geneva in the area of humanitarian policy.

Switzerland spoke out strongly in favour of strengthening and promoting international humanitarian law. It actively participated in the debate on the role of the national societies in support of state institutions, and on strengthening the legal framework for the provision of relief aid by the international community following major disasters. The Swiss delegation participated in the negotiations committee in close co-operation with the Swiss Red Cross. The proposals it made resulted in the adoption by consensus of the Conference texts, which were comprehensive and oriented towards future action. It also expressed views on current humanitarian challenges in light of climate change, international migration, armed violence and current public health risks.

Forum and platform for debate on migration issues

Switzerland supported a number of regional and international forums focusing on migration including the Global Forum on International Migration and Development which was held in Brussels in July 2007. The objective of the Forum was to create an informal global platform for states to exchange findings and experiences relating to good practices and co-operation between each other and other players. The strengths of the Forum were the fact that it focused strictly on the links between migration and development, that countries from all over the world participated, and that it served as a catalyst for presenting proposals on specific projects. The presence of many senior political figures, including the UN Secretary-General, gave the event a high degree of political credibility and thus attracted a great deal of interest among the general public.

The recommendations of this first meeting of the Forum encompass practical measures such as the promotion of legal migration, the more efficient use of migrants' remittances, and consideration of migration as a factor in national development programmes. States can implement these recommendations independently or within the scope of partnerships.

Switzerland will attend the next Global Forum on International Migration and Development in Manila in October 2008, where it will again set out to promote the potential of the Forum to the full through setting up, for example, an online platform for monitoring and securing the follow-up on the recommendations of the Brussels Forum.

Migration is a global phenomenon that links all regions of the world. Both the opportunities and the challenges arising from this dynamic process were discussed intensively and productively at the 2007 Annual Conference of FDFA Political Affairs Division IV, Human Security, which was attended by a public of around 400 from Switzerland and abroad.

Innovative ideas were examined in depth in a series of speeches and panel discussions in the presence of prominent international speakers. One such idea was the concept of migration partnerships, according to which the search for constructive and acceptable solutions should take account of the interests and needs of all countries involved; another proposed enhancing the protection of vulnerable individuals in need in their regions of origin and thus help them avoid having to risk migration. The benefits and drawbacks of circular (temporary) migration were also discussed from the point of view of future demographic challenges, in particular with regard to labour market demand in host countries, as were innovative aspects of the social integration of migrants.

The conference provided the FDFA with valuable input on potentially important concepts and ideas on the issue of migration, from which it will be able to benefit in its efforts to develop and implement concrete programmes.

5. Swiss Expert Pool for Civilian Peacebuilding

The Swiss Expert Pool for Civilian Peacebuilding (SEP) ensures that Switzerland is represented by its own experts in a variety of bilateral programmes and multilateral organisations, as well as in peace missions in conflict regions.

The SEP is managed on the militia principle, which gives it considerable flexibility in the way it selects individuals for missions from its large reserve of experts. One drawback of this system, however, is that highly qualified personnel cannot easily interrupt their professional activities in Switzerland for missions abroad, and this means it is sometimes difficult to find personnel with the necessary qualifications at short notice.

As of the end of 2007, the SEP comprised 630 experts (196 women and 434 men) with qualifications in a wide variety of areas, including election monitoring, police consulting, constitutional law, customs, mediation, the rule of law, dealing with the past, human rights and international humanitarian law. The thematic and geographic focus of the Expert Pool reflects the priorities of Switzerland's peacebuilding and human rights policies. In the year under review, 188 SEP members were seconded on missions. One of the priorities for the year was the preparation of Swiss experts for participation in the new international presence in Kosovo to be introduced in 2008 when the UN mission (UNMIK) is replaced by the International Civilian Office and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX).

Swiss expert assists the office of the Prime Minister of Kosovo as a community affairs adviser

Switzerland is among the biggest financial donors to Kosovo. For numerous reasons, concerning both foreign and domestic policies, Switzerland has an interest in helping secure political stability in Kosovo and consolidate local authorities and civil society. One of the commitments the government in Pristina undertook in accordance with the Ahtisaari Plan is to promote peaceful coexistence in a multi-cultural, multi-confessional and multilingual society: Albanians account for 88% of the population and Serbs for 7%, while the remaining 5% comprises Bosnians, Gorans, Roma, Ashkali (also known as "Egyptians"), Turks and Croatians. In this situation, it is extremely important to guarantee the rights of the different ethnic groups, including cultural and language rights, the right to education and the right to adequate representation in public institutions. At the talks that were held in Bern between the Kosovo government and the President of the Swiss Confederation in 2007, it was agreed that Switzerland would place a specialist from the Swiss Expert Pool for Civilian Peacebuilding at the disposal of the office of the Prime Minister to assist as a community affairs adviser, in particular on issues relating to the rights of ethnic communities.

The expert commenced his activities in Kosovo in September 2007. Since that time he has been advising the government of Kosovo on the development of a strategy for the different groups and minorities. He works closely with a variety of public authorities, including the Parliamentary Commission for the Rights of Minorities and the Advisory Committee for Community Affairs, which is headed by the President of Kosovo. He is also directly involved in supporting and promoting the country's multicultural society and acts as co-ordinator between various local and international players with the aim of ensuring that their concerns and needs are adequately taken into account and addressed in a co-ordinated manner. The activities of the Swiss expert benefit not only the local administration but also civil society organisations and the various international players.

Swiss Expert Pool for Civilian Peacebuilding

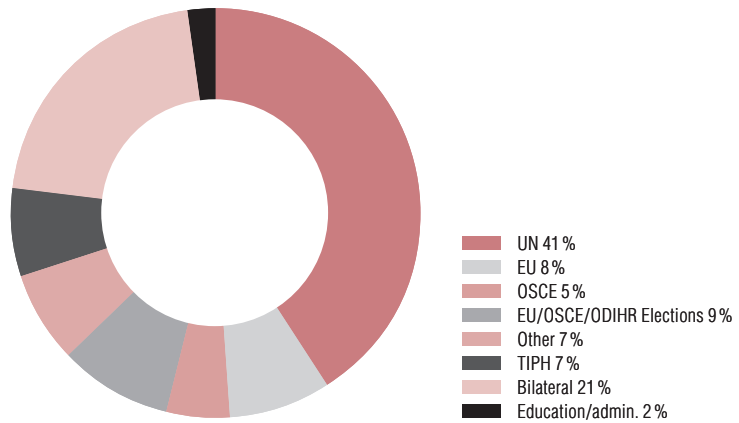
A high-performance Swiss peacebuilding instrument

In 2007, 188 members of the Swiss Expert Pool for Civilian Peacebuilding (SEP) were involved in bilateral or multilateral missions in 41 countries. Swiss experts were seconded to the headquarters of the UN, the OSCE and the EU, as well as on missions primarily concerning human rights protection, humanitarian policy and peace policy. 13 peacebuilding experts and 6 human rights observers supported bilateral priority programmes directly in other countries. Swiss experts participated in a total of 19 international election monitoring missions in 18 countries, mainly in the framework of OSCE and EU observation missions. The SEP deployed 24 civilian police officers and 2 customs specialists in the course of the year. On average, 73 experts were deployed simultaneously, and 38% of all deployed experts were women.

Co-operation with international organisations

Approximately 79% of Pool members were seconded to international organisations. The chart below shows the principal international organisations to receive such support in 2007. The United Nations and the European Union head the list, followed by the OSCE and other international or regional organisations and international programmes, such as the Council of Europe and the Temporary International Presence in the City of Hebron (TIPH).

Secondments from the SEP in 2007 by organisation



(in percentage of expenditure)

6. Organisational development, strategic control mechanisms and indicators

The four-year credit facility that Switzerland has had since 2004 to develop its policy on civilian peace promotion and strengthening human rights has also been beneficial for the planning and raising the efficiency of its political commitment as well as for its projects and programmes. By making the efficiency of its interventions the most important criterion for assessing its activities, the FDFA was able to further professionalise its management structure and instruments in 2007 as well as refine its instruments for improving quality.

6.1. Organisational development

The Control Committee of the Council of States (Parliament) had in fact resolved to examine the co-ordination and implementation of the Confederation's peace promotion activities in 2007, but following the release of a study conducted by the Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETHZ) on a similar topic, it decided not to carry out its own examination. It supports the recommendations put forward by the ETHZ and welcomes the fact that the FDFA has already taken steps to implement them. It will review the progress that has been achieved with these measures in a separate follow-up audit in 2008.

As part of the organisational development work carried out by Political Affairs Division IV, Human Security, three workgroups focused on the following themes in 2007:

1. organisational reform, precise definition of thematic priorities and organisational responsibilities;
2. working methods of the financial administration; and
3. improvements to co-operation between Political Affairs Division IV and the divisions of the FDFA responsible for Switzerland's bilateral relations (the so-called geographical divisions).

These workgroups also adopted the recommendations of the diplomatic audit carried out in April 2007. The most significant results of the organisational development process were the creation of a new section for multilateral peace policy and the upgrading of Finance and Administration Service to a section. Both these changes enter into effect in 2008. The middle management of Political Affairs Division IV has thus been decisively strengthened, and the Division is now well prepared to tackle the additional tasks that will come into being when the new four-year credit facility enters into effect in 2008.

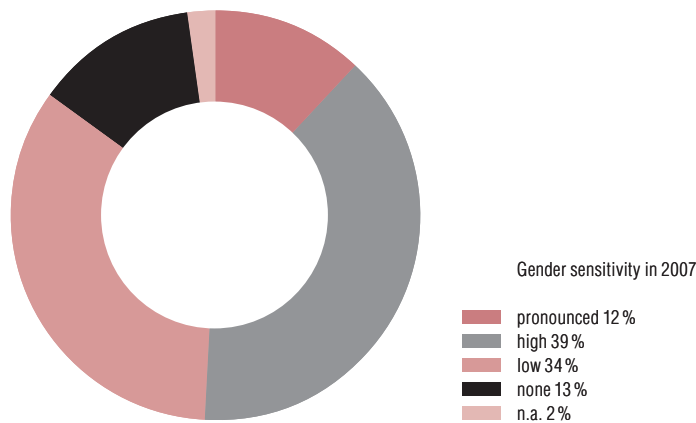
6.2. Strategic control mechanisms and indicators

Various control indicators and references are used for verifying whether the objectives specified by the Federal Council⁵ and the FDFA management have been achieved. With these instruments it is possible to gain an overview of all activities, for example, with regard to their gender sensitivity, level of intervention, and the partners supported by Switzerland. These instruments were improved in the course of 2007.

Gender sensitivity

Armed conflicts, human rights violations and methods of intervention can have widely differing impacts for men and women. It is therefore essential to incorporate gender mainstreaming into all programme phases, from the initial analysis of the situation through to the formulation of a programme concept and its practical implementation (Gender mainstreaming).

In 2007, 12 % of Switzerland's peace promotion activities gave high consideration to gender sensitivity (versus 7 % in 2006), while 39 % gave the issue a significant degree of importance, and 34 % only little attention. The criterion of gender sensitivity was applicable in 83 % of the projects and programmes.



(percentage of credit facility draw-downs in 2007, including the category "not applicable")

The increase (7 to 12 %) can be attributed to the intensive efforts made in 2006 in the area of internal management instruments to ensure that greater attention is paid to the gender dimension in the various activities. As a result of the reform, the evaluation instruments are now fully compatible with those of the OECD, and this means that gender-sensitive budgeting is now possible.

⁵ Bill dated 23 October 2002 concerning the Credit Facility for Civilian Conflict Transformation and the Promotion of Human Rights

“Stop Rape Now”

A UN action against sexual violence in situations of armed conflict

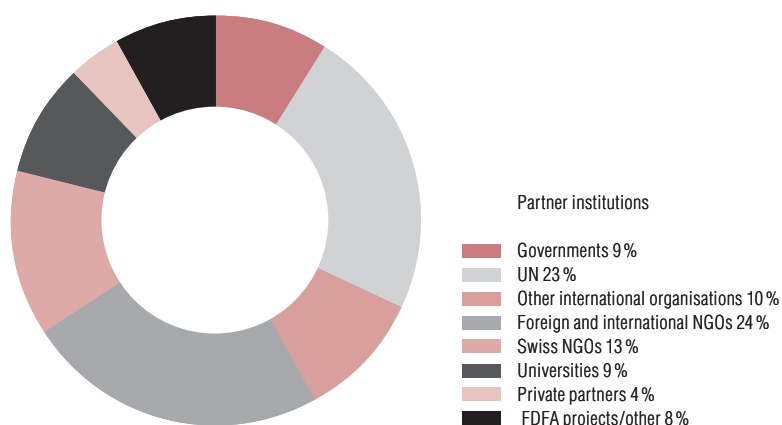
Switzerland is involved in the UN initiative “Stop Rape Now”, which demands an end to sexual violence against women in the context of armed conflict. This broad-based initiative, combining activities of 12 UN institutions as well as national governments and non-governmental organisations, has set itself the goal of combating sexual violence against women in crisis situations and armed conflict in a more co-ordinated manner and with the aid of more effective instruments.

New programmes are supported in the affected countries. One of the main objectives is to take measures to ensure that the perpetrators of acts of sexual violence against women in the context of an armed conflict are brought to justice. At the same time, the initiative calls for the creation and expansion of victim aid facilities.

Through its commitment to this UN initiative, Switzerland is also actively supporting the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. At the beginning of 2007, the Federal Council adopted Switzerland's action plan to implement this resolution.

Partners

In implementing its human security policy Switzerland often works together with partners, or mandates other institutions to carry out the planned task. The following chart gives a breakdown of Switzerland's partner institutions in 2007:



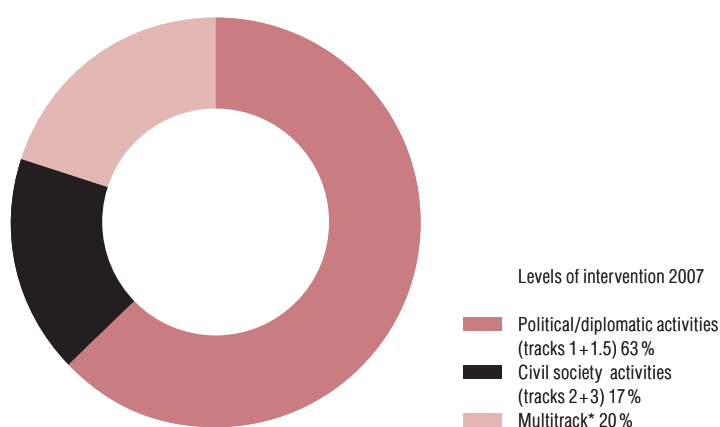
(percentage of credit facility draw-downs in 2007 [CHF 53,173,326])

In Swiss francs:

Partners	Expenditure in CHF
Governments	4,633,067
UN	12,584,628
Other international organisations	5,183,774
Foreign and international NGOs	12,786,310
Swiss NGOs	6,650,465
Universities	4,785,045
Private sector	2,098,471
FDF projects / others	4,451,567
Total	53,173,326

Levels of intervention⁶

An analysis of the draw-downs from the credit facility in 2007 shows that most of Switzerland's activities were at the political and diplomatic level (63%, versus 54% in 2006), supplemented by partnerships with civil society organisations (17%), and activities involving partners at different levels, known as "multitrack" activities (20%).



(percentage of credit facility draw-downs in 2007 [CHF 53,173,326])

In Swiss francs:

Level of intervention	Expenditure in CHF	2007	2006	2005	2004
Political/diplomatic activities (tracks 1 + 1.5)	33,527,717	63%	54%	61%	64%
Civil society activities (tracks 2 + 3)	9,285,118	17%	27%	18%	19%
"Multitrack" activities *	10,360,492	20%	19%	21%	17%
Total	53,173,326	100%	100%	100%	100%

⁶ The levels of intervention are as follows: tracks 1 and 1.5 = political and diplomatic activities; tracks 2 and 3 = civil society activities; "multitrack" = combination of various intervention levels.

