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**2004 Report
on Switzerland's relations with the United Nations and with international organisations based in Switzerland**

7 June 2004

Presidents,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are pleased to submit the 2004 report on relations with the United Nations and international organisations based in Switzerland.

In accordance with the wishes of Parliament, this report describes the activities carried out by Switzerland during its second year as a member of the United Nations. In response to a postulate submitted by the Socialist group on 7 May 2003, a chapter has been devoted to UN reforms and Switzerland's contributions in this area. In accordance with a postulate submitted on 18 October 1998 (98.3482), this report also presents an overview of Switzerland's activities in its capacity as host nation to international organisations. Finally, it presents the results achieved in association with candidacies and positions of responsibility held by Swiss nationals within the United Nations.

At the same time we invite you to file the following parliamentary proceedings:

2002 P. 02.3063 Report: Safeguarding Switzerland's interests within the United Nations (N 21.6.02, Zäch)

2002 P 02.3114 Plenary discussion on the objectives of the Federal Council for the UN General Assembly (N 21.6.02, Müller-Hemmi)

2003 P 03.3209 Report on UN reforms (N 3.10.03, Socialist group)

Yours respectfully,

7 June 2004

On behalf of the Swiss Federal Council:

Federal President : Joseph Deiss

Federal Chancellor : Annemarie Huber-Hotz

Abstract

This second report to Parliament on relations with the UN and international organisations based in Switzerland describes the country's activities and experiences as a member of the UN during the period from March 2003 to March 2004. In response to a request by Parliament, it contains a specific chapter devoted to UN reforms.

The military invasion of Iraq by a coalition of nations without the authorisation of the UN Security Council gave rise to intense debate throughout the world – and of course in Switzerland, too – concerning the role and effectiveness of the United Nations. Although it was unable to prevent war in Iraq, the UN did not allow itself to be instrumentalised, and the members of the coalition soon discovered the need to turn to the UN for assistance in their efforts to reconstruct Iraq and make it secure, and to legitimise the process of political transition towards a sovereign and democratic Iraqi government.

As a consequence of the Iraq crisis, fresh impetus was given to the debate on the reforms that need to be undertaken in order to allow the UN and other multilateral organisations to respond quickly and effectively to the new challenges of our times. Contributing to the reform efforts was one of Switzerland's main priorities during the 58th UN General Assembly, which was opened on 16 September 2003. Switzerland is making specific contributions to support the ongoing efforts to enhance security and strengthen the capacity to respond at the multilateral level. It also supports the revitalisation of the General Assembly, the reform of the Commission on Human Rights and a closer involvement of civil society in the activities of the UN. In this connection, the World Summit on the Information Society held in Switzerland represented a significant step towards the involvement of non-governmental organisations in activities of the UN, and was also a successful event for Switzerland in terms of its policy of playing the role of host nation to international organisations.

Switzerland also actively supported the follow-up and implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. Although these were adopted by consensus three years ago, their implementation has been delayed and is coming up against severe divisions among member states that mainly concern financing issues. In response to a request by Parliament, the Federal Council is to present a specific report in 2005 on the Millennium Goals.

Switzerland's capacity to promote new and constructive initiatives became especially apparent in the area of human security, in which it was able to obtain the establishment of a working-group for the identification and tracing of small arms and light weapons, as well as its presidency.

In order to safeguard our own interests and positions, we need to be active and innovative, but this nonetheless is not a guarantee for success. In an organisation that numbers 191 member states, it is essential to define clear priorities and undertake constant efforts to persuade all nations that could act as our partners. And this will remain a priority for the Federal Council in the future too.

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Report

1 Introduction

In its first report to Parliament (dated 26 February 2003) on relations with the UN and international organisations based in Switzerland, the Federal Council drew a positive balance from Switzerland's initial experiences as a full member of the United Nations. The report outlined Switzerland's priorities for the next few years with respect to its commitments within the UN. Here the Federal Council underscored its determination to make every effort to ensure that Switzerland can play a constructive role and further its interests within the framework of the United Nations.

The crisis in Iraq, followed by the military intervention launched by a coalition of nations in March 2003 without the authorisation of the UN, gave rise to strong emotional reactions throughout the world, and of course in Switzerland, and led to intense debate (including in Parliament), not only on the position to be adopted by Switzerland towards this conflict, but also on the role and effectiveness of the United Nations when it comes to preventing conflicts¹. In retrospect, it may be stated that, while the UN was unable to prevent war in Iraq, it did not allow itself to be instrumentalised, and the members of the coalition soon discovered the need to turn to the UN again for assistance in their efforts to make Iraq secure and rebuild the nation, as well as to legitimise the process of political transition towards a sovereign and democratic government.

The analysis of the Iraq crisis also grew increasingly sensitive, and as things came to a head, various observers began to state that the UN had failed to meet its responsibilities by refusing to give the go-ahead for military intervention against Iraq, and was now in danger of becoming increasingly incapable of meeting present-day challenges. This criticism indicates a misunderstanding of the UN Charter and the principles on which it is based. The UN did not authorise military action against Iraq because three of the five permanent members of the Security Council, and the majority of its members, were opposed to such a move and called for the continuation of the activities of UN weapons inspectors. This was also the position adopted by Switzerland, and it has so far been confirmed in that the coalition has not been able to prove to date that Iraq was still in possession of significant quantities of weapons of mass destruction, nor that it represented an immediate threat to international peace and security. The difficulties that arose after the initial war was over, and the insistence on the UN's rapid return to Iraq, demonstrate that even a country with the might of the USA needs the support of the UN and its member states.

¹ Motion Spielmann dated 17 March 2003 (03.3057): "Switzerland, the UN and the war against Iraq"; Postulate Dupraz dated 20 March 2003 (03.3110): "Transfer of the UN headquarters to Geneva"; Motion Hans Fehr dated 20 March 2003 (03.3118): "Project concerning the departure of the UN"

The position adopted by Switzerland with respect to the crisis in Iraq met with widespread consensus among the federal authorities, Parliament and civil society. The Federal Council applied the principle of neutrality, and Switzerland's status as a full member of the UN allowed it to clearly speak out in favour of the observance of international law and of the provisions of the UN Charter. Following the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime, Switzerland also took a firm stand in calling for the members of the Security Council to put their differences behind them, restore the role of the UN and ensure the restoration of Iraq's sovereignty as quickly as possible.

The 58th session of the UN General Assembly, which opened on 16 September 2003, was influenced by the crisis in Iraq. After many months of division in the international community, this new session of the General Assembly represented an opportunity for UN member states to try to overcome their differences, reaffirm the importance of multilateralism and seek suitable collective responses to present-day challenges such as terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, civil war, disease, famine and poverty. In order to demonstrate their continued commitment to the UN and multilateral co-operation, an unusually large number of heads of state and ministers participated in the high-level debate that is traditionally held at the beginning of each UN General Assembly, and attended the special summit on the topic of HIV/AIDS that was held on the day before the debate.

The Federal Council attaches a great deal of importance to information and regular dialogue with Parliament and civil society on the topic of Switzerland's involvement in the UN. In the first half of 2003, the foreign policy committees, and subsequently the two parliamentary chambers, examined the first report of the Federal Council on relations with the UN and international organisations based in Switzerland, and Parliament went on to formally comment on the findings to date as well as on Switzerland's priorities for the next few years.

In August 2003 the Federal Council adopted its directives addressed to the Swiss delegation at the 58th General Assembly, which take into account the results of this dialogue with Parliament as well as developments in the international arena². The three main priorities are as follows: strengthening the role of the UN and pushing ahead with reforms; follow-up and implementation of the Millennium Development Goals; and promotion of human security. The parliamentary foreign policy committees commented on these priorities in September 2003, and in October they were informed about the progress of activities within the General Assembly. The Federal Council's directives also took into account the position of Swiss non-governmental organisations, which met on 29 April 2003 on the initiative of the Swiss United Nations Association.

In his speech to the UN General Assembly on 23 September 2003 – the first day of the high-level debate – Federal President Pascal Couchepin invited the member states to use this debate as an opportunity for refocusing on common objectives and reaffirming their commitment to multilateral co-operation. He outlined Switzerland's priorities by formulating specific pro-

² The text of the directives for the Swiss delegation at the 58th UN General Assembly may be ordered from the Department of Foreign Affairs (UN co-ordination office).

posals for reforming the UN, calling on industrialised nations to keep their promises with respect to the Millennium Development Goals, and announcing Switzerland's intention in the area of human security to focus on small arms and landmines. At a number of high-level meetings in New York, he and foreign minister Micheline Calmy-Rey went on to describe in greater detail how Switzerland intended to support the process of UN reforms.

Switzerland was able to meet most of its objectives during its second year as a full member of the United Nations. It demonstrated that it is a highly active member of this body, is keen to make a constructive contribution and is capable of formulating pragmatic proposals that simplify the search for sound solutions. In this respect, Switzerland is able to benefit from the fact that it is not suspected of using its involvement with the UN to pursue an hidden agenda. Switzerland also frequently made use of opportunities as they arose in order to underscore its own viewpoints or safeguard its own interests, both at the General Assembly of which it is a fully fledged member, and within the Security Council, for example by speaking in favour of the International Criminal Court³ or on the topic of combating terrorism⁴.

In order to safeguard our own interests and positions, we need to be active and innovative, but this nonetheless is not a guarantee for success. In an organisation that numbers 191 member states it is essential to define clear priorities and undertake constant efforts of persuasion to build partnerships with other nations⁵. And this will remain a priority for the Federal Council in the future too.

2 UN reforms

The divisions that arose during the Iraq crisis and the attack on the UN headquarters in Baghdad in August 2003 raised a number of questions and added a renewed sense of urgency to the issue of UN reforms. Another reason for addressing the question of reforms is the fact that the political will on the part of member states to work together within the framework of the United Nations depends on their conviction that this organisation is effective and is able to meet contemporary challenges.

A postulate dated 7 May 2003 by the socialist group of the National Council (03.3209) requested that the Federal Council should prepare a report on the

³ Address to the Security Council on 12 June 2003, the content and context of which were discussed with the foreign policy commission of the National Council on 30 June 2003.

⁴ Addresses to the Security Council on 16 October 2003 (fight against terrorism), 12 December 2003 (sanctions against people suspected of maintaining ties with Al Qaida) and 4 March 2004 (revitalisation of the UN Committee Against Terrorism). All Switzerland's addresses to the UN General Assembly and Security Council may be viewed at the following web site: www.eda.admin.ch/newyork_miss/f/home.html

⁵ In this connection, mention should be made not only of the ongoing consultation process that is carried out within the scope of negotiations within the UN, but also of bilateral talks concerning the UN held with a variety of countries (in 2003, with Norway, Canada, Finland, the UK, Italy, France, Sweden, the USA, Russia, Romania, Austria, Tunisia). Regular talks have also been held between members of the Federal Council and the UN General Secretariat, in New York, Geneva and Berne (official working visit on 1 July 2003)

reform of the United Nations, and in response to this the Federal Council undertook to devote a chapter of this report to this particular issue.

2.1 New challenges and unresolved problems

The past year was an especially difficult period for the UN in particular and multilateral co-operation in general. On the one hand, deep-seated divisions arose among member states over the issue of Iraq, which had direct implications for the region, but also had further-reaching consequences for international security and the role of the United Nations. And on the other hand, the attention of the international community was diverted from other major problems such as the deterioration of the environment, poverty, starvation, and the spread of AIDS and other endemic diseases.

To speak of a “crisis” within the UN would be an exaggeration. After all, this organisation has gone through – and overcome – a number of difficult periods since its inception shortly after World War II. It has been confronted with the Korean War, the Cold War and a number of other conflicts in which leading member states were directly involved as opposing parties, yet each time history has proven those wrong who have too readily judged the UN to be obsolete or outdated.

However, the fact cannot be denied that certain parameters have changed significantly since the UN was founded shortly after World War II:

- Firstly, the threats to peace and security have fundamentally changed. They now no longer come so much from countries that wage wars of aggression as from other sources that are much more difficult to identify, and in certain respects are also more difficult to combat (terrorism, civil wars, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organised crime, etc.). Furthermore, some countries have redefined their strategy in favour of preemptive military action. In order to prevent the proliferation of this form of military intervention and maintain the authority of the UN Security Council as the authorising body for the use of force, it is essential to demonstrate that the existing multilateral system is able to respond collectively and effectively to these new threats.
- Secondly, the challenges associated with development remain enormous. Instead of undergoing urgently needed development, some countries have in fact found themselves moving in the opposite direction. At a special millennium summit held in New York in September 2000, the heads of state and government leaders of the UN member states declared a variety of shared objectives concerning the problem of development, but there has been very little progress to date with respect to the implementation of the commitments that were undertaken within the scope of the Millennium Declaration. The members of the UN do not share the same perception of threats, nor do they have the same priorities. Some countries are in favour of combating terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction, while others focus their attention on civil wars, poverty, starvation, AIDS and other endemic diseases that represent the most significant threats to the population in many regions of the world.

These different perceptions of threat severely affect the credibility of the collective international security system. In order to restore consensus in this area it is essential to shed light on the factors that link the various types of threats, and to find a suitable balance at the global level in the way in which they are perceived and approached.

In his address on the occasion of the opening of the 58th United Nations General Assembly in September 2003, the Secretary General called for deeper reflection on the new interactions in the area of security and on ways of responding to them in a collective manner. For this purpose he appointed a panel of prominent international figures headed by the former prime minister of Thailand, Anand Panyarachun, which he entrusted with the task of analysing modern-day threats and formulating recommendations concerning the changes that need to be made in order to secure effective collective measures. This panel is expected to present a report on its findings to the Secretary General at the end of December 2004.

As a specific contribution towards the activities of this panel, and in the hope of helping it accomplish its complex task, Switzerland resolved to carry out an in-depth study into the question of legitimate defence. For this purpose it organised a workshop in Geneva at the end of March 2004 that was attended by approximately twenty acknowledged international experts in the areas of international law, diplomacy and security policy. Under the leadership of Professor Nicolas Michel, legal adviser to the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, this group of experts examined the scope of Article 51 of the UN Charter, which recognises a right of legitimate defence, and its relation to other provisions of the Charter, most notably those defining the responsibilities of the Security Council in maintaining peace and international security. All participants agreed that it is neither desirable nor feasible to amend Article 51 of the UN Charter. The participants further agreed that there is no need for a reinterpretation of the right of self-defence set out under Article 51 of the UN Charter. Instead, all efforts should be made to strengthen the UN collective security system. Several concrete suggestions were made. Switzerland went on to inform the panel about the main conclusions reached at this workshop and the proposals made for the purpose of reinforcing the multilateral system.

2.2 Constant need for adaptation

Every international organisation has to constantly adapt to new challenges and changing needs on the part of its member states. Since the end of World War II and the inception of the United Nations, a variety of new specialised bodies and institutions have been established within the UN system in order to respond to the changing expectations within the international community. Alongside these institutional moves, internal reforms have been carried out on a periodical basis for the purpose of enhancing the efficiency of the UN and defining its priorities more precisely.

When he took up office at the end of 1996, the current Secretary General, Kofi Annan, declared his intention to pay special attention to the question of reforming the UN. In autumn 1997 he presented a first package of reforms,

most of which have since been implemented. The main objectives of these internal reforms were to improve the organisation's finances, increase its effectiveness, and more precisely define its role in four areas of strategic priority: promotion of peace, economic and social development, human rights and protection of the environment. He went on to present a second package of reforms in autumn 2002⁶, and some of the proposals are still being debated within the General Assembly. The main objectives in this package were to focus financial resources on strategic priorities, promote the level of co-operation between UN bodies, funds and programmes, and improve the budgetary cycle.

The reforms that have been implemented to date at the initiative of the UN Secretary General primarily concern the internal functioning of the organisation and its priorities, but they have not focused on the more fundamental rules governing the functioning of its main bodies and the general structure of the UN Charter. In this respect it should be emphasised that while certain internal reforms can be successfully implemented under the authority of the UN Secretary General, more fundamental reforms depend on decisions by member states or changes in behaviour on their part. A large proportion of the reforms that have been brought about to date belong to the first category, i.e. they take the form of internal reforms implemented under the authority of the UN Secretary General, while only very slow progress is being made with bolder reforms that depend on action on the part of member states.

It is also important to distinguish between reforms of the organisation itself and working methods adopted by the UN, which can be introduced by changes in practice or amendments of the relevant provisions, and more radical reforms that call for a revision of the UN Charter. For example, changes in the composition of the Security Council or the abolition of veto rights would require amendments to the UN Charter. Such amendments have to be approved by a two-thirds majority of the UN members and by the five permanent members of the Security Council⁷. It is therefore very difficult to accomplish such a move. This is clearly underscored by the fact that the UN Charter has only been formally amended on three occasions since the UN was established in 1945, namely to raise the number of members of the Security Council from eleven to fifteen, and (on two occasions) to increase the number of members of the Economic and Social Council to the current level of fifty-four. However, a number of provisions of the Charter have in fact been modified on the basis of unanimous agreement on a fresh interpretation of their contents. This is the case for instance with the abstention of a permanent member of the Security council, which does not prevent the council to adopt valid decisions – despite other explicit Charta regime.

⁶ Report of the UN Secretary General dated 9 September 2002 entitled "Strengthening the UN: an agenda for further reforms".

⁷ Article 108 of the United Nations Charter

2.3 Institutional reforms

2.3.1 Strengthening the General Assembly

The UN General Assembly is the central body around which the organisation effectively functions. It is the sole institution in which all member states are represented on a strictly equal basis, which means that the vote by a tiny island state in the Pacific has the same weight as that of the USA or China. However, over the past few decades the authority and role of the General Assembly have been weakened by an ever-increasing number of items on the agenda, cumbersome and often ineffective rules of procedure, and prolonged and often repeated debates that fail to lead to a clear decision.

It is widely agreed that there is a need to revitalise the General Assembly, and an important debate on this issue was held at the instigation of the President of the 58th General Assembly – the Foreign Minister of St-Lucia – in autumn 2003. The main goal is to reinstate the General Assembly to the central position allocated to it by the UN Charter, by strengthening its authority and role within the United Nations and streamlining its working methods and procedures. In December 2003, the member states agreed on a certain number of general principles concerning the revitalisation of the UN General Assembly, and these are to be debated in detail up to the end of summer 2004 so that they can be proposed for adoption by the 60th General Assembly in 2005.

The proposals primarily set out to ensure greater co-operation between the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in order to secure better continuity between sessions of the General Assembly by establishing direct co-operation during the period when the current President steps down and the designated President of the next Assembly prepares to take office, and to provide the President and secretariat of the Assembly with suitable support instruments for carrying out their tasks. The proposals currently under consideration also set out to ensure better follow-up of the decisions of the General Assembly, to ease the agenda, to avoid repetitive resolutions, to limit the number and length of documents and to more effectively spread the workloads of the plenary and commissions of the General Assembly throughout each session.

Switzerland supports efforts to strengthen the General Assembly, but is also aware of certain practical difficulties associated with this move, most notably concerning the co-ordination of the schedule of the General Assembly and of other UN institutions dealing with sectoral issues. The Swiss delegation has also emphasised that if meetings of the commissions of the General Assembly were to be rescheduled to take place throughout the entire year, this should not be allowed to interfere in any way with the effects of the proposed strengthening process. In this connection it has therefore postulated three conditions as follows: 1) that the proposed measures do not give rise to additional costs for the UN (i.e. for its member states); 2) that the revised schedule does not lead to an increase in the number of meetings or

their prolongation; 3) that the measures concerned are compatible with the reform as foreseen within the scope of the UN budgetary cycle.

2.3.2 Reform of the UN Security Council

The question of reforming the Security Council has been under discussion at the UN for a number of years now, but progress has been very mixed. Proposals aimed at changing the composition of the Security Council and regulations governing veto rights have been blocked for the time being due to a lack of consensus among the UN member states, but on the other hand significant progress has been achieved over the past few years with respect to the working methods and instruments of the Security Council.

As far as the *composition of the Security Council* is concerned, there is broad consensus that it is no longer in line with present-day geopolitical circumstances. For example, some member states feel that the United Kingdom and France no longer possess the military and political power they wielded in the period immediately after World War II now that they no longer have their colonies; although it has a population of more than a billion, India does not have a permanent seat on the Security Council; and developing countries are very poorly represented. Since none of the five permanent members of the Security Council are willing to renounce this status as it is both prestigious and influential, the debate is now focusing on allocating additional permanent or non-permanent seats. The principal candidates (declared or potential) for a permanent seat are as follows: Asia – India, Japan and Indonesia; Africa – Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa; South America – Brazil, Mexico and Argentina; and Europe – Germany, though there is also the possibility of allocating a permanent seat to the European Union as a single entity. Switzerland is in favour of expanding the Security Council since this would ensure better representation of the various regions of the world. But it also feels that any increase in the number of members needs to be kept within reasonable bounds so that the Security Council's is not deprived of its capacity to take decisions. Switzerland also feels that it is up to the different regional groups to select their candidates for a permanent seat.

With respect to *veto rights* there appears to be very little likelihood that these will be abolished, since such a move would require the consent of the permanent members, and none of them appears to be willing to renounce this prerogative. But the focus of ongoing discussions is now turning towards limiting the use of veto rights. For example, a proposal has been put forward to restrict the use of this instrument to cases in which the fundamental interests of one of the permanent members are involved, and Switzerland is in favour of this idea. In his speech to the General Assembly in September 2003, Federal Councillor Pascal Couchepin (in his capacity as Federal President) also suggested that any permanent member of the Security Coun-

cil which exercised its veto right should be required to give an explanation of the reasons for this decision before the UN General Assembly⁸.

As far as the *working methods and procedures* of the Security Council are concerned, there is no question that considerable progress has been made over the past ten years that permits greater transparency and increased opportunities for involvement by non-member states. These improvements have been brought about through a variety of measures: an increase in the number of public sessions as well as in the number of open debates that may be attended by non-member states; more regular information about the progress of internal consultations; meetings of the Security Council with countries contributing troops for peacekeeping and similar operations, etc. Although this area of reform may be somewhat less spectacular, it is nonetheless extremely important. Switzerland wants the working methods and procedures of the Security Council to continue to evolve in the direction of greater transparency and increased opportunities for the involvement of non-member states. It has made use of increased opportunities for non-member states to participate by regularly taking part in open debates. In 2003, Switzerland participated in such debates on Iraq, the fight against terrorism, small arms and other aspects relating to human security. It also actively participates in meetings of countries contributing troops for peacekeeping missions involving the deployment of Swiss military observers or civilian police officers⁹. Switzerland became a member of the special committee for peacekeeping operations in 2003, and is working hard to promote a higher level of interaction between the Security Council and countries contributing peacekeeping troops.

Furthermore, over the past few years the Security Council has developed a variety of *new operational instruments* that enhance its capacity to monitor the implementation of its resolutions and to anticipate – and respond to – new threats to peace. One of these new instruments are visits by Security Council delegations, which allow representatives of its member states in New York to make personal assessments of problems directly on location, establish personal contacts with heads of state or ministers of the countries concerned, and to formulate recommendations for the attention of the Security Council. In the area of sanctions, an important development to which Switzerland has made an active contribution concerns the use of targeted sanctions, i.e. measures targeted directly at high-level officials (e.g. prohib-

⁸ While restrictions on the use of veto rights may be desirable, the fact should not be overlooked that – with or without veto rights – the support of the world's major powers and their readiness to take action when required are essential for ensuring the success of the UN's activities in the area of peacekeeping. Furthermore it should also be noted that the use of veto rights has declined considerably since the end of the Cold War. In the period from 1945 to 1989, veto rights were exercised six times a year on average, but since 1990 this figure has fallen to just once a year. This trend is all the more striking if we consider that the number of resolutions passed by the Security Council during the same period was considerably higher. Between 1945 and 1990, approximately 600 resolutions were adopted by the Security Council, or 13 a year on average. But since 1990, the figure has risen to more than 800 resolutions, or more than 60 a year.

⁹ On average, around thirty Swiss military observers and civilian police officers are placed at the disposal of the UN for peacekeeping missions, for example in the Golan Heights, Georgia and Kosovo. For further details, please refer to section 3.1. (Peace, security and disarmament).

iting their travel abroad or seizing their assets) or goods that fuel armed conflicts (weapons and ammunition, oil products, diamonds, etc.). The Security Council also reinforced its instruments for monitoring the enforcement of sanctions by systematically setting up special sanctions committees that are often supported by panels of experts. In this context we should also mention the proposal put forward by the UN Secretary General in Stockholm in January 2004 to appoint a special ambassador on genocide who would report directly to the Security Council and alert it to any threats of genocide that may arise.

As far as *reforms in the area of peacekeeping operations* are concerned, a variety of recommendations were put forward three years ago by an international group of experts presided over by the former Algerian minister of foreign affairs, Lakdhar Brahimi and including other notable figures such as Cornelio Sommaruga, former President of the International Committee of the Red Cross. To date, the main progress that has been noted with regard to the implementation of the Brahimi Report concerns an increase in rapid deployment capacities. The goal is to provide the UN with the means of setting up a basic peace mission within 30 days and a more complex one within 90 days. For this purpose, member states were invited to conclude agreements through which they undertake to provide personnel at short notice. At present this system concerns military personnel, but it is to be extended to police officers in the near future. The creation of an early warning and evaluation system would represent another substantial improvement in the capacity of the UN to prevent crises and respond to them quickly and effectively. With this system, which was recommended in the Brahimi Report, it would be possible to clarify the decision-making process of UN institutions and release them from reliance on information received from national intelligence services.

2.3.3 Strengthening the UN in the area of economic and social affairs

In the area of economic and social affairs, the UN bases its activities on a structure comprising three levels: functional commissions entrusted with a variety of tasks, including monitoring the outcome of major thematic conferences held in the course of the 1990s (Rio Conference on the Environment and Development, Vienna Conference on Human Rights, etc.); the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), entrusted with the task of coordinating the policies and activities of UN funds, programmes and specialised organisations and putting forward recommendations to the General Assembly¹⁰; and the General Assembly, which formulates the main directions and political orientations that the member states and the UN system as a whole are called on to pursue.

In Switzerland's view, the role of the UN in the area of economic and social affairs needs to be strengthened, in particular so that it more effectively takes account of the ties between international stability and economic devel-

¹⁰ Article 58 of the UN Charter.

opment. In this connection, a number of recent positive developments should be emphasised, most notably the creation over the past two decades of a less ideological and a less politicised atmosphere in UN debates focusing on economic issues. It is also important to recall that the majority of innovative ideas in the area of economic and social affairs – e.g. the concept of human development or recognition on the part of developing nations of the notion of co-responsibility for their development alongside industrialised nations – have originated within the framework of the United Nations.

The desirable strengthening of the role of the UN in the area of economic and social affairs can be implemented in a variety of ways: by revitalising and to some extent reforming the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and its various commissions; by strengthening the UN Secretariat's Department of Economic and Social Affairs; and by overhauling the programmes of the commissions of the UN General Assembly (a process that has already been initiated).

As far as the revitalisation of the Economic and Social Council is concerned, it should be emphasised that this is the principal UN body in the area of economic and social affairs. ECOSOC comprises 54 member states and usually holds its main assembly in July, alternately in Geneva and New York. All specialised agencies of the UN, as well as the various funds and programmes (e.g. PNUD, PNUE, UNICEF) and regional committees report to ECOSOC concerning their activities in this area. Furthermore, ECOSOC elects the members of its numerous subsidiary bodies such as the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on Sustainable Development. However, over the past few years it has lost some of its influence and impact on the activities of the UN. One way of strengthening it again would be to widen its decision-making competencies and turn it into a sort of "economic and social affairs security council". But such a comprehensive reform would require a revision of the UN Charter, which would hardly be feasible in the short term. On the other hand, it would be possible to implement other changes without having to amend the UN Charter, for example a redistribution of tasks between ECOSOC and the General Assembly.

Switzerland also feels that co-operation between the UN, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organisation should continue to be strengthened, for example in order to ensure better coherence between policies and instruments. Progress has in fact been achieved over the past few years with respect to co-operation between these organisations, in particular following the international conference on financing and development that was held in Monterrey, Mexico, in March 2002. Meetings are now held at the ministerial level between ECOSOC, Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organisation each spring. Switzerland is also in favour of greater exploitation of potential synergies between ECOSOC and UN specialised agencies, and the fact that every second year the ECOSOC session is held in Geneva should be used more effectively for this purpose.

2.3.4 Reform of the Commission on Human Rights

The Commission on Human Rights is a subsidiary body of ECOSOC. It convenes in Geneva each spring for a period of six weeks. For a country like

Switzerland, which attaches a great deal of importance to the promotion international law, the increasing polarisation that is becoming apparent within this Commission is far from satisfactory. However, it is important to be cautious, since calls for reform are not only being made by countries and non-governmental organisations that want to give the Commission on Human Rights a more pronounced role to play as the conscience of humanity, but also by nations that want to have more control over it or weaken it.

In 2003, Switzerland asked Professor Walter Kälin (University of Berne, member of the UN Commission on Human Rights) to prepare a study and put forward suitable proposals. The findings of this study, which were submitted to the parliamentary foreign affairs committees, were presented to member states of the UN, the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights and the main non-governmental organisations active in the area of human rights. Switzerland now aims to support some of these proposals and, wherever possible, to promote discussion on the various topics. Special attention is to be paid to the following activities:

- Compilation of data on human rights on a country by country basis, based on reports from official UN sources;
- More effective monitoring of resolutions adopted by the Commission on Human Rights, and assistance to the rapporteurs and experts working on its behalf (special procedures);
- Together with other partners, establishing a forum for informal dialogue for national human rights institutions;
- Supporting the election to the Commission on Human Rights of countries that have demonstrated their capacity to co-operate and have shown a constructive approach in the area of human rights. In this respect, Switzerland has joined other countries in supporting a proposal put forward by Canada that calls for members of the Commission on Human Rights, along with countries that have announced their candidature, to publicly disclose their commitments in the area of promotion of human rights.

Furthermore, with respect to UN conventions relating to the protection of human rights, it should be noted here that Switzerland has proposed consolidating and regrouping the various reports that member states are required to submit to the relevant treaty bodies. The aims here are to streamline the task of presenting reports, which is especially burdensome for certain developing countries, and to secure better interaction between the various treaty bodies.

2.4 Reform of the budgetary cycle

Shortly before Christmas 2003, the Administrative and Budgetary Committee of the UN General Assembly resolved to reform the cumbersome and complex programme and budgetary cycle (which provides the organisation with both a medium-term strategic programme orientation and a shorter-

term operational action plan) and to make it shorter, more coherent and more flexible. Here, one of the problems to date concerns the fact that strategic and operational planning has been poorly co-ordinated. At the same time, a total of three committees have been involved in the programme and budgetary cycle, and this has often resulted in duplications and triplications that additionally hamper the overall process.

In view of this situation, the Administrative and Budgetary Committee asked the UN Secretary General to take the necessary preparatory measures to simplify this complex process on the basis of agreed criteria. Assuming that the General Assembly approves the proposed reforms, it should be possible to implement them already in the next planning and budgetary period (2006-2007). Then in autumn 2007, if the foreseen trial budgetary procedure runs smoothly, the General Assembly would be asked to make a definitive decision concerning the future structure of the programme and budgetary cycle.

2.5 Opening up the UN to parliaments, non-governmental organisations and the private sector

As part of the ongoing efforts to adapt the UN to the realities of the present-day world and the new challenges facing the organisation and its member states, in February 2003 the Secretary General appointed an international panel and entrusted it with the task of examining ties between the UN and civil society. This move on the part of Kofi Annan was based on the acknowledgement of the fact that the process of globalisation is suffering from a lack of a political framework and insufficient consultation with civil society. In view of this development and the distrust of many countries towards the growing influence of the civil society, it is important that the UN creates space for dialogue and consultation. The panel, which is chaired by former Brazilian president Fernando Enrique Cardoso, will soon submit its report to the UN Secretary General. It will outline the present situation with respect to access to, and involvement in, the activities of the UN on the part of civil society in the broadest sense, i.e. including national parliaments, non-governmental organisations and the private sector. It will also identify positive practices (within the UN as well as other international organisations) and will formulate recommendations aimed at strengthening the involvement of civil society.

Switzerland is firmly in favour of developing synergies between non-governmental organisations, the private sector and parliaments on the one hand, and international organisations on the other. On 11 December 2003, Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey, the Swiss foreign minister, met President Cardoso in Geneva, where the panel was holding its second plenary meeting. She outlined Switzerland's efforts in support of non-government organisations, in particular on the occasion of the World Summit on the Information Society. These efforts form part of our country's activities as a host nation as well as of our policy of promoting new forms of co-operation with civil society. Mr Cardoso praised the role played by non-governmental organisations at the World Summit on the Information Soci-

ety, as well as in the initiation and promotion of the Geneva Initiative (for peace in the Middle-East).

Furthermore, five years after proposing the implementation of the Global Compact within the scope of the World Economic Forum, in January 2004 the UN Secretary General announced in Davos that a summit has been scheduled to be held in New York in June for members of the Global Compact, at which Switzerland will be represented. This summit will be an opportunity to provide the Global Compact with renewed impetus. It will provide a framework for discussing the recommendations being presented by the Commission on the Private Sector and Development, which is headed by Paul Martin (former Canadian prime minister) and Ernesto Zedillo (former president of Mexico).

2.6 Conclusions

The conclusions that may be drawn from the efforts implemented to date to bring about reforms are mixed. There is little doubt that the internal reforms carried out under the auspices of the Secretary General have already yielded positive results. They have improved the financial situation of the UN, enhanced its level of efficiency and enabled it to focus more directly on activities relating to its four main strategic priorities – promotion of peace, economic and social development, human rights and protection of the environment – which correspond to the objectives of Switzerland’s foreign policy. Furthermore, progress has been made with respect to the introduction of new working methods and procedures.

But on the other hand, progress with respect to more fundamental reforms has remained sluggish. This is partly due to the difficulty of implementing any amendment to the UN Charter, but also to the lack of consensus among UN member states. In point of fact, this may not be an appropriate time to carry out a revision of the UN Charter. Some countries feel – and not without good reason – that, in the current circumstances, such a move could actually weaken the UN rather than achieve the desired effect of strengthening its capacity to respond collectively.

Switzerland intends to continue to give this matter careful consideration and to maintain contacts with other countries to discuss the question of UN reforms. The Federal Council wants to include Parliament in its discussions on this topic. A seminar on UN reforms is to be organised in May 2004 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva by the two parliamentary foreign affairs committees. And the Federal Council intends to continue pursuing dialogue with Parliament on progress with the reforms at the UN as well as on Switzerland’s own position and contributions.

3 Switzerland’s co-operation with the United Nations

Although a large number of heads of state and ministers made use of the opportunity presented by the high-level debate at the 58th General Assembly to reaffirm their commitment to multilateralism and strengthening the role of the UN, these good intentions have not always led to the desired effects

concerning the organisation's specific activities. Member states have not succeeded in overcoming their differences in a variety of areas.

The UN's capacity to pursue its objectives continues to depend to some extent on the position adopted by the USA towards the organisation. As the biggest financial contributor to the UN, a member of the Security Council and now the world's sole superpower, the USA plays a role within the UN that matches its weight in the world today. As a driving force in certain areas, e.g. the fight against terrorism, the USA also effectively applies the brakes to multilateral actions in other areas. During the 58th General Assembly, the USA essentially focused on safeguarding its national interests with a great deal of consistency and often very vigorously. Some countries feel that the current US administration is practising a form of "à la carte" multilateralism, in which it is frequently tempted to simply ignore the UN or otherwise instrumentalise it for its own needs. In view of this attitude on the part of the USA, the constant challenge for the UN and its member states is to find a compromise solution that allows the USA to be involved in actions of the UN without harming the credibility of the organisation throughout the rest of the world.

When the EU member states agree on an issue, the European Union plays a major role within the UN. This can be explained by the nature of the stances it adopts and its capacity to rally support. It is not only able to mobilize 25 member states to support its views, but is also frequently able to count on the backing of countries that are applying to join the EU or have entered into agreements with it, as well as on a significant number of other states that simply sympathise with its stances. However, during the 58th General Assembly, the EU was often divided on certain issues, and thus found itself sometimes relegated to the sidelines. By contrast, the group of non-aligned countries and G77 (the group of developing countries) were often able to successfully reposition themselves to represent a common stance. Apart from budgetary issues, they were thus able to generally defend their own views to greater effect.

Since Switzerland is not attached to any of these major interest groups, it had to safeguard its own interests and defend its own positions by forming functional alliances relating to specific topics.

3.1 Peace, security and disarmament

Throughout the whole of the past year, *Iraq* was the predominant issue on the UN agenda in the area of peace, security and disarmament. Despite serious divisions and deep disillusionment in the first few months of the year, the members of the Security Council searched for ways to overcome their differing viewpoints once Saddam Hussein had been overthrown. By unanimously adopting Resolution 1483 in May 2003, the Security Council took a first step towards reinstating a common approach and defined a basic international framework for the post-war period. However, agreement was reached here at the cost of ambiguities concerning the role of the UN. The deadly attack against the UN headquarters in Baghdad on 19 August 2003

and the report on security drawn up by an international panel of experts, led to a partial withdrawal of the UN from Iraq for a period of several months.

In this context, it was not possible for Switzerland to provide the intended contributions in the areas of constitutional law and human rights, so we focused on humanitarian aid instead. Switzerland also participated in periodical exchanges of ideas within a group of countries sharing similar views to our own (Canada, Chile, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland), and also joined a “group of friends of Iraq” that comprises 45 member states and is convened from time to time by the UN Secretary General.

The *conflict between Israel and Palestine* was also high on the agenda of the Security Council, the General Assembly and a number of functional committees. The USA used its veto right on two occasions to block action on the part of the Security Council. On the other hand, the General Assembly voted by a large majority in favour of a resolution calling for Israel to refrain from expelling the president of the Palestinian Authority, Yasser Arafat. Furthermore, it called on the International Court to give a consultative opinion on the legal consequences of Israel’s construction of a wall or security fence on occupied Palestinian territory. Along with a large number of other countries, Switzerland participated in the written proceedings before the International Court. In its statements, Switzerland declared that it accepted the competence of the International Court in this matter, and reaffirmed the applicability of humanitarian law (citing the 4th Geneva Convention in particular), and the provisions protecting human rights.

The Geneva Initiative, which resulted from efforts on the part of civil society and was fully supported by Switzerland, was warmly received in New York. The Secretary General of the UN was one of the first leading international figures to publicly acknowledge its importance and underscore that it was a valuable complement to the proposals contained in the “road map” drawn up by the Quartet (USA, Russia, UN and EU). The balanced voting stance adopted by Switzerland at the General Assembly, together with its commitment on the ground in favour of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), helped it consolidate its profile as a nation that is anxious to make a constructive contribution towards the peace process.

The *fight against terrorism* is one of the core areas of action within the UN today. The Security Council imposed sanctions against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and leaders of Al Qaida at the end of the 1990s, and these were extended and reinforced following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. It also demanded that all member states should ratify the dozen conventions to combat terrorism that had been drawn up under the auspices of the UN. Finally, it went on to create a committee against terrorism, which has been entrusted with various monitoring functions and promoting co-operation in the combat against terrorism. However, there are still problems concerning the way in which the Security Council draws up lists of people suspected of involvement with, or ties to, Al Qaida, since the associated procedures do not sufficiently guarantee the observation of human rights. Switzerland approached the Security Council with the request that it should improve the mechanisms by which these lists are compiled and updated.

In the area of *preventive diplomacy*, Switzerland supported missions involving good offices and mediation by the UN. Since 2002, Swiss Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini has been in charge of the UN mission in Georgia. Another Swiss diplomat, Mr. Didier Pfirter, and two other legal advisors, have been involved in negotiations concerning the future of Cyprus with the special representative of the UN. The last round of that negotiation took place in Switzerland, in Bürgenstock (Nidwald).

Developments in the area of *peacekeeping operations* have confirmed a tendency that has been observed to an increasing extent over the past few years in the direction of close co-operation with regional organisations. It is based on pragmatic considerations and takes the form of requests by the UN for individual countries or regional organisations to assume responsibility for conducting peacekeeping missions. This was the case in the Democratic Republic of Congo, for example, in the period from June to August 2003, where for the first time in its history the European Union led an autonomous military operation outside its immediate geographical boundaries. This operation was authorised by the Security Council and given the code name “Artemis”. Its objective was to stabilise a situation that had become extremely precarious. Once this task had been completed, the EU forces were replaced by UN troops. Similar operations have been carried out in Ivory Coast by France and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and more recently by the USA, France and Canada in Haiti, in each case in direct co-operation with the UN. It should be noted that the majority of UN peacekeeping operations concern countries in Africa (Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Eritrea/Ethiopia, Ivory Coast, Western Sahara, and perhaps soon also Sudan and Burundi).

Switzerland is involved in a number of UN peacekeeping operations, providing around thirty military observers, police officers and civilian experts. Most of the military observers are in action in the Middle East (10), Korea (5), Georgia (4), the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea (4), and in the Democratic Republic of Congo (2), while the police officers have been deployed in Kosovo and Bosnia. Switzerland also continues to deploy military personnel in two operations authorised by the UN, under the command of NATO: in Kosovo (authorised deployment of up to 220 personnel) and in Afghanistan (2 to 4 personnel). Finally, around a dozen military experts are involved in landmine removal operations within the scope of UN peacekeeping missions.

As a full member of the United Nations, in 2003 Switzerland paid its compulsory contribution towards peacekeeping operations, namely the equivalent of 1.274% of the normal budget¹¹. It also made voluntary contributions to support the UN in countries in which Switzerland has a particular commitment, such as Georgia. Finally, we also indirectly supported the UN by financing peace promotion projects initiated by non-governmental organisa-

¹¹ In accordance with the new distribution key for members of the UN, Switzerland’s contribution for 2004-2005 will be 1.197% of the normal UN budget. For further details, please refer to section 3.8. (UN finances and personnel).

tions in regions affected by conflicts, most notably Afghanistan, Colombia and Kosovo, as well as in the Great Lakes region of Africa.

In the area of *sanctions*, Switzerland pursued its efforts to promote more directly targeted measures, i.e. sanctions aimed specifically at troublemakers in order to protect the civilian population and third countries to the greatest possible extent. In May 2003, Switzerland co-organised a seminar together with Germany and Sweden that was addressed to member states of the Security Council and set out to familiarise experts from these countries with the results of various studies (such as those conducted in Interlaken, Bonn/Berlin and Stockholm) of ways to make sanctions more effective. In view of the fact that the composition of the Security Council changes from year to year, it was decided to hold a similar seminar in 2004. Switzerland is also supporting a project of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) that sets out to develop a suitable instrument for evaluating the humanitarian impacts of sanctions.

The combat against *illicit trading in small arms and light weapons* has been one of Switzerland's highest objectives for many years in the area of peace policy. It constitutes one of our country's defined priorities for reinforcing human security and securing better protection for civilian populations in regions affected by armed conflict. At the end of 2003, the UN General Assembly set up an open ended working group for the purpose of negotiating an international instrument to enable states to better identify and trace illegal small arms and light weapons. Switzerland has long been recognised for its strong commitment to this issue, a fact that was confirmed with the appointment of Ambassador Anton Thalmann as chairman of this working group, which started its activities in February 2004.

Switzerland has also declared the *elimination of the use of landmines* as one of its main priorities in the area of peace promotion. The various programmes that have been initiated in order to respond to the threats posed by landmines should be viewed not only in terms of security, but also from the point of view of promotion of peace, development aid and human rights. Switzerland aims to further its ideas within the scope of its presidency of the Mine Action Support Group, which it assumed in January 2004 in the person of Ambassador Jenö Staehelin. The main objective of this informal group, which convenes in New York, is to promote dialogue between the UN and countries most actively engaged in financing the fight against landmines. Furthermore, within the scope of the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of antipersonnel mines and on their destruction (Ottawa Convention), Switzerland co-chaired the permanent committee on the destruction of stocks of landmines in the person of Ambassador Christian Faessler.

On top of this, Switzerland deployed a dozen or so military experts in the area of landmines within the scope of UN peacekeeping operations to support the UN Development Programme (UNDP) or as a contribution to non-governmental organisations engaged in the struggle against landmines. Our country is one of the ten main financial contributors in this area. In 2003, we paid almost 8 million Swiss francs to the International Centre for Humanitarian Demining in Geneva, which is a recognised partner of the UN. Its director, Swiss Ambassador Martin Dahinden, was also invited to speak

before the Security Council in November within the scope of a debate on action against landmines, and this confirms the UN's recognition of the important role played by this institution.

Within the UN *General Assembly*, debates on multilateral disarmament demonstrated that fundamental differences still exist between industrialised nations and developing countries. Generally speaking, the former tend to focus on non-proliferation of weapons and the fight against terrorism, whereas the latter demand specific disarmament measures while retaining the right of access to the latest technologies. Throughout the various debates, Switzerland spoke in favour of finding realistic and balanced solutions, and called for the full implementation and effective monitoring of existing agreements that should also be made universal.

The *Conference on Disarmament*, which is based in Geneva and numbers 65 member states, has been blocked for five years due to fundamental differences concerning nuclear disarmament. In order to facilitate the recommencement of negotiations, Switzerland submitted proposals concerning a moratorium on production of fissile materials and measures to guarantee nuclear security.

A number of talks were again held in Geneva on the topic of disarmament. During the second session of the preparatory committee of the States parties to the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, Switzerland supported the efforts aimed at universalising the treaty, as well as the activities of the IAEA in its capacity as supervisory authority. The member states of the 1975 *Convention on the Prohibition of the Supply, Manufacture and Storage of Biological Weapons or Toxins, and their Destruction (Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons)* initiated a monitoring process aimed at reinforcing national measures governing the use and protection of pathological agents. In this connection, Switzerland offered to provide a team of experts in the field.

In the area of arms control, a new protocol on *unexploded remnants of war* was adopted in November in Geneva, and Switzerland assumed the presidency of the group of military experts in charge of preparing its technical annex. This is the first international agreement that calls for the sides in an armed conflict to remove all unexploded ammunition strewn over the battlefield, thus ensuring that, after hostilities have ceased, civilians, peacekeeping troops and humanitarian workers will no longer be threatened by explosive debris. Switzerland played a highly active part in the negotiations that culminated in the formulation of this protocol, which is to be submitted to Parliament in the near future for approval.

It should also be noted here that, four years after it ratified the treaty banning nuclear tests, Switzerland inaugurated a *seismic station in Davos* in October 2003. This facility forms part of the international monitoring network that will be responsible for ensuring that no country carries out nuclear tests after the treaty comes into effect.

Although Iraq and other conflict areas kept the UN extremely busy last year, the implementation of the UN Millennium Development Goals was by no means pushed aside. Responsibility for implementation of these objectives primarily lies with each individual country, of course. Switzerland, too, is actively promoting their implementation, both through its bilateral programmes and within multilateral institutions and forums. This was one of Switzerland's main thematic priorities for its commitments within the UN during the year under review.

The adoption of the chairmanship of the *UNICEF executive board* in New York by Ambassador Jenö Staehelin was an especially significant move last year. The new chairman succeeded in additionally sensitising the members of the executive board to specific activities of UNICEF. Switzerland was also host for the first time for the launch of the UNICEF report on the situation of children in the world in 2004, which focused on the education of girls. This report was presented by Carol Bellamy (UNICEF executive director) and Ambassador Staehelin (in his capacity as chairman of the executive board of UNICEF) in Berne and Geneva on 11 December 2003 in the presence of members of Parliament. It primarily deals with the topic of the education of girls as one of the main challenges in the declared Millennium Goals.

As far as the *Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)* is concerned, the main debate in its annual session focused on the topic of secure food supply from the point of view of development aid, and a major discussion took place this year on the subject of the future financing of the various UN funds and programmes. Other developments of note included constructive talks between the UN and the Bretton Woods institutions on the occasion of the traditional spring meeting in Washington, at which Switzerland was represented in 2003 by Federal Councillor Joseph Deiss. This session resulted in the formulation of initial principles for future co-operation on the implementation of the Millennium Goals. Furthermore, the UN Development Programme and the World Bank agreed on ways in which they intend to jointly contribute towards the achievement of the Millennium Goals at the national level. Switzerland supports these efforts, and it is also trying to persuade other multilateral institutions to orient their programmes more effectively towards poverty reduction strategies for developing countries and to co-ordinate them more efficiently with the main relief agencies in the field.

Preparations for an international partnership had already been made with the same objective in mind at the *International Conference on Development Financing in Monterrey* in March 2002. At that time, the international community agreed that an efficient fight against poverty had to be based primarily on transparent co-operation between governments, civil society, the private sector and multilateral institutions. Within the scope of follow-up activities to Monterrey, the parties concerned formulated an initial report on progress that has been achieved to date at a high-level meeting held at the end of October 2003 on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. Switzerland actively participated in this dialogue and welcomed the consolidation

of the Secretariat for Financing for Development, with which it intends to work more closely together in the future. One of the main goals here will be to promote dialogue with the private sector as well as with civilian institutions. It is currently examining various initiatives in this direction, including the possibility of greater integration of the World Economic Forum (WEF Davos) and the OECD into the development policy activities of the UN.

The convergence process initiated in Monterrey between development aid and financial, investment, debt settlement, fiscal, currency and trade policy still requires additional efforts. Switzerland therefore intends to actively participate in this process and in particular to promote the increased integration of the Millennium Goals into the implementation of the resolutions adopted in Monterrey. The most important issues are the securing of financing over the long term and the presence of UN funds and programmes at the national level.

The 11th session of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD), the first to be held after the *World Summit on Sustainable Development* in Johannesburg, was convened in April and May 2003. It focused on two main issues: the preparation of a future programme for implementing Agenda 21 and the plan of implementation that was approved in Johannesburg; and the reform of its working methods and procedures. The CSD now has a much clearer focus thanks to the new activities programme, since the two-year cycles each focus on a coherent thematic priority. Its methods and procedures were adapted so that, in future, political recommendations will only be dealt with every two years. In this way it will be able to function more effectively as a forum for exchanging specific practical findings. As was already the case before and during the summit in Johannesburg, Switzerland played a very active role here, pushing for a focusing of the activities programme and putting forward constructive proposals for reforming the CSD's working methods. Other priorities included more effective integration at the regional level, transparency with respect to partnership initiatives and co-operation with civil society.

In the year under review, sport once again figured on the agenda of the UN General Assembly. At the suggestion of former Federal Councillor Adolf Ogi, who is now special adviser to the UN Secretary General on sport for development and peace, Tunisia called for a resolution on this topic, which was subsequently adopted by the General Assembly by consensus. The resolution primarily calls for better promotion and co-ordination of sporting activities as a means to attain the goals cited in the UN Millennium Goals. In order to promote special efforts in this direction, 2005 is to be declared the International Year of Sport and Sports Education.

For the *UN Conference on Trade and Development* (UNCTAD), which is based in Geneva, the year under review marked the beginning of preparations for the 11th conference of ministers, which is its highest executive body. This event is to be held in Sao Paulo (Brazil) from 14 to 18 June 2004, and will provide an opportunity to evaluate the results of the programme of activities that was adopted at the last conference of ministers in Bangkok (Thailand), as well as to define priorities for the next four years.

Switzerland remains an important sponsor in the area of technical co-operation tied to trade. During the year under review, it financed a new project aimed at strengthening political and legislative aspects of competition in Central America, Bolivia and Peru, in order to help boost the private sector and prevent the profits resulting from the opening up of the markets from being cancelled out due to anti-competition practices. Switzerland also continued its support for the *BioTrade* initiative, which sets out to facilitate trade in products and services that meet the criteria of biodiversity. And in 2003 a national *BioTrade* programme was also initiated in Bolivia with Switzerland's support.

In the area of investment promotion, UNCTAD is seeking to elevate the competencies of developing countries with respect to international agreements linked to investments. Switzerland is supporting these activities at the multilateral and bilateral levels by focusing its aid on priority countries for co-operation and development. During the year under review, it financed projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tanzania and Costa Rica.

It should also be noted here that Switzerland was one of the first backers of voluntary funds of the *UN Industrial Development Organisation* (UNIDO), where it focuses on projects in the area of internal production.

3.3 Human rights

The discrepancy between declarations of commitment to multilateralism and the genuine capacity of the international community to co-operate constructively has grown especially noticeable in the area of human rights, which has been suffering from politicisation and increasing polarisation over the past few years. As before, debates on human rights are held against a backdrop that divides those countries that focus on civil and political rights and those that give priority to economic and social rights such as rights to food, housing and health. However, there is another form of division that is occurring more and more frequently, namely between conservative visions and liberal ideas. The notions of “values” or “religion” are being invoked more and more frequently in order to question certain established standards relating to human rights. The growing influence of conservative milieus, most notably in the USA and Muslim countries, has become apparent in a number of debates, for example on reproductive health, rights of women and the situation of young girls.

Within the UN, human rights are mainly the responsibility of the Commission on Human Rights, which convenes each spring in Geneva, and the 3rd Committee of the General Assembly. During the year under review, activities in the area of human rights were hampered, especially at the General Assembly, by the clear intention on the part of certain member states to use the various procedural instruments to slow down and complicate the taking of decisions. In keeping with its traditional approach, Switzerland set out to

promote dialogue and avoid confrontation. It was especially active during the year within the Commission on Human Rights and during the 58th General Assembly. This more visible role on the part of Switzerland should increase its chances of election this autumn to one of the vice-presidencies of the 3rd Committee of the General Assembly, as well as reinforce its candidacy for a seat on the Commission on Human Rights for the period from 2007 to 2009. Alongside like-minded countries (e.g. the EU, Norway, Canada, New Zealand, Liechtenstein as well as some South American nations), Switzerland strengthened efforts to prevent any attempt to weaken accepted standards in the area of human rights and the role of the International Criminal Court. It was particularly active in promoting the protection of human rights in association with the fight against terrorism, and in the areas of children's and women's rights. As far as the latter are concerned, Switzerland strongly supported a new resolution at the General Assembly condemning domestic violence and called for a study to be initiated on the topic of the use of violence against women.

By contrast with the results from activities within the Commission on Human Rights, very few resolutions of the General Assembly deal with the human rights situation in specific countries. Switzerland generally supports these texts. The initiative launched by Canada during the year under review calling for a resolution on the human rights situation in Iran gave rise to considerable astonishment among many member states since the European Union, which presented the text to date, had in fact renounced it a year earlier. In October 2003, Switzerland initiated dialogue on human rights in Iran, and under these conditions felt it was wise to abstain from voting. However, Switzerland's position may change at a later date, depending on the outcome of the dialogue and the way in which the human rights situation develops in Iran.

Following the tragic death of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Sergio Vieira de Mello, who was killed in the attack on the UN headquarters in Baghdad in August 2003, the UN Secretary General appointed Louise Arbour (Canada) – who previously held the position of public prosecutor of the criminal tribunals for former Yugoslavia and Rwanda – as his replacement. Within the budgetary commission of the UN General Assembly, Switzerland called for an increase in the section of the budget allocated to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. It also significantly increased its own voluntary contributions to this Office, and is now one of the leading donating countries. This reflects the high priority that Switzerland attaches to the protection and promotion of human rights in its foreign policy¹².

¹² In the area of reforms, it should be recalled to mind that Switzerland entrusted Professor Walter Kälin with the task of formulating proposals for reforming the UN Human Rights Commission. Switzerland also put forward a proposal concerning the consolidation and re-grouping of various reports that member states are required to submit to UN treaty bodies. For further information on this topic, please refer to section 2.3.4 dealing with UN reforms.

3.4 Humanitarian affairs

During the year under review, debates carried out within the UN on humanitarian affairs were marked by the development of the crisis in Iraq and the attack against the UN headquarters in Baghdad on 19 August 2003. The safety of humanitarian personnel everywhere, and the role of the UN in such crisis situations, are two of the biggest challenges facing the organisation today. In order to take up these challenges, it is essential to secure greater independence of humanitarian aid vis-à-vis other UN activities, and to increase the level of universality of humanitarian aid by including countries in debates and decisions that are not among the circle of leading donors. These two objectives are among the priorities defined by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Furthermore, following the attack on the UN's headquarters in Baghdad, the Secretary General asked an independent panel of experts chaired by former Finnish prime minister Athissari to carry out an investigation concerning the safety of UN personnel in Iraq. One of the four experts on this panel was a Swiss citizen, namely Claude Brüderlein, director of the Harvard Programme on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research. In its report, the panel pointed to a number of shortcomings in the management and security of UN personnel, and went on to make a variety of recommendations.

During the 58th General Assembly, Switzerland pursued the efforts it initiated a year earlier aimed at improving the co-ordination of humanitarian aid. Efficient co-ordination is necessary both within the UN system itself as well as among the members of the permanent Committee responsible for co-ordinating the UN humanitarian agencies, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent, as well as the leading humanitarian bodies of non-government organisations. Switzerland also set out to promote the clarification of respective roles to be played by civilian and military players in emergency situations. To this end it supported the implementation of direct operational guidelines that were adopted in 2003 and which entrust civil authorities with the responsibility of deciding on the use of civilian or military means for handling complex humanitarian crises. Switzerland also continued to promote the observation of humanitarian principles, especially in debates by both the General Assembly and the Security Council concerning Iraq, the Middle East and other conflicts. Finally, Switzerland repeatedly called for access on the part of humanitarian organisations to civilian populations in order to afford them greater protection during armed conflicts.

Another of Switzerland's medium-term priorities is to increase the portion of the normal UN budget allocated to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and to strengthen the role of the latter. Our country aims to pursue this by using its presidency (which it assumed in 2004) of the group that unites the main donors to the OCHA. In other areas, Switzerland supported the follow-up programmes to the Chernobyl nuclear disaster and the implementation of the International Strategy for the Prevention of Disasters, both of which are the responsibility of the Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Egeland.

This year, Switzerland assumes the chair of the executive committee of the *Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees* (UNHCR) in Geneva. This one-year mandate has been assumed by Ambassador Jean-Marc Boul-

garis, head of the Swiss permanent mission to the United Nations in Geneva, who is holding a series of discussions concerning governance, the budget and relations with non-governmental organisations. Furthermore, it should be noted that the High Commissioner for Refugees, Ruud Lubbers, is pursuing his initiative called “Convention Plus”, which sets out to develop new instruments for dealing more effectively with refugee problems throughout the world. Within the scope of this initiative, Switzerland is active in the area of irregular and secondary movements. Finally, following a re-evaluation of the mandate and functions of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the UN General Assembly decided to prolong the mandate indefinitely (until now it had to be renewed every five years). However, the High Commissioner will have to report to the UN General Assembly every ten years on the global situation with respect to refugees and the implementation of his mandate.

3.5 Economic, social and cultural issues

In the year under review, Switzerland assumed the presidency of the UN *Commission for Social Development* (CSocD). Headed by Ambassador Jean-Jacques Elmiger of the State Secretary for Economic Affairs, this commission paid special attention to improving the effectiveness of the public sector. In view of the differences that exist between the various national systems and levels of economic development, the goal here was not so much to produce recommendations as to illuminate certain tendencies: the greater importance attached to good governance; transparency in decision-making and assumption of responsibility by public sector players; orientation towards “services markets” without losing sight of the fact that, as before, the main purpose of the public sector is to provide services to the population as a whole, and in particular to especially vulnerable groups. Since the commission’s mandate is also to follow up the major international summits on social development (held in Copenhagen in 1995 and Geneva in 2000), it also debated topics relating to the ageing of the population, the rights of disabled citizens, and social aspects of international migration¹³. Assuming the presidency of the Commission for Social Development has also given Switzerland an opportunity to contribute towards the reform of its methods and procedures. Here, special attention has been paid to promoting a greater involvement on the part of civil society.

For Switzerland, integrating the private sector into the activities of the United Nations represents a major priority. It therefore keeps an especially close eye on the activities of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the OECD and the “Global Compact” initiative that was launched by the UN Secretary General. In collaboration with the Global Compact Office, Switzerland organised an international conference in Berne in June 2003. Here, delegates from more than 30 countries received a unique opportunity to jointly deal with the question of improving and consolidating already existing national networks to promote social responsibility in the corporate sec-

¹³ Regarding the issue of migration, see section 3.9. below.

tor. Switzerland will also be represented at the Global Compact Summit to be held in New York in June 2004.

At the annual session of the UN *Economic Commission for Europe* (ECE), which is held in Geneva, the debate on reforms that had been initiated a year earlier was taken up again, and efforts were made to promote the incorporation into ongoing commercial negotiations of the three main dimensions of sustainable development, namely cultural diversity, the social dimension of globalisation, and environmental aspects.

In the area of *culture*, it was the *Orchestre de la Suisse Romande* that performed in 2003 at the traditional concert at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York on the occasion of United Nations Day (24 October). On Human Rights Day (10 December), and to open the Global Summit on the Information Society two days later, a group of Swiss artists supported by the Swiss Federal Office of Culture installed a system that projected messages by laser onto the UN building ("Hello World" project).

3.6 Environment and sustainable development

The protection of natural resources is one of the priorities of Switzerland's foreign policy. For this reason, our country strongly supports international environmental processes and institutions, and also plays a significant role in this area. At the 2003 UN General Assembly, one of our main aims was to confirm the results achieved to date with respect to strengthening international environmental architecture and the *United Nations Environment Programme* (UNEP), protecting the diversity of species throughout the world and preventing global warming. Switzerland was also highly active at both the national and the international level in supporting the UN Year of Water.

In order to effectively deal with global environmental problems, it is essential to strengthen the related international structures. This means securing the coherence of international environmental activities with their broad variety of specific instruments and processes. For this reason, at the 2002 Environment Ministers Forum and the World Summit on Sustainable Development it was resolved to strengthen international environmental governance. In institutional terms, the focus here is on supporting UNEP as the central pillar of the global environmental system. Switzerland fully supports this programme, and in the year under review it strongly promoted the fast and effective implementation of the resolutions concerning international environment governance.

Efforts to protect the diversity of species have been intensified over the past few years at both the national and the international level, but biodiversity continues to diminish at a rapid pace. Switzerland is therefore calling for specific measures to achieve the goal that was declared at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, namely to significantly slow down the worldwide loss of biodiversity by 2010. At the same summit it was also resolved to pave the way for an international procedure for distributing profits from the utilisation of genetic resources. At the 58th General Assembly, Switzerland successfully campaigned for this procedure to be based on the Bonn Guidelines governing access to genetic resources and the fair distribution of

profits obtained from their utilisation. This meant that we were able to create the essential basis for the commencement of negotiations on the new regulations in time for the seventh conference of contractual parties to the Convention on Biodiversity to be held in February 2004.

With respect to the urgent problem of *global warming*, Switzerland consistently emphasised the need for the Kyoto Protocol to come into effect without further delay, i.e. to be ratified by those countries that have not yet done so. We also campaigned for the immediate continuation of climate negotiations with a view to the second period of obligation in accordance with the Kyoto Protocol.

During the *UN Year of Freshwater, 2003*, a variety of multilateral forums provided visible signs that water is becoming recognised as a valuable resource and thus a crucial element of sustainable development. But last year, Switzerland also campaigned outside the bounds of the UN – namely at the 3rd World Water Forum in Kyoto and the Dushanbe Fresh Water Forum – in favour of the practical implementation of the concepts and declarations that were approved at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. It supported the declaration that was approved in Dushanbe for the attention of the UN and which calls for a “Water for Life” programme for the period from 2005 to 2014, and together with numerous other countries it campaigned to ensure that the corresponding resolution would be approved by the 58th General Assembly.

The following events were also held in Geneva in the course of 2003: the tenth meeting of the negotiating committee of the Rotterdam Convention on the procedure of prior consent following notification of hazardous chemicals and pesticides in international trade (*PIC Convention*); the seventh meeting of the negotiating committee of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (*POP Convention*), and the third meeting of the *UN Forum on Forests* (UNFF).

3.7 International law

In the eyes of a country like Switzerland, international law is an essential factor for the stability and smooth functioning of international relations. One of the main challenges today is to maintain the universality of international law and ensure observation of its provisions, not only by governments, but also by non-state actors. In order to accomplish this it is necessary to convince the directly involved players, or exert suitable pressure on them, and this implies that Switzerland has to work closely together with other countries that share the same sensibilities.

As far as the formulation and ongoing development of international law are concerned, a number of significant events occurred during the year under review, above all the conclusion of the *UN Convention Against Corruption* in Vienna after two years of negotiations. This Convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 31 October 2003. For the first time there is now an international treaty that encompasses all the essential aspects in the fight against corruption at the international level, from preventive measures to incrimination, including legal aid and the return of unlawfully obtained

assets. This is also the first international treaty to recognize the principle of returning illicitly acquired funds. Since Switzerland has plenty of experience in this area, it showed particularly support for this aspect. The treaty does not give rise to any new obligations for Switzerland, and our country signed it on 10 December 2003 on the occasion of the special conference held for this purpose in Mérida, Mexico.

Negotiations have been in progress within the UN for several years now for the purpose of adopting a *general convention on the fight against terrorism*. The main goals here are to put together a single instrument and precisely define some of the obligations cited in the twelve UN sectoral agreements dealing with terrorism. Although there is widespread agreement concerning the usefulness of such an instrument, no progress has been made with negotiations for the past two years, and there are no signs of consensus in the near future. One of the main obstacles concerns the difficulty in defining terrorism and drawing an absolutely clear distinction with other forms of action that may be classified under the header of freedom fighting or struggles for national liberty. It is extremely difficult to find consensus in this area, which is highly sensitive from a political point of view. Nonetheless, the special workgroup that was established for this purpose will continue its efforts in 2004. Here it should be noted that Switzerland supports the international convention for the suppression of terrorist attacks using explosives (15 December 1997), has ratified the convention for the suppressing of financing of terrorism (9 December 1999), and is now party to the dozen *sectoral conventions* drawn up under the auspices of the UN in order to combat terrorism.

Another area that is characterised by a lack of progress is the *regulation of human cloning*. Negotiations were initiated within the UN in 2000 with the aim of concluding an international convention banning the cloning of human beings for reproduction purposes. Progress has stalled due to strongly differing views, with one group demanding a total ban on all forms of human cloning (led by the USA, Costa Rica and the Vatican) and the other (which includes Switzerland) preferring a two-level approach, namely 1) an immediate ban on human cloning for reproduction purposes, and 2) a separate debate on the regulation of cloning for therapeutic purposes, a topic on which views are not so divided. Since it has not been possible to overcome these differences, negotiations on the issue of human cloning are to be pursued during the next UN General Assembly.

In March 2004, the Judicial Commission of the General Assembly concluded a project for drawing up a *convention on the legal immunity of states and their assets*. Despite the controversies that have surrounded the preparation of this text over the past few years, a draft agreement has finally been drawn up. As host nation to a large number of international organisations, Switzerland has a particular interest in an agreement of this sort, since only an international convention can both standardise and clarify the different national practices relating to legal immunity.

During the year under review, Switzerland pursued its commitment in favour of the *International Criminal Court*, having already strongly supported its creation. At the insistence of the USA, in June 2003 the Security Council renewed a resolution preventing the International Criminal Court

from prosecuting military personnel engaged in UN peacekeeping operations if they are citizens of countries that have not recognised its jurisdiction. Together with three other countries, Switzerland petitioned the Security Council to hold a public debate on this topic that was also open to non-members. Although this debate failed to prevent the adoption of the above-mentioned resolution, it nonetheless revealed growing opposition to its renewal. Switzerland intends to continue supporting the International Criminal Court in the future and to encourage other countries to recognise its authority.

Finally, it should be recalled to mind that Switzerland was one of the main driving forces behind the adoption by the General Assembly on 18 December 2002 of the *UN optional protocol to the convention against torture and other forms of punishment or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment*, an instrument that was largely based on experiences of the ICRC and which sets out to prevent torture by conducting on-site inspections of prisons and other detention centres. Its ratification will not be able to take place as quickly as originally hoped. However, the Federal Council should be signing it in the near future, and once the modalities of the national mechanism have been defined, it will submit a Bill to Parliament, probably in the course of the current legislature.

3.8 UN finances and personnel

The UN's 2003 financial year was tighter than the previous year, with total expenditure reaching the level of approximately 4 billion US dollars. This figure encompasses the ordinary programme budget (1.4 billion), expenditure for peace-keeping operations (2.4 billion) and costs relating to the war crimes tribunals in the Hague and Arusha (0.2 billion). Expenditure for peacekeeping operations, which is of course very difficult to predict, will probably rise during the current year as the result of new operations such as UNMIL in Liberia and UNOCI in Ivory Coast, plus the expansion of existing ones (e.g. MONUC in the Democratic Republic of Congo).

While the UN's expenditure increased, the payment behaviour on the part of many of the 191 member states simultaneously declined. In the mid-1990s, only around 40% of the UN member states paid their compulsory contributions punctually, thus dragging the organisation into a financial crisis, though the next few years saw an improvement in payment behaviour. However, since 2001 the UN's financial situation has again been worsening and payment behaviour has been on the decline. In 2003 the total amount of outstanding payments of compulsory contributions reached 2.4 billion US dollars. Switzerland, which pays its fees punctually, has strongly criticised this behaviour, calling on the member states concerned to meet their financial obligations.

Every two years the UN General Assembly is asked to vote on the organisation's budget, and shortly before Christmas 2003 the Administrative and Budgetary Committee approved the new *programme budget for the next two*

years. The secretariat, programmes and funds will have 3.161 billion US dollars and 62 new jobs at their disposal for implementing the various projects that have been approved (and in some cases slightly modified) by the General Assembly. This amount represents a compromise between the higher figure originally proposed by the General Secretariat and the pressure to cut costs that is being felt by practically all major contributing member states. The new programme budget is result-oriented throughout, and can be directly assessed from the point of view of future successes and failures. This more stringent focus has primarily come about as the result of pressure from the main contributors of financial resources to the UN, i.e. the members of the *Geneva Group*, an informal group of which Switzerland is an active member. The content of the programme budget is now more streamlined and the priorities – most of which relate to ongoing reforms and the goals cited in the Millennium Declaration - are more clearly defined.

Overall, Switzerland can be very satisfied with the outcome of the most recent budget negotiations: the budget takes adequate account of our country's foreign policy objectives within the UN, and the Administrative and Budgetary Committee also approved substantial additional financial and human resources for areas we regard as priorities, e.g. human rights, treatment of refugees and humanitarian affairs.

The new *rate for contributions* towards the ordinary programme budget and peacekeeping missions was also approved by the General Assembly. Its calculation reflects major economic criteria such as gross domestic product and foreign debt of member states. In accordance with the new formula, Switzerland is to pay 1.197% (versus 1.274% for the period from 2001 to 2003) of the UN's overall costs for the next three years, and is therefore 15th on the table of all contributing nations. Thanks to this reduction and the ongoing weakness of the US dollar, we will therefore have to pay less to the UN despite an enormous increase in its overall budget.

3.9 Migration

More and more attention is being paid within the UN today to the question of international migration, the causes of movements of populations and their complex ties to development. In collaboration with the UN Secretary General, Switzerland and Sweden co-sponsored the creation of a *Global Commission on Migration* that comprises 17 international figures who possess a high level of expertise in this area. The main tasks entrusted to this new commission, which is co-chaired by former Swedish minister for migration, Jan Karlsson, and World Bank vice-president Mamphela Ramphele, are to analyse various migration policies and put forward recommendations concerning issues that are likely to become the subject of increasing international co-operation. The aim here is to promote suitable solutions for the involved countries of origin, transit and destination. The Commission will be expected to submit a report on its activities to the UN Secretary General by autumn 2005. The official inauguration took place in Geneva in December 2003 in the presence of the UN Secretary General, Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey and Swedish minister for migration, Barbro Holm-

berg. The secretariat is based in Geneva and is managed by Rolf Jenny (Switzerland).

Within the UN General Assembly it was also decided to hold a high-level dialogue on the topic of migration in the course of 2006. This will provide an opportunity to discuss the recommendations of the newly formed Commission at ministerial level. It should also be noted here that an initial debate on the topic of “women and migration” was held in autumn 2003 at the request of countries in which – as is the case with Switzerland – the foreign affairs minister is a woman. The topic of international migration was also touched on from a social perspective during the 42nd session of the UN Commission on Social Development (CSocD), which was held in February 2004 in New York under Swiss chairmanship. Attention was focused on the widening discrepancy between the globalisation of the economy – characterised by an increase in free circulation of assets and capital – on the one hand, and growing restrictions on the free movement of people at the global level, on the other.

4 Co-operation with international organisations based in Switzerland

Switzerland has been involved in international co-operation within the scope of multilateral institutions almost since its foundation as a modern-day confederation. The first international organisations were mostly based in Berne, though this has been more or less forgotten in Switzerland. Today, Geneva is by far the most important centre of multilateral co-operation in the world¹⁴, both quantitatively and, in many areas, qualitatively, even if New York often attracts greater attention since it hosts the central institutions of the United Nations and is thus the location of many major debates and resolutions.

Switzerland is a member of the international organisations it hosts on its sovereign territory just like any other country. After all, multilateral co-operation is based on the principle of equality of states. But as host nation, we also have a special interest in ensuring that international organisations based in our country are able to function as smoothly and efficiently as possible. We therefore devote a great deal of time and effort to these organisations, and set out to actively contribute towards the successful accomplishment of their respective mandates. This chapter presents a brief overview of the main developments within most of these organisations in the year under review¹⁵.

4.1 UN specialised agencies

The *World Intellectual Property Organisation* pursued its activities aimed at developing new regulations that are adapted to modern-day technologies but

¹⁴ See Annex 7.4: “International Geneva” – some facts and figures.

¹⁵ Developments that have taken place within funds and programmes and other entities of relevance to the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council are described in section 3.

take adequate account of the special needs of developing countries. In the area of genetic resources and conventional knowledge, Switzerland put forward a number of specific proposals for dealing with the problem of “bio-piracy”, which is a crucial issue for developing countries. The aim here is to define potential solutions with a view to securing fair distribution and equal benefits with respect to the utilisation of these resources and knowledge. The summit meeting concerning current issues in the area of intellectual property, which was to have been held in Beijing in April, was postponed. The annual conference of member states resulted in the adoption of statutory reforms aimed at streamlining the structure of the WIPO and specifying the applicable contributions system. Switzerland supported the various negotiations during the preparatory stage of the construction of a new administrative complex and conference hall for 650 delegates. The new complex is to be financed entirely from internal funds, without the need for a loan from the host nation. Director General Kamil Idris (Sudan) was re-elected for a term of office of six years.

The main event in the calendar of the ITU (*International Telecommunications Union*) was the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), phase 2 of which is to be held in Tunis in 2005¹⁶. The ITU also pursued its deliberations on the reforms to be introduced in view of the institution’s adaptation to changes brought about by globalisation and the liberalisation of new information and communication technologies. The ITU’s financial situation remains precarious, and this means it will be forced to take the difficult step of gradually cutting jobs over the next few years. The ITU organised another international “TELECOM” exhibition in Geneva in October.

During the annual conference of the *World Health Organisation* (WHO) in May, retiring Director General Gro Harlem Brundtland introduced for adoption the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) – the first treaty to be called into being under the auspices of the WHO. Mrs Brundtland is leaving a strengthened WHO behind her at the political level after having succeeded in positioning public health at the centre of development. However, the internal restructuring of the WHO has not yet been completed. The new Director General, Jong-Wook Lee (Republic of Korea), intends to continue pursuing the policies of his predecessor while strengthening activities and impacts at the national level and introducing a new approach in the area of personnel policy. Jong-Wook Lee has declared the fight against AIDS and access to anti-retroviral treatment among his highest priorities. The “3x5” initiative, which was launched on World AIDS Day on 1 December, sets out to supply anti-retrovirals to three million inhabitants of developing countries between now and 2005. As Dr. Lee took on his position as Director General, he paid a visit to the federal authorities in Berne in August.

The tendency towards politicisation of the WHO that has been witnessed over the past few years continued during the year under review. The growing north-south polarisation among member states gave rise to difficult debates during the sessions of the executive board and above all the World

¹⁶ For further information on this topic, please refer to section 5.2. “Major conferences”.

Health Assembly, with the budget and the question of representation of states in the secretariat as the areas in which differences were most pronounced. The proposals for reforming the methods and procedures of the executive board, which were put forward by a workgroup chaired by Switzerland, were adopted.

Switzerland was able to provide significant support in the negotiations on access to medicaments and the protection of intellectual property rights. Furthermore, former Federal Councillor Ruth Dreifuss was appointed head of the *Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health*, which was created through the implementation of a resolution adopted by the World Health Assembly, and has been entrusted with the tasks of publishing an analysis of intellectual property rights, innovation and public health, including suitable financing mechanisms, and promoting the manufacture of new medicines and other products to combat diseases that primarily affect developing countries. This Commission is expected to report to the executive board in January 2005.

Switzerland is actively setting out to improve living and working conditions throughout the world within the scope of the *International Labour Organisation* (ILO), primarily by reinforcing fundamental labour standards and promoting human rights, social equality and the struggle against poverty. During the year under review, a number of projects our country is carrying out in this area in co-operation with the ILO in southern Africa and two Chinese export promotion zones, were expanded in both qualitative and geographical terms, and co-operation with the ILO was also initiated in South America and Vietnam. The purpose here is to finance production centres in order to provide primarily small and medium-sized companies with advisory services relating to compliance with social and environmental standards.

Once again the International Labour Conference – the annual conference of the ILO – focused on the situation of workers in the occupied Palestinian territories, where efforts were hampered by the ongoing violence and series of attacks and counterattacks. Measures to combat forced labour in Myanmar (Burma) also featured on the agenda again, but the political situation in the country has so far prevented the initiation of a corresponding ILO action plan.

In February 2004 the international committee of experts headed by the presidents of Finland (Tarja Halonen) and Tanzania (Benjamin Mkapa) submitted its report which for the first time dealt comprehensively with the social dimension of globalisation. Above all, the report called for a fairer structure for the globalisation process. In the committee's view, the main factors for accomplishing this goal are strong, democratically oriented states, productive and fair markets, solidarity and a more effective multilateral system. The report is to serve as the basis for discussion within the ILO as well as in other UN institutions, e.g. the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

At the 14th World Weather Congress, which was held in Geneva from 5 to 24 May, Switzerland was elected to the executive council of the *World Meteorological Organisation* (WMO). This was an especially significant

move in that the last time our country was represented on this body was back in 1971-1975. This position is to be filled by the Director of Meteo-Schweiz, Daniel Keuerleber-Burk, who was also elected president of the WMO region of Europe in the autumn. The WMO Congress, which is held every four years, appointed Michel Jarraud (France) as new secretary general of the organisation. He took over the helm on 1 January 2004, relieving his Nigerian colleague, Obasi, from the post he has held since 1984.

The purpose of the *Universal Postal Union* (UPU), which is based in Berne, is to facilitate and co-ordinate the international exchange of mail, while focusing primarily on the areas of regulation and standardisation of worldwide postal services and the national legislation that governs them. Its main objectives include speeding up the flow of mail deliveries, guaranteeing free circulation of carriers, including in electronic form, and extending its competencies to private companies operating in the sector. The UPU is currently preparing for its 23rd World Congress, which is to be held in autumn 2004 in Bucharest, and will define the main orientation of the organisation for the next few years.

4.2 Other international organisations and institutions

The main event involving the *World Trade Organisation* (WTO) during the year under review was the fifth ministers conference that was held in Cancún, Mexico, from 10 to 14 September. The member states had hoped for this conference to yield political impulses for the round of negotiations launched at the previous ministers conference in Doha (Qatar) at the end of 2001, and thus result in the corresponding operational decisions. However, the conference was unable to meet these expectations, other than in the area of intellectual property/access to medicines for poor countries without their own production capacity, in which an agreement was reached shortly before the conference was due to begin. The negotiating positions of the WTO member states remained widely divergent right up to the end, for example in the key areas of agriculture and industrial products, but especially with respect to the “Singapore Issues” (trade relief, trade and investments, trade and competition policy, transparency in the area of public procurement). The conference was therefore abandoned without having made any progress.

From Switzerland’s point of view, this outcome was disappointing. The probable postponement of the Doha round of negotiations until 2005 or beyond threatens to diminish the importance of the WTO and weaken the multilateral trade system. If the WTO is unable to effectively deal with the challenges associated with globalisation and bring negotiations to a successful conclusion, this could cause some member states to shift their priorities in the direction of negotiating regional agreements. But a marginalisation of the WTO would clearly harm the interests of the vast majority of its members, i.e. small to medium-sized industrialised and developing countries. In mid-December the member states of the WTO at least agreed to recommence the Doha negotiations during 2004 and at the same time to continue the consultation process concerning ways to approach the “Singapore Issues”.

At its headquarters in Geneva, the *European Free Trade Association* (EFTA) focused primarily on negotiating and managing free trade agreements with third countries, and implementing and updating the EFTA Convention. The agreement signed in 2002 with Singapore came into effect on 1 January, and on 26 June the EFTA countries were able to conclude a free trade agreement with Chile. In the year under review, EFTA initiated free trade negotiations with the South African Customs Union (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland) and Lebanon, and pursued its ongoing negotiations with Egypt, Canada and Tunisia. Initial meetings were held with the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates) and Algeria on the basis of the respective co-operation declarations. The situation with respect to other potential partners is also being constantly reviewed. Various committees of EFTA also held talks with Israel, Croatia, Macedonia, Mexico, the Palestinian Authority, Romania and Slovakia concerning the administration of existing free trade agreements.

The forthcoming expansion of the EU will lead to the termination of eight EFTA agreements with non-member states, and Switzerland's free trade with these countries will then be covered by its trade agreements with the EC dating from 1972. Amendments to the 1999 sectoral agreements between Switzerland and the EC have in turn led to modifications to the EFTA Convention with respect to social security issues and mutual recognition of conformity evaluations. Finally, initial supplementary negotiations were concluded with Liechtenstein concerning freedom of movement.

In the course of the year under review, CERN (*European Organisation for Nuclear Research*) introduced a variety of measures to overcome the financial crisis resulting from the additional costs associated with the construction of the large hadron collider, or LHC. These measures include refocusing activities on the LHC, careful financial planning and stringent control, an updated personnel policy and streamlining the internal administrative structure. A re-adaptation of institutional structures has been approved, and the aim here is to simplify intergovernmental decision-making mechanisms and render them more efficient. It is planned to start up the LHC in 2007. The new Director General, Robert Aymar (France), took over on 1 January 2004. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of CERN's existence in 2004 the Federal Council resolved to present it with the "Palais de l'équilibre", which was used for Expo02.

The aim of the *Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail*, which has been based in Berne since 1893 and is currently under the leadership of a Swiss citizen (Hans Rudolf Isliker), is to draw up uniform legislation in its area of competence, namely international rail transport. It is currently engaged in obtaining the necessary ratifications from the countries concerned for the Convention Concerning International Carriage by Rail to enter into effect in accordance with the new content that was approved in 1999 through the "Vilnius Protocol". This process is expected to be finalised by the end of 2004, thereby transforming the organisation from an essentially regional entity into a genuinely supranational one with a significantly greater international role. Contacts are now being established with the aim of co-operating with railway systems in place in Russia and countries of the

East. Steps have also been taken to promote a project aimed at standardising national legislation governing the transport of goods by rail.

The *Bank for International Settlements*, which is based in Basel, is engaged in promoting discussion and co-operation among central banks. For this purpose it has formed a variety of committees that focus on financial stability and the global financial system. In the year under review, the activities of the four relevant committees included examining the role of central banks in the area of mass payment transactions, and incentive structures in institutional asset management and their impacts on the financial markets. The Basel Committee on Banking Supervision focused primarily on the conclusion of the new equity capital agreement (Basel II), which enhances the sensitivity of equity capital requirements on the part of banks with respect to credit risks. The aim here is to increase the stability of the banking system. The new method of handling credit risk also gives rise to a greater differentiation of interest rates for bank loans, and thus to more efficient lending activity. The Basel Committee hopes to finalise the new agreement by the middle of 2004, so that it can come into effect as of the end of 2006.

5 Switzerland's host country policy

5.1 Overview

Switzerland has a long tradition as a host country to numerous intergovernmental organisations and as a centre for conferences and multilateral talks. This role provides it with an important platform for its foreign policy initiatives and interests. Switzerland's host country policy, in which Geneva features as a major international centre, is therefore an extremely important element of the country's foreign policy.

Switzerland has a variety of special obligations as host country to international organisations. These include granting privileges and immunities, including tax relief and exemptions, as well as accepting responsibility in the area of security – an area that has of course taken on a whole new dimension since the events of 11 September 2001.

But these obligations, which in some cases are associated with considerable expenditure both for the Swiss Confederation as well as for the cantons concerned (especially Geneva), are offset by equally significant benefits. For example, as host country to international organisations and conferences, Switzerland is frequently in a position to exert more influence than it could otherwise expect. But of course playing the role of host country is not enough on its own – while it can greatly simplify this process, it needs to be combined with creative political thinking and sound diplomacy in order to become truly effective. Switzerland's involvement in the preparation and organisation of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), which is outlined below, is a good example of this formula¹⁷. Another important benefit for Switzerland concerns the fact that the various interna-

¹⁷ See section 5.2. "Major conferences".

tional organisations and permanent missions of member states have become a significant economic factor, at least in the canton of Geneva¹⁸.

In its efforts to promote Geneva as an international centre, the Federal Council attaches a great deal of importance to the *regional dimension*, and is therefore anxious to intensify co-operation in the area beyond the canton's borders. The decision to extend the area of activity of the Building Foundation for International Organisations (FIPOI), which is based in Geneva, to the canton of Vaud¹⁹ may be regarded as the most recent result of such efforts (cf. "Real estate policy and the FIPOI"). This regional dimension also encompasses transboundary co-operation. For example, the most recent meeting of the Franco-Suisse consultative committee for problems between the Republic and Canton of Geneva and the neighbouring French provinces of Ain and Haute-Savoie, held upon Switzerland's request in Lyon in November, offered a platform for discussing issues relating to the presence of international organisations based in the region of Lake Geneva.

Alongside Nairobi (Kenya), Geneva is a leading centre of international environmental policy. The European regional office of the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) and numerous other environmental organisations are based here, and have grouped together to form the Geneva Environment Network (GEN). The Federal Council intends to promote Geneva as a major centre of environmental policy through a variety of suitable measures. Priorities here currently include the candidacy to the permanent secretariat of the PIC Convention (Rotterdam) and POPs Convention (Stockholm). The decision concerning the location of the permanent secretariat of the PIC Convention, for which Geneva and Rome have put forward their joint candidacy, is expected to be announced in September 2004. Switzerland and Italy are conducting an intensive campaign in this connection. The completion of the expansion of the International Environment House (cf. "Real estate policy and the FIPOI") at the end of the year was an additional contribution towards Geneva's attraction as a centre of environmental policy²⁰.

In order to increase both the effectiveness and the attractiveness of the *Graduate Institute of International Studies (HEI)* in Geneva, the federal government is to carry out a comprehensive reform of this internationally renowned institution in co-operation with the canton. In stage 1, the statutes were revised and updated, and a new board of trustees was appointed. The next stage will involve the conclusion of an agreement between the federal government, the canton of Geneva and the institute, in which the objectives of the latter are to be re-defined.

Each new member state traditionally offers the UN headquarters in New York a *gift* to commemorate its accession to the organisation. Switzerland decided to renovate a part of the premises of the General Assembly, and

¹⁸ International organisations in Switzerland spent approximately 5.5 billion Swiss francs in 2001, almost 5 billion of which was attributable to organisations based in Geneva. Approximately 14,000 jobs in Geneva are indirectly dependent on the presence of international organisations, mainly in the hotel and catering sectors.

¹⁹ See section 5.6 „Real estate policy and the FIPOI“.

²⁰ See section 5.6 „Real estate policy and the FIPOI“.

expects to be able to officially inaugurate them in September 2004 on the occasion of the 59th UN General Assembly. In view of its special role as host country to UN institutions, Switzerland also presented a gift to the Office of the UN in Geneva, namely an innovative, multiple-purpose mobile exhibition system that was specifically conceived by Swiss designers for the Palais des Nations. It was officially handed over to the UN on the occasion of the 60th session of the Commission on Human Rights in March 2004, with an special exhibition on the topic of human rights in art (“être. les droits de l’homme à travers l’art”). Switzerland’s gift also included the restoration of the frescoes by Swiss artist Karl Hüglin in the “Delegates’ Lounge” at the Palais des Nations, which was officially renamed “Salon suisse”. Switzerland initially presented the frescoes as a gift to the League of Nations in 1937.

5.2 Major conferences

From 10 to 12 December, Geneva hosted the first phase of the *World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)*. During the preparatory stage, Switzerland worked closely together with the UN, which organised the WSIS through the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), and the canton of Geneva. The members of the Federal Council were personally involved to ensure that this event, which was the first UN summit to be held in Switzerland, ran smoothly and that it would attract a large number of participants and give rise to direct interaction between representatives of governments, non-governmental organisations and the private sector, as well as yield pleasing results in terms of content of the various debates and adopted resolutions. Switzerland additionally supported the preparatory process by appointing an executive secretariat under the leadership of Swiss diplomat Daniel Stauffacher.

Switzerland played a vital support role in the difficult negotiations that were carried out both before and during the summit. Marc Furrer, director of the Swiss Federal Office of Communications, chaired a committee which succeeded in attaining consensus on the text of a declaration of principles and of a plan of actions only a few hours before the summit was opened. However, no agreement was reached on certain fundamental issues, and these therefore had to be deferred until phase 2 of the summit, which is to be held in Tunis in 2005. Nonetheless, the political outcome of the summit was in line with Switzerland’s main interests. The summit in Geneva represents the initiation of a process that will be pursued in Tunis and beyond. As coordinator of a newly established Working Group on Internet Governance, the UN Secretary-General appointed Swiss diplomat Markus Kummer.

A total of around 11,000 delegates attended the summit, including a number of heads of state and numerous high-level government officials. The creation of an “Office for Civil Society” paved the way for increased integration of non-governmental organisations and the private sector, and in this connection a platform organised by Switzerland (“ICT4D”, or Information and Communication Technologies for Development) was also well received. The large number of participants and visitors posed considerable problems

in terms of security and logistics, but these were successfully overcome thanks to smooth and efficient co-operation between the federal government and the canton of Geneva.

The 28th *International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent* was held in Geneva in December. Its motto, “Protecting Human Dignity”, served as the basis on which the 191 member states of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, the 181 Red Cross and Red Crescent associations and their umbrella organisations, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) defined the basic principles for their activities over the next four years. The main topics included the confirmation and promotion of international humanitarian law and modified strategies to lessen the degree of vulnerability to natural and scientific disasters, and transmittable or contagious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Switzerland supported the organisation of this conference in the form of a significant financial contribution, and as in the past it also provided a diplomat to function as commissioner.

On the evening before the opening of the annual *Conference of heads of state and government of the 8 leading industrialised nations (G-8)*, which was held in Evian (France) at the beginning of June, the Federal Council invited the members of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), representatives from other developing countries, the heads of the World Trade Organisation and the International Monetary Fund, the president of the World Bank and the UN Secretary General to a meeting in Ouchy. This event offered numerous opportunities for bilateral contacts, and these were subsequently utilised to the full. The organisation of this meeting and the G8 summit itself was associated with major challenges in terms of security and logistics for Switzerland as an immediate neighbour of the host country, but despite a number of large-scale demonstrations it was possible to successfully overcome these thanks to close co-operation between the federal government and the cantons of Vaud, Valais and Geneva.

Numerous guests from Switzerland and abroad gathered together in Geneva in December on the occasion of the launch of the *Geneva Initiative*, a peace initiative for the Middle East that was essentially funded by private sponsors and supported by Switzerland both financially and logistically. The two delegations led by the initiators, Jossi Beilin (former Justice Minister of Israel) and Yassir Abed Rabbo (former Palestinian Minister for Government Affairs), met in the presence of Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey to sign the text of the Initiative. Once again, Switzerland supported this event by contributing towards the costs.

5.3 International community

While the general conditions for hosting international organisations are an essential factor in Switzerland's host country policy, helping diplomats and employees of international organisations to settle in the country is an equally important aspect. The Swiss Confederation and the canton of Geneva jointly established an institution called International Geneva Welcome Centre (CAGI), which offers practical assistance to some 35,000 international officials and members of permanent diplomatic missions (together with their

families, of course), as well as to employees of non-governmental organisations who live and work in Geneva. This support centre now works more closely together with the Foundation for Geneva, especially in the areas of receiving new guests and providing them with information, and organising joint socio-cultural events. An effective support network has thus been created in co-operation with Genève Tourisme.

The *Diplomatic Committee of Geneva*, which comprises two representatives from each of the world's geographical regions plus China, is an institution that provides assistance and good offices, and sets out to maintain good relations with the host country and find solutions to problems encountered by permanent missions and their members. Switzerland works closely together with the Diplomatic Committee through the Permanent Swiss Mission to the Office of the United Nations and other international organisations based in Geneva.

5.4 Security

Adequate security measures play a decisive role in the choice of an international location. The measures introduced by the Federal Council following the events of 11 September 2001 remain in effect today. In view of the ongoing threat at the international level imposed by terrorism, the security of buildings is of the highest priority for international organisations. Given host countries' obligations, the Swiss authorities are expecting higher demands for support in this area. Here the army will continue to play an important role.

Apart from receiving participants of various international statutory conferences, Geneva also hosted a number of important heads of state and government leaders who came to participate at the G8 summit and the World Summit on the Information Society. Both these events constituted a major challenge to the federal and cantonal authorities responsible for security.

With the support of the federal government, other cantons and a contingent of German police, the canton of Geneva was able to establish very tight security throughout the G8 summit, and thus to effectively preserve the security of international organisations in the area.

5.5 Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

Non-governmental organisations have been playing an ever more important role in the area of international co-operation over the past few years. They have become significant partners for international organisations and contribute towards the activities of numerous multilateral forums. Approximately 170 NGOs based in Geneva now enjoy a consultative status towards the UN.

The possibility of granting targeted and limited support to certain NGOs has meanwhile become an important element in Switzerland's host country policy. The country's measures in favour of hosting NGOs in Geneva are being implemented in the form of a direct partnership between the federal

government and the cantonal authorities, competent in this area. This support covers a variety of activities: projects to help NGOs set themselves up in Geneva, provision of start-up aid (on a selective basis, and in cases deemed sufficiently important in political terms), assistance in obtaining residence and work permits, help with fiscal matters, provision of office space or conference facilities for NGOs, etc.

The NGO co-ordinator for the canton of Geneva, who is based at the International Geneva Welcome Centre (CAGI), examines the requirements of NGOs that intend to establish themselves in the Geneva region, helps them find suitable premises and obtain the necessary residence permits, and acts as a link with the authorities of the canton of Geneva.

5.6 Real estate policy and the FIPOI

The FIPOI (Building Foundation for International Organisations) works closely together with the federal government and the canton of Geneva to ensure that international organisations in Geneva are able to find suitable premises. To date, the FIPOI's activities have been limited to the territory of the canton of Geneva, but developments over the past few years have shown that Geneva's status as an ideal location for international organisations could be rendered even more attractive if the FIPOI were also able to act outside the canton's borders. The board of trustees, which comprises representatives from the federal government and the canton of Geneva, therefore approved a corresponding amendment to its statutes in November, with the blessing of the Federal Council. This means that the FIPOI is now able, in certain cases, to develop its activities on the territory of the canton of Vaud as well, in close cooperation with the relevant cantonal authorities.

In the year under review, the *Inter-Parliamentary Union* (IPU) moved into its new head office, which was financed through an interest-free loan by the federal government to the FIPOI. Construction work on the *Balexert administrative complex*, which the FIPOI built in its own name and at its own cost, was completed towards the end of the year. This complex serves as an expansion to International Environment House and is primarily intended for use by NGOs active in the area of environmental protection.

In its December session, the Council of States (second parliamentary chamber) approved an interest-free loan to the FIPOI amounting to 59.8 million Swiss francs for the purpose of constructing a new building for the *World Health Organisation* (WHO) and the *Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS* (UNAIDS). This means that the financing of the new office complex in the immediate vicinity of the WHO headquarters has now been secured. Construction is due to commence in spring 2004 and will take approximately two years.

The *World Trade Organisation* (WTO) carried out an international architecture competition in collaboration with the FIPOI, in which 149 competitors from 28 countries took part. In December, the WTO General Council selected a project based on the results of the competition. After completing an architectural study, including budget, the next step will be to apply to Parliament (probably in the first half of 2005) for an interest-free FIPOI loan to

finance the project (estimated financing requirement, 50 to 60 million Swiss francs).

The next major project within the scope of real estate policy concerns the construction of an additional building for the *World Conservation Union* (IUCN) in Gland, canton of Vaud. Subject to approval by the Federal Council and Parliament, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs wants to arrange for the IUCN – which is one of the most important environmental organisations in Geneva – to receive financial support in the form of an interest-free loan (as of approx. 2007, amounting to a maximum of 20 million Swiss francs). Following the extension of its area of activity, the FIPOI would be in the position to implement this project as well.

6 Candidacies and Swiss nationals serving in international organisations

6.1 Candidacies

Since becoming a full member of the UN, Switzerland has succeeded in strengthening its presence in a number of important internal bodies. Although we have suffered the occasional setback, e.g. with respect to the International Criminal Court, more than thirty Swiss candidacies have been successful in the course of the past two years.

In addition to the presidency mandates cited above in the respective sections by topic²¹, Daniel Keuerleber-Burk (director of MétéoSuisse) was elected to the executive council of the World Meteorological Organisation, which is based in Geneva and in which Switzerland has not been represented for more than thirty years. Switzerland was also elected to the executive council of UNESCO after an absence of more than six years, despite strong pressure from the USA, which was anxious to secure its own presence on the council. Within the UN as such, Switzerland was elected to the Information Committee, the Committee for Programme and Coordination, the Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and the administrative council of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law.

These successes were the result of Switzerland's new policy to plan its candidacies for functions within international organisations. This policy is defined with the aid of a database ("IO/UNO Vote" – formerly "DFA-IO Elect") that lists all candidacies (by country) for functions within the various international organisations. It significantly simplifies the decision-making process and exchange of votes (direct or indirect) by providing an overview of all requests for support received from other countries, as well as past, present and future candidacies.

²¹ 2003 presidency of executive board of UNICEF; 2004 presidency of the UN Commission on Social Development; presidency of the executive committee of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (2003-2004); presidency of the UN Mine Action Support Group (2004-2005); and presidency of the Open-ended working group for the identification and tracing of small arms and light weapons.

Switzerland was also able to benefit from its membership of the UN by gaining seats on a number of key institutions within the UN. In the coming two years, it will be focusing strongly on its candidacy for the UN Commission on Human Rights for the period from 2007 to 2009, which was submitted by the Federal Council in April 2003.

At the same time, and without endangering its candidacy for the UN Commission on Human Rights, Switzerland aims to become integrated into the rotation scheme of the Western European and Other States Group within the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). This would require an amendment of the current system of rotation among its members, to the detriment of certain countries. In its capacity as a member state of the UN, Switzerland can legitimately expect to be represented at regular intervals in its main institutions, including – over the longer term – the Security Council.

6.2 Swiss nationals serving in international organisations

Promoting the recruitment of Swiss personnel within international organisations has to remain a priority. This is especially important for UN organisations since, in the period under review, the number of recruited Swiss nationals is barely high enough to compensate for those resigning or retiring. Furthermore, newly occupied positions are often intended for those starting out on their career, and the responsibilities are therefore lower than those held by long-serving personnel.

Following Switzerland's accession to UN, Swiss nationals were invited to submit their applications for recruitment as junior administrators, positions reserved for nationals of countries that are under-represented in the UN Secretariat. During the 2002 and 2003 campaigns, approximately 600 young Swiss nationals submitted their candidacy papers, and 236 of them were subsequently selected to sit the relevant examinations. Switzerland's membership of the UN also gave rise to increased interest in the possibility of employment in international organisations. During 2002 and 2003 the relevant service of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) was invited to organise 48 conferences on this topic, mostly within Swiss universities. The DFA also financed a number of positions for junior professional officers within various institutions, funds and programmes of the UN.

1. Evolution of Switzerland's compulsory contributions to the UN, 2001 to 2003
2. Overview of Switzerland's contributions to the UN in 2002
3. Switzerland's contributions to international government organisations both within and outside the UN system in 2002
4. International Geneva – facts and figures
5. The Real Estate Foundation for International Organisations (FIPOI) – facts and figures
6. List of abbreviations

7.1 Evolution of Switzerland's compulsory contributions to the UN, 2001 to 2003

(in Swiss francs)

	2001	2002		2003
	As observer 1.1.-31.12.2001	Pro rata as observer	Pro rata as full member	As full member 1.1.-31.12.2003
1. Ordinary budget	6,522,504	5,570,392	6,189,325	25,800,897
- Annual contribution to "Capital Master Plan" fund				482,065
2. UN courts				
- International Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia			596,598	2,195,432
- International Tribunal for Rwanda			481,992	1,805,726
3. Peacekeeping operations			13,075,043	45,196,439
4. Contributions to funds for two-year budget period (2002-2003):				
- Operating resources			2,229,500	
- Reserve fund for peacekeeping operations			3,344,250	
Total	6,522,504	(5,570,392)	(25,916,708)	75,480,559
USD-CHF exchange rate				
2001 = 1.65				
2002 = 1.75				
2003 = 1.50				

The rate for contributions from Switzerland was 1.274% for the period from 2001 to 2003. For 2004, it was reduced to 1.197% in accordance with a resolution approved by the UN General Assembly.

7.2 Overview of Switzerland's contributions to the UN in 2002

(in Swiss francs)

1	Main UN system	
1.1	UN (cf. "Total" in Appendix 7.1)	31,487,100
1.2	Voluntary contributions to peacekeeping operations	7,926,555
1.3	Secondary bodies, institutions and commissions*	274,060,897
	Total for main UN system	313,474,552
2	Special organisations**	65 808 848
3	World Bank, International Monetary Fund (Bretton Woods) and associated institutions***	211 861 921
	Total 1+2+3	591 145 321

* In the areas of development aid, humanitarian aid, human rights, environment, research and education

** UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Telecommunications Union (ITU), International Maritime Organisation (IMO), UN Education, Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO), UN Industrial Development Organization (IDO), Universal Postal Union (UPU), World Health Organization (WHO), World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), World Meteorological Organisation (WMO)

*** International Development Association (IDA), International Financial Society (IFS), Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), Consultative Group on Agricultural Research (CGAR), World Environment Fund (WEF)

7.3 Switzerland's contributions to international governmental organisations both within *and* outside the UN system in 2002
(by area of activity)

Total, CHF 1.246 billion

International financial institutions	3%
Multilateral development co-operation	11%
Other	7%
Economy	6%
Security and humanitarian aid	14%
Science and technology	19%

7.4 “International Geneva” – facts and figures

Source: Swiss Mission to the Office of the UN and other international organisations in Geneva, and Statistics Office of the Canton of Geneva

International organisations in Switzerland with a domicile agreement (20 of which are based in Geneva)	23
Office of the United Nations in Geneva	1
UN specialised agencies Examples: World Health Organization (WHO), International Labour Organization (ILO), Universal Postal Union (UPU) (Berne)	7
International organisations outside the UN Examples: European Free Trade Association (EFTA), Bank for International Settlements (BIS) (Basel), European Centre for Nuclear Research (CERN), World Trade Organization (WTO)	15
International organisations domiciled in Switzerland with an agreement of a fiscal nature Examples: International Air Transport Association (IATA), World Anti-Doping Agency (European office in Lausanne), World Union for Nature Conservation (WUNC) (Gland, canton of Vaud)	5
Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)	
NGOs in Geneva with consultative status towards the UN	approx. 170
International sports federations and organisations in the canton of Vaud	approx. 30
Foreign countries and permanent missions	
Foreign countries represented in Geneva by a mission or agency towards the United Nations Office at Geneva, the WTO or the Conference on Disarmament	152
Permanent missions to the Office of the UN at Geneva (including Switzerland)	153
Permanent (separate) missions to the WTO (including Switzerland)	24
Permanent (separate) missions to the CD	15

Conferences, delegations and state visits (2001)	
Meetings and conferences of international organisations in Geneva	2,319
Meetings and conferences of international organisations in Switzerland	2,462
Delegates and experts attending meetings and conferences in Geneva	94,980
Delegates and experts attending meetings and conferences in Switzerland	101,305
Visits to Geneva by heads of state / government leaders, ministers and other dignitaries (approximate figure)	3,000
Financial figures (Swiss francs)	
Total annual budget of international organisations based in Geneva	approx. 8 billion
Contributions by Switzerland to international organisations based in Geneva	approx. 282 million
Expenditure by international organisations with domicile agreement (2001)	5.694 billion
Employment statistics (approximate figures)	
Jobs within international organisations (with domicile agreement) in Switzerland	25,000
International functionaries in Switzerland (holders of accreditation card issued by Swiss Mission)	18,000
Jobs within international organisations (with domicile agreement) in Geneva	23,000
International functionaries in Geneva (holders of accreditation card issued by Swiss Mission)	16,000
Jobs within missions, agencies and delegations	3,600
International community in Switzerland (including family members and household personnel)	35,000
Jobs within NGOs in Geneva	2,200
Estimated no. of jobs associated with "International Geneva"	14,000

More detailed information is available on the web sites of the Swiss Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other international organisations based in Geneva (http://www.eda.admin.ch/geneva_miss/f/home/numbe.html) and the Statistics Office of the canton of Geneva (www.geneve.ch/statistique).

7.5 Real Estate Foundation for International Organisations (FIPOI) – facts and figures

Source: FIPOI, Geneva

Balance of repayable loans to the Swiss Confederation (in Swiss francs) as of 31 December 2003	401,801,089
Buildings owned by the FIPOI	73,316,200
Buildings owned by international organisations	328,484,889
Building loans (interest-free, repayable within 50 years) in favour of international organisations in Geneva, issued by the Swiss Confederation to the FIPOI in 2003	5,955,000
Portion intended for new development project for the World Health Organization (WHO) and the joint UN HIV/AIDS Programme	2,475,000
Portion intended for construction of new headquarters of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)	1,980,000
Portion intended for extension project for World Trade Organization (WTO)	1,500,000
Loans repaid to the Swiss Confederation (amortisation) by the FIPOI and international organisations in 2003	10,362,800
Financial aid provided to the FIPOI by the Swiss Confederation in 2003	6,823,971
Deficit guarantee, International Geneva Conference Centre	5,191,560
Maintenance of William Rappard Centre (headquarters of World Trade Organisation)	924,411
Management and maintenance costs of William Rappard Centre conference hall	708,000
Conference activities of GICC	
Conferences organised by GICC	89
Participants at conferences	27,252
Conferences with 200 to 500 participants	74
Conferences with 500 to 1,000 participants	9
Conferences with more than 1,000 participants	6

For more detailed information please visit the FIPOI web site: <http://www.fipoi.ch>