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SWITZERLAND AND THE UN

The 2006 Report of the Federal Council

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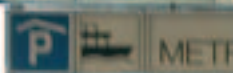
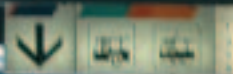
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19 JUNE - FIRST DAY



METRO



HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
Genève
de l'humanitaire
droits humains
OF THE FIRST SESSION



The new Human Rights Council started its work on 19 June 2006

SUMMARY

This report focuses on the outcome of the Millennium+5 Summit and follow-up measures since September 2005, and presents an overview of the issues and challenges relating to Switzerland's host country policy. It also examines the situation with respect to Switzerland's candidacies and personnel active within the UN system, and broadly outlines Switzerland's priorities for the 61st session of the UN General Assembly, starting from September 2006.

The Millennium+5 Summit reaffirmed the commitment of the international community to multilateral co-operation and to the system of collective security laid down in the UN Charter. At this Summit, the heads of state and government took some important decisions for the ongoing UN reform process in that they approved the creation of new institutions such as the UN Peacebuilding Commission and the UN Human Rights Council. The decisions of the Millennium+5 Summit are being resolutely implemented and the reform efforts are being actively pursued, and Switzerland is strongly supporting efforts in both these areas.

The creation of the Human Rights Council, which resulted from a diplomatic initiative launched by Switzerland, was formally approved by resolution of the General Assembly on 15 March 2006. This important new institution will have its seat in Geneva. After a highly active campaign, on 9 May 2006 Switzerland was elected to the Human Rights Council by the UN General Assembly for a term of office of three years. This is Switzerland's greatest success with regard to candidacies since becoming a member of the UN. It means that Switzerland will now be able to contribute towards defining the working methods and programme of the Human Rights Council. The Federal Council also wants to ensure that suitable working conditions will be offered to personnel of the

Human Rights Council in keeping with the principles of our host country policy.

In view of the shortcomings that were revealed in connection with the affair surrounding the 'Oil for Food' programme, the need for improvement within the UN administration and its internal supervisory bodies is becoming an increasingly urgent priority in Switzerland's view. Switzerland has traditionally shown a strong commitment in this area, and is anxious to ensure that the resolved measures lead to concrete and tangible results.

With respect to the adopted measures to strengthen the UN, special attention now has to be paid to improving the efficiency of operational activities of the UN in the field, as well as institutional coherence in the areas of development, protection of the environment and humanitarian issues. Switzerland will be actively participating in the various related efforts, and will continue to support them in the form of specific measures.

Switzerland will also contribute towards the implementation of the international agenda in the area of sustainable development. It will attend the 2006 High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS that will be held in New York from 31 May to 2 June,

and will also participate in the high-level dialogue on migration issues that will be held on 14/15 September 2006 in parallel with the 61st session of the General Assembly.

The draft law on the host country policy which the Federal Council has submitted for consultation contains a range of instruments that will enable Switzerland to deal with the various challenges that arise in association with the presence of international organisations within our sovereign territory. In collaboration with the various relevant partners, the Federal Council is determined to pursue a host country policy that enables Switzerland to act in its capacity as host country to international organisations in a dynamic and credible manner, since this status promotes the positive image of our country throughout the world.

Since its accession to the UN, Switzerland has set out to safeguard its own interests by actively supporting Swiss candidacies in governing bodies within the UN system, as well as for the presence of Swiss personnel within international organisations. The Federal Council will be continuing to develop such a policy, with the aim to encourage candidacies by providing more detailed information concerning existing career opportunities and ways in which the chances of success can be improved.

INTRODUCTION

The Federal Council has been paying special attention to our active participation in the United Nations ever since Switzerland joined this organisation on 10 September 2002. The Federal Council's aim is to ensure that Switzerland's interests and positions are adequately safeguarded and effectively promoted within this global forum for multilateral negotiation and co-operation, and for this reason it is actively supporting the institutional reform of the UN.

In its report dated 18 May 2005 on Switzerland's relationship with the United Nations and with international organisations based in Switzerland¹, the Federal Council outlined Switzerland's main positions relating to the reform of the UN. It also defined Switzerland's position for the High Level Plenary Meeting of the 60th UN General Assembly in New York² in the areas of human security, promotion of rule of law, democracy and human rights, the struggle against poverty, the preservation of natural resources and the implementation of UN reforms. The Federal Council underscored its determination to continue to promote the international role of the city of Geneva, since it makes a valuable contribution towards the enhancement of Switzerland's international image.

The preparation and organisation of the M+5 Summit mobilised numerous players who contributed to the activities within their own particular areas. At their meetings held on 22 August 2005 in Schaffhausen and 29 August 2005 in Fribourg, the Foreign Affairs Committees of the National Council and the Council of States examined the status of preparations for the Summit. Both Councils then dealt with this topic in depth: the Council of States on 26 September 2005, and the National Council on 29 September 2005. The President of the National Council,

¹ Swiss Federal Gazette 2005, 3903.

² Since this summit took place five years after the Millennium Summit held in September 2000, it is normally referred to as the 'Millennium+5 Summit' or 'M+5 Summit'. For the sake of convenience, we have used the designation 'M+5 Summit' throughout this report.

³ Here the Federal Council was represented by President of the Swiss Confederation Samuel Schmid and by the head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Micheline Calmy-Rey, who were joined at the working dinner by the head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Joseph Deiss.

Thérèse Meyer, and the Vice-President of the Council of States, Peter Bieri, attended the Second World Conference of Speakers of Parliament which was organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and held at the UN headquarters in New York from 7 to 9 September 2005, and was attended by approximately 150 speakers of national parliaments.

On the occasion of an official visit to Bern by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, on 7 October 2005, representatives of the Federal Council³ and Parliament⁴ reviewed with him the results of the Summit and identified the next stages in the implementation of its decisions.

As far as civil society is concerned, the Swiss–United Nations Association organised the Swiss Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations for the UN on 30 June 2005. This took the form of a platform for an exchange of ideas with representatives of the federal administration concerning Switzerland's relations with the United Nations. At the same time it offered NGOs the opportunity to inform the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) about their views concerning the next session of the General Assembly. The publication of a brochure by the Swiss Evangelical Church Alliance that contains proposals for sup-

porting the UN reform process⁵ is another example of the commitment on the part of civil society. On the initiative of the President of the General Assembly, an interactive hearing was held in New York on 23/24 June 2005 which offered the invited NGOs an opportunity to comment on the four main chapters of the report by the Secretary-General entitled 'In larger freedom'⁶.

In view of subsequent developments and the importance of the topic, in the current report the Federal Council focuses on the outcome of the M+5 Summit and measures that have been taken since September 2005. Other areas of focus include an updated presentation of issues and challenges relating to Switzerland's host country policy, the situation with respect to Swiss candidacies within the UN system, the positions that Switzerland intends to defend in the continuation of the 60th session of the UN General Assembly, and Switzerland's priorities for the 61st session of the General Assembly which opens in September 2006.

⁴ Parliament was represented at the working dinner by Erwin Jutzet, President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council. Peter Briner, President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Council of States, was unable to attend.

⁵ Hella Hoppe & Christoph Stückelberger (2005), 'Reforms for Strengthening the United Nations : Orientations and Proposals of the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches', April 2005. ISBN 3-7229-6016-9.

⁶ Report by the UN Secretary-General dated 21 March 2005, 'In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all' (A/59/2005).





The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva organised an open doors day on 18 June 2006

M+5 SUMMIT: ASSESSMENT AND FOLLOW-UP MEASURES

Five years after the Millennium Summit, the UN member states agreed to assess progress on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and take important decisions on the proposed UN reforms at a high-level plenary meeting in New York from 14 to 16 September 2005, at which the heads of state and government approved an Outcome document that records the current status of international co-operation and defines the next steps to be taken in the reform process.

In its 2005 report, the Federal Council described the status of preparations for the Summit as of 18 May 2005, i.e. the time of acceptance of the report. This chapter presents an overview of the main developments since that date.

STAGES OF PREPARATION FOR THE M+5 SUMMIT

In 2005, the institutional reforms of the UN were the centre of focus, and it was also the year in which the UN celebrated its 60th anniversary on the occasion of the M+5 Summit. The reform process was initiated following the submission of the report by the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change on 2 December 2004⁷, and was continued after the release in January 2005 of the 'Sachs Report'⁸ on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The next major stage commenced with the release of the report 'In larger freedom' by the UN Secretary-General on 21 March 2005.

Intensive consultations took place between the time at which the Secretary-General's report was presented and the M+5 Summit. This process was co-ordinated by Jean Ping, President of the 59th session of the UN General Assembly and foreign minister of Gabon, together with a number of moderators entrusted by Jean Ping with the task of promoting consensus among member states in the four areas referred to by the Secretary-General in his report: development (freedom from want), peace and security (freedom from fear), human rights (freedom to live in dignity) and strengthening the United Nations (institutional reforms).

During this period, in which activities had to be carried out under enormous time pressure, member states submitted their proposals and statements of position as requested within the scope of the consultation process guided by the various monitors. In summer 2005, the President of the General Assembly submitted the first draft of the final document intended for approval by the heads of state and government at the M+5 Summit.

In the course of the summer, the reform process took on the more traditional form of inter-governmental consultation, within the scope of which the member states formally declared whether they were for or against the proposed wording. During the run-up to this stage it had primarily been those countries that favoured the changes and fundamental reforms that were in the majority, but now more and

⁷ A/59/565.

⁸ UN Millennium Project 2005. *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*. New York. [This report is not an official UN document.]

more countries came to the fore that expressed scepticism about the reforms.

During this stage we also witnessed more resolute action by the major powers, in particular the USA and China. On the occasion of the assumption of office of its new permanent representative at the United Nations, the USA presented a lengthy list of proposed changes to the final document. China launched a strong campaign in which it rejected the proposal put forward by Japan, Germany, India and Brazil to expand the Security Council.

M+5 Summit and its most important results

More than 170 heads of state and government attended the Millennium+5 Summit which was held from 14 to 16 September 2005 in New York. Switzerland was represented by the President of the Confederation, Samuel Schmid. In addition to the plenary meeting, a high-level conference was held on the topic of development financing, and a ceremony took place to mark the signing of international treaties, including the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which was signed by the President of the Confederation. On the same day, the Security Council convened a special meeting on the topic of terrorism at the request of the UK and Russia.

The most important result of the summit was the formal approval of the Outcome document⁹ by the heads of state and government on 16 September 2005. This

result was achieved when a compromise was reached among the member states following a marathon round of negotiations, and is the result of common efforts to find wording that reflects the agreement of the broadest possible range of countries on the framework for international development aid as well as on institutional reform of the UN.

The Outcome document expresses the readiness of the UN member states to work together, and confirms the role of the UN and importance the international community attaches to multilateralism and international law. In line with the proposal of the Secretary-General, the member states underscored the interdependence of development, security and respect for human rights, thus giving high priority to these among the objectives of multilateral co-operation.

At the same time, this document also makes it clear that the member states do not find it easy to overcome the mistrust that arose due to the differences concerning the Iraq crisis in 2003. This especially applies to the chapter on peace and collective security. The section on disarmament and non-proliferation was deleted altogether because it was not possible to reach agreement. In the structure of the final document of the World Summit, the objective of sustainability is subordinate to that of development, which may be interpreted as a step backwards versus the results achieved at the 1992 and 2002 UN summits on sustainable development.

Nonetheless, Switzerland generally regards the document as satisfactory, since it contains a number of decisions and clauses that meet its expectations. For example it defines a framework for the creation of new bodies such as the Human Rights Council – which can be traced back to a diplomatic initiative launched by Switzerland – and the UN Peacebuilding Commission. At the same time, it calls for an intensification of consultation that will be required for establishing firm foundations for the new institutions. The document does not contain any points that Switzerland might find problematic.

The document is also satisfactory from the point of view of issues for which Switzerland actively campaigned in the run-up to the summit, and for which the final version defines methods for follow-up activities after the summit (e.g. in the case of improvement of working methods of the Security Council).

In some points the document does not go as far as Switzerland had hoped. Nonetheless, it represents significant progress as well as a general readiness to hold discussions and debates. In many cases it specifies schedules and deadlines. In this respect, the results of the summit met the expectations formulated by the Federal Council in its 2005 report on Switzerland and the UN, in which it stated that it was aware of the uncertain outcome of current discussions. The Federal Council also emphasised that Switzerland will strive to promote a positive

⁹ A/RES/60/1.

outcome of the process, and ensure that a timetable is defined for areas in which consensus was unlikely to be reached in the immediate future.

To summarise, the document makes it clear how difficult it is for the international community to agree on common action. The UN member states are still a long way from giving common objectives precedence over their own interests, even though there is undoubtedly a desire to work together to bring about improvements. Although some progress was achieved in September 2005, due to the many differences of opinion among the member states, the summit was merely another step in a lengthy and complex process that is still ongoing and will continue in 2006. Many of the decisions outlined at the summit required subsequent deliberation, and the associated discussions have led to varying results to date.

Results of the summit as a mirror of international relations

Debates in the UN provide an idea of the status of international relations. It appears as though member states have come to terms with the crisis caused by the military intervention in Iraq, but they still have difficulty in coming to a true understanding. Activities in New York are primarily characterised by the following factors: the demands placed on the UN by the USA and the scepticism the latter displays towards the former, the growing rivalry between Washington and an increasingly self-confident China,

the roles now being played by new major powers such as Japan and India, both of which feel they do not have sufficient say, the increasing influence of the EU and the positions of nations like Egypt, Pakistan and Cuba, which frequently act as strict defenders of the Third World.

In such a complex environment within a large-scale organisation like the UN that cultivates consensus, it is not at all surprising that reaching agreement even on minor issues can be a lengthy and complex process. The fact that the efforts to expand the Security Council – the key element of a far-reaching institutional reform – failed was a setback for the entire reform process. The results achieved at the end of 2005 were only possible thanks to some rather unconvincing compromises in certain areas, for example the pre-eminence of the Security Council in the UN Peacebuilding Commission. They also gave rise to growing frustration. The impression among the countries of the South is that the major donors dominated the UN, while the majority of member states feel that the permanent members of the Security Council sometimes display a certain degree of arrogance.

In addition to inter-governmental tensions, increasingly difficult problems also became apparent within the UN itself: a Secretary-General who will soon be stepping down and has been weakened by the scandal surrounding the 'Oil for Food' programme, a strong President of the General Assembly who is endeavoring to bridge the power vacuum as far as possible, and signs of a constitutional crisis between the General Assembly and the Security Council.

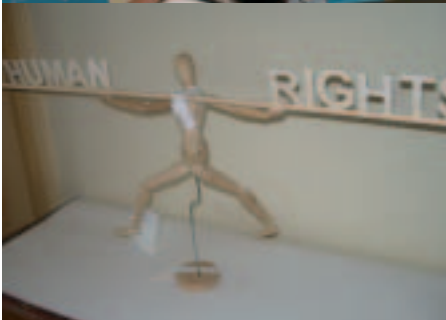
Even though there are grounds for believing that a certain degree of progress can still be made in the reform process, we cannot rule out the occurrence of other crises, and it is also likely to become more difficult to reach compromises. The selection process and subsequent election of a new Secretary-General by the General Assembly at the beginning of its 61st session is therefore likely to represent a major challenge for the UN.

The Federal Council will be keeping a close eye on how the situation develops in order to ensure that the commitment of member states to the operational dimension of the UN does not over the long term go hand in hand with a weakening of the role of the latter as a forum for negotiations and the continued development of international law – a function that calls for a readiness on the part of member states to compromise. For Switzerland these are real challenges.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISIONS OF THE M+5 SUMMIT AND CONTINUATION OF THE UN REFORMS

The President of the 60th session of the General Assembly, Jan Eliasson, initiated a variety of ambitious follow-up measures to the summit already in the autumn of 2005, all of which concern issues that



Impressions of the open doors day organised by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on 18 June 2006, at the Palais Wilson in Geneva

were discussed in the run-up to the Summit, but were not adequately solved in the Outcome document and were therefore earmarked for further attention. This section deals with the most important developments concerning these issues that took place during the 60th session of the General Assembly.

In its contributions to activities during this stage, Switzerland focused on priorities that had been defined by the Federal Council for the 60th General Assembly, namely matters relating to human rights and the creation of a Human Rights Council, improvement of the working methods of the Security Council, the establishment of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, and improvement of the administration and internal management of the UN Secretariat. Switzerland paid special attention to the streamlining of the operational capacities of the UN and to the improvement of institutional coherence in the areas of development, environmental protection and humanitarian assistance.

Peace and collective security: Confirmation of the principles of collective security

In response to the growing threat of terrorism and the continuing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, for a number of years now the international community has been debating whether the system of collective security laid down in the UN Charter still serves its intended purpose.

In his report dated 21 March 2005 ('In larger freedom'), the UN Secretary-General recommended a more comprehensive concept of international security that takes account of all types of threats as well as their interconnections. This type of security concept covers not only armed conflicts, terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, but also other problems such as poverty, HIV/AIDS and the destruction of the environment, especially climate change. The Secretary-General put forward a broad variety of proposals for reinforcing joint efforts in the area of collective security.

At the M+5 Summit in the middle of September 2005, the heads of state and government of UN member states approved the Secretary-General's more comprehensive security concept, and underscored the importance of multilateral action. In the final document of the summit the heads of state and government reaffirmed the collective security system anchored in the UN Charter, and declared that it was adequate and sufficiently flexible to respond to the entire range of current threats and challenges. The member states thus confirmed the prohibition of the use of force (other than for the purpose of self-defence), the prime responsibility of the Security Council for the preservation of world peace and international security, and its powers to impose coercive measures. The Federal Council attaches special importance to the fact that the member states underscored the necessity to comply with international

law and found that an amendment to the provision relating to the use of force for the purpose of self-defence was neither necessary nor useful. Thus, the UN member states rejected the introduction of an option that would lead to an increase in unilateral military pre-emptive strikes and destabilise the system of collective security laid down in the UN Charter.

The responsibility to protect

Over the past few years the international community has been discussing how to respond to occurrences of genocide, crimes against humanity and grave violations of human rights. The failure to take action against crimes committed in former Yugoslavia and Rwanda was heavily criticised¹⁰. There is no consensus concerning either the means that can be deployed to combat such crimes or the suitability and lawfulness of foreign military intervention.

At the M+5 Summit, the UN member states approved the principle of the responsibility to protect¹¹ and defined the main criteria for minimum consensus in this issue. They went on to emphasise the duty of every state to protect its population against genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. At the same time they underscored the need for the international community to intervene through the UN and with the use of all suitable means – including collective military action as a last resort – in cases in which a state fails to meet this obligation.

The recognition of the term ‘responsibility to protect’ by the UN member states is undoubtedly a positive step for international law and the protection of human rights. But it is essential to ensure that this concept cannot be used as a pretext for unilateral military intervention. If a member state fails to meet its obligation to protect, the international community has to intervene, but the action concerned must be within a clearly defined framework, namely the provisions of the UN Charter. Furthermore it is important to define criterias to determine in which cases an intervention by the international community is necessary and which form it should take.

In this context it should be noted that, in their initiative relating to the working methods of the Security Council, Switzerland and a number of partner states called on the permanent members of the Security Council not to exercise their veto right in resolutions concerning collective action in response to genocide, crimes against humanity and grave violations of international humanitarian law¹².

UN peace operations

In the present-day environment of risks and threats, UN peace operations are a central instrument for conflict transformation and the resolution of crises. They frequently form a fundamental prerequisite for the reconstruction of a conflict region. In comparison with the peacekeeping operations carried out during the Cold War, today’s peace opera-

tions cover a broader range of activities with both military and civilian elements, place a stronger emphasis on conflict transformation and prevention, are often entrusted with a more robust mandate (including the use of force if necessary to fulfil it), and are active during various stages of conflict transformation. On top of this, attempts are increasingly being made to launch so-called integrated missions that combine civilian and military resources and activities and can be deployed coherently in political, military and humanitarian areas as well as in areas of relevance to development.

The UN currently operates and manages 9 country-specific sanctions regimes, 15 peacekeeping operations and 11 political or peacebuilding missions. More than 85,000 people are currently deployed in missions entrusted by the Security Council with often widely differing mandates. It is increasingly integrating all aspects of efforts to find peace into its mandates, including conventional peacekeeping activities with the aid of military and police forces, conflict prevention and, more and more often, peacebuilding. These complex, multidimensional missions are often active in areas such as promotion of human rights, demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration of former combatants, security sector reforms, promotion of rule of law and the organisation of elections.

The scope and complexity of this enterprise are clearly illustrated by the fact

¹⁰ Two reports (A/54/594 and S/1999/1257) by independent investigatory committees established by the Secretary-General examined the causes of this failure in order to clarify the events that took place in Srebrenica and Rwanda.

¹¹ The term ‘responsibility to protect’ has been the subject of lively debate for a number of years. For further information, please refer to the report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (December 2001). This Commission was established at Canada’s initiative, and the former President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Cornelio Sommaruga, was among its members.

¹² For further details, please refer to page 28.

that the UN now tends to incorporate its various activities in this area under the heading of 'peace operations', and that the term 'integrated missions' has since become firmly established. This concept has already been implemented on a number of occasions. The model concerned describes the way in which the UN carries out and manages these complex operations by defining qualitative aspects of the improved co-operation and co-ordination of all involved players.

The UN has far more experience than any other organisation when it comes to organising complex missions, and is undoubtedly a central player in this area. Over the past few years it has also invested a great deal of time and effort in adapting its international peacebuilding instruments to the new challenges and co-ordinating them more effectively and coherently with regional organisations in order to approach the enormous challenges together with other players.

At the M+5 Summit, the heads of state and government acknowledged that, in view of the complexity of such missions, the UN needs to have the necessary means and capabilities at its disposal to effectively fulfil the mandates with which it is entrusted. It is also essential to ensure the safety of its personnel and troops in the field. It was therefore decided to establish rapidly deployable capacities that could be mobilised to support UN personnel already in the field in the event of a crisis. Furthermore, it was decided

to create a standing police capacity that could rapidly respond to the need for additional staff of the police component of peace operations in the early phases. These proposals are being negotiated in detail within the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, in which Switzerland also holds a seat. Switzerland is in favour of the creation of a standing police capacity and will put forward suitable personnel as candidates.

Disciplinary offences such as sexual harassment and exploitation of women and children committed by personnel within UN missions must be fully investigated and the offenders must be punished. Numerous recommendations were approved last year. With the call for standardised training of UN personnel in the field and the formulation of a code of conduct, significant steps were taken to eliminate the causes of such offences and intensify co-operation with the country of origin of members of UN missions suspected of committing them.

Switzerland is one of the biggest contributors of funds for UN peace operations. The amount of the assessed contribution towards the budget for peace operations primarily depends on the number of operations and involved personnel, both of which are subject to considerable fluctuations. It also depends on the normal calculation procedure within the UN, which gives rise to variable amounts within a 3-year cycle. During the first full 3-year cycle following Switzerland's ac-

cession to the UN (i.e. 2004 to 2006), the total amount for peace operations was 187 million Swiss francs¹³, or an annual average of 62.3 million.

In 2005, the Swiss Expert Pool for Civilian Peacebuilding deployed 42 people for peace operations, including 11 police officers (mainly in the Balkans), plus experts in the areas of human rights, transitional justice and political analysis. Most of the involved personnel worked in missions in the field or at UN agencies that support peace operations. The Swiss Expert Pool offers special training for personnel who are deployed abroad, focusing on the topic of civilian peacebuilding. 17 Swiss military observers are also currently involved in UN missions.

UN Peacebuilding Commission

The creation of the UN Peacebuilding Commission on 20 December 2005 was one of the first direct results of the M+5 Summit. This Commission is part of a new peacebuilding structure that includes a Peacebuilding Support Office and a Peacebuilding Support Fund. While the Commission is attached to the Security Council and the General Assembly, the other two entities report to the Secretary-General.

The UN Peacebuilding Commission is an advisory body entrusted with the task of bringing together all involved players to support the development of integrated strategies for peacebuilding and restoration activities in a country after the end

¹³ Further details, see Appendix.

of a conflict. The main objective of these strategies is to improve the degree of co-operation and co-ordination between all involved players both within the UN and externally. During the negotiations, Switzerland's position was that the new Commission should not be exclusively answerable to the Security Council, but should have a broader base and be an advisory body to both the latter and the Economic and Social Council. Furthermore, Switzerland's view was that all relevant organisations, funds and programmes should be actively involved in the formulation of strategies, including non-governmental organisations and academic institutions. In addition, in a communiqué to the President of the General Assembly, the informal group of women foreign ministers strongly urged that the inclusion of the gender perspective and consultation with women's organisations should be expressly cited in the resolution. Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey also signed this document.

After protracted and difficult negotiations, the General Assembly approved a resolution on 20 December 2005 that defines the criteria for the composition of the new Commission and its range of duties. Switzerland welcomed this move. The modalities of the UN Peacebuilding Commission was a significant milestone, and it provided fresh impetus for the implementation of other resolutions relating to the reform process. Nonetheless, Switzerland joined numerous other member states in submitting a declaration in which they

object to the insufficiently representative composition of the Commission and the unduly strong influence accorded to the Security Council. The resolution primarily places the Commission at the service of the Security Council, requiring it to consult on situations with which the latter is currently dealing.

The organisation committee of the new Commission comprises a total of 31 members: 7 from the Security Council, 7 from the Economic and Social Council, 5 from the 10 most important troop contributors, and 5 from the 10 biggest financial contributors to the UN. For the final category, the General Assembly elected 7 members from its own ranks. Depending on the issues at hand, representatives of involved countries and regions will belong to the Commission, together with representatives of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. In a separate resolution, the Security Council decided that its permanent members are also to have a permanent seat on the UN Peacebuilding Commission.

In May 2006, the members of the UN General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council reached agreement on the distribution of seats on the organisation committee of the Commission in the respective categories. In view of the defined criteria, Switzerland does not have the possibility of becoming a member of the Commission in 2006. Although our country is among the largest contributors towards the activities of the UN, it

is not one of the top ten. We will therefore campaign all the more vigorously for the creation of working methods that also enable those countries that are not members of the Peacebuilding Commission, but which make major contributions in the area of international peacebuilding, to co-determine its activities. Switzerland therefore welcomes the fact that the Commission will be constituted and commence operation in the near future.

Disarmament

In the year under review, very little progress was achieved in the area of disarmament, and instead we witnessed a hardening of positions. Constructive multilateral efforts were hampered, if not obstructed altogether, by overriding national interests. The NPT Review Conference (Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons), held in May 2005 in New York, closed without achieving any substantial results. At a time when the non-proliferation regime is being confronted by major challenges, the NPT Review Conference was characterised by disputes right through to the end, and thus concluded without reaching an agreement. Since the differences were still impossible to overcome in September 2005, the disarmament chapter was deleted from the Outcome document of the Millennium+5 Summit.

Despite these negative developments, Switzerland was able to note some success in what it regards as an important area. In June 2005, a representative

group of states under the leadership of Switzerland agreed on an international instrument for identifying and tracing illegal small arms and light weapons, after a two-year period of negotiation. A broad definition for these weapons categories was approved, as was a catalogue of international standards for their marking and registration. The new instrument also regulates international co-operation between states, as well as with the UN and Interpol. The Federal Council appointed an interdepartmental workgroup and entrusted it with the task of clarifying the necessary amendments to Swiss legislation and drawing up proposals concerning the next steps to be taken.

As a result of Switzerland's efforts, which included representing the issue to the General Assembly, in December 2005 the latter approved the proposed new instrument for identifying and tracing small arms and light weapons. This move was all the more remarkable in that, for the first time, a definition of the term 'small arms and light weapons' was approved that was acceptable to all UN member states.

At the UN Review Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons, which will be held in New York from 26 June to 7 July 2006, Switzerland wants to ensure that the action programme is both strengthened and expanded. This includes the approval of internationally binding criteria for the export and trade in small arms and light weapons, dealing with the top-

ic of misuse of firearms and integrating projects aimed at controlling small arms into development programmes.

During the second year of its presidency of the Mine Action Support Group, Switzerland was able to intensify the activities it had initiated in 2004. Its programme of sensitising the missions in New York to the various dimensions of the problems associated with landmines was interesting and successful, and a great deal of interest was displayed in the correlation between the landmines problem and development co-operation and peacebuilding processes. The presidency of this group is to be assumed by the USA, the largest financial contributor.

During the Sixth Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (Biological Weapons Convention), which will be held in Geneva from 20 November to 8 December 2006, Switzerland intends to campaign for a strengthening of the Convention. Its proposals include holding an annual conference, which would simplify the task of monitoring the implementation of the Convention, and keeping a closer eye on developments in this area. Due to the lack of a legally binding verification tool, Switzerland wants to focus on voluntary measures aimed at building up trust, and on the implementation of the Convention at the national level. For this purpose it supports the creation of a

secretariat that will be able to help States Parties meet the obligations that arise in association with the implementation of the Convention, as well as to promote the Convention and thus help it become more effective.

The fight against terrorism

The fight against terrorism has become a major area of activity for the UN, especially since the attacks of 11 September 2001. Thanks to the adoption of a variety of resolutions and the deployment of various specialised committees, the Security Council has succeeded in creating a range of political and legal instruments that oblige member states to actively participate in the fight against terrorism.

A total of 13 sectoral anti-terrorism conventions have been drawn up since 1963, the most recent of which – the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism – was signed by Switzerland on 14 September 2005 in the margin of the M+5 Summit.

As before, one of the actions that the UN has found especially difficult in its efforts to combat terrorism concerns the formulation of a general convention on international terrorism that would complement the existing range of legal instruments resulting from the 13 sectoral conventions and contain a definition of terrorism that is acceptable to all member states. The final document of the M+5 Summit calls on all member states to agree on a solution before the end of the 60th session

of the UN General Assembly. Switzerland is actively supporting the discussions that are currently in progress to find an acceptable solution.

Another issue still to be resolved concerns the question whether a body attached to the Security Council – namely the Counter-Terrorism Committee – should continue to bear the main responsibility for combating terrorism. In this connection, Switzerland welcomes the fact that, in the Outcome document to the M+5 Summit, the members states entrusted the General Assembly with the task of formulating an overall strategy for combating terrorism, and it will follow the debate in the General Assembly, which will be based on proposals put forward by the Secretary-General, with a great deal of interest. This debate will provide all member states with an opportunity to participate more actively in the struggle against terrorism. Switzerland has repeatedly spoken in favour of the creation of a central counter-terrorism authority that would report directly to the Secretary-General and which in the medium term would assume the main responsibility for the fight against terrorism within the UN¹⁴.

Development co-operation, preservation of natural resources and humanitarian aid

The M+5 Summit held in September 2005 was also of special importance from the point of view of development co-operation, since this was the first opportunity for carrying out an assessment at the

highest level concerning the degree of achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and deciding on any adjustments that may be required. Switzerland, too, provided information about its efforts in support of the Millennium Development Goals (cf. Federal Council: 'Millennium Development Goals – Progress Report by Switzerland, 2005'). In his summary of the status of the Millennium Development Goals, Kofi Annan stated that, since the beginning of the 1990s, the world has made notable progress in combating poverty, but that the degree of progress with respect to the individual objectives differs considerably from region to region and in terms of areas of focus. If the current trends persist until 2015, the world will only be able to achieve the declared goals to a limited extent.

This summary gave rise to high expectations for the M+5 Summit. In view of the widespread poverty in many parts of the world, many participants at the Summit expressed the hope that the member states would agree on entering into courageous and new commitments in the struggle against poverty. Others – and not least Kofi Annan – emphasised the necessity to first transform existing commitments into deeds. Many of the measures proposed by the Secretary-General in his report, 'In larger freedom', are aimed at achieving the more efficient and speedy implementation of commitments entered into by both developing countries and industrialised nations.

Against this backdrop and as a result of the 'Make Poverty History' campaign led by non-governmental organisations active in the area of development co-operation together with comprehensive media coverage, the Summit was to some extent perceived by the general public as an event focusing primarily on development aid.

At the Summit, the heads of state and government from industrialised nations were confronted with especially high expectations regarding development financing – an area in which the developed countries entered into certain commitments regarding the development partnership between industrialised and developing countries at the Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey in 2002. In the run-up to the Summit, these expectations gave rise to various initiatives on the part of donor nations that were also reflected in the Outcome document. These include announcements by various governments that they will substantially increase their contributions to development aid, initiatives aimed at exploiting 'innovative financing sources', and the multilateral initiative to further reduce debt in developing countries launched by the G8 states at the Gleneagles Summit from 6 to 8 July 2005.

The Federal Council is pleased to note that the principles agreed between countries of the North and the South at the UN Conference on Financing for Development ('Monterrey Consensus') were confirmed

¹⁴ Switzerland has supported various resolutions within the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights aimed at promoting the fight against terrorism and the protection of human rights. It has also campaigned for the appointment of a special rapporteur in this area (Commission on Human Rights, Resolution 2005/80).

in the Outcome document to the M+5 Summit. In his address to the Summit, the President of the Swiss Confederation emphasised that the aid Switzerland had been providing developing countries – and above all, the poorest countries, especially in Africa – for almost 30 years was of high quality and provided in close co-operation with the recipients. He called for better co-ordination of players in the area of international aid, and pointed out that Switzerland's official development assistance has been constantly increasing since the Monterrey Conference, and has now reached the level it promised at that time. He also reported that our country's level of official development assistance has reached 0.44 percent of gross domestic product¹⁵, which means that Switzerland now ranks 11th of the 22 OECD donor nations, and that development aid is one of the few budget positions that will continue to grow over the next few years: an 8 percent increase has been budgeted for the period from 2005 to 2008. The President of the Confederation went on to confirm that Switzerland will continue to increase its official development assistance budget after 2008 in order to increase its contribution to international efforts in the area of development aid. He concluded his address by expressing Switzerland's readiness to closely examine the various initiatives for exploiting 'innovative financing sources' for development aid.

In July 2005, the G8 states agreed on an initiative to further reduce debt in developing countries as a contribution towards

the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. This initiative was subsequently named 'International Debt Relief Initiative', and was approved by all members of the Bretton Woods institutions. It called for the debts owed by qualifying countries to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development to be cancelled in their entirety. The financing of this initiative for the International Monetary Fund was agreed at a meeting held on 23 November 2005. Switzerland will not have to pay additional contributions at the present time.

By contrast with the International Monetary Fund, the financing of the debt relief initiative for the World Bank and the African Development Bank is to be covered exclusively through contributions from member states. Switzerland has not yet specified its own financial involvement.

It was not possible for the current round of world trade negotiations within the scope of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to be concluded as hoped at the seventh World Trade Conference in Hong Kong in mid-December 2005. Contrary to fears expressed in the run-up to the conference, however, the negotiations did not break down. One resolution passed in Hong Kong was of importance as far as development aid is concerned, namely that industrialised nations are to open up their markets from 2008 to the poorest developing countries, and in almost all areas (97 percent) exempt them from duties and quotas.

The Federal Council is of the opinion that both the modest but nonetheless real advances made in the Doha Round of world trade negotiations and the new multilateral debt relief initiative represent welcome progress. They demonstrate the seriousness with which the international community is endeavouring to find ways and means of reaching the Millennium Development Goals. By joining the consensus in approving the Outcome document to the M+5 Summit, Switzerland has confirmed its willingness to contribute towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Initiatives and instruments in the area of development

As noted above, no progress in terms of standards or programmes was sought or achieved at the M+5 Summit in thematic areas. The chapter of the Outcome document dealing with development policy primarily summarises previously agreed goals. Switzerland welcomes the express and universal recognition of the Millennium Development Goals and the resolution to use strategies and resources in such a manner as to ensure that the defined objectives can be reached by 2015. In addition, Switzerland appreciates the positive references to reproductive health, gender equality, empowerment of women and the increasingly acknowledged correlation between migration and development. It welcomes the immediate support that the member states have assured for the initiatives to combat malaria and promote education

¹⁵ Figures for 2005 are based on the new calculation method for official development assistance. In his address, the President of the Swiss Confederation cited the figures for 2004 (0.41% of GDP for official development assistance, Switzerland among the top 10 donors in the OECD).

and health, and also regards the stress given to the importance of responsible corporate practices (as advocated in the 'Global Compact') and the role of information and communication technologies in the area of development, as positive elements.

Some of the resolutions cited in the Outcome document of the Summit can be directly implemented by the member states. For example, developing countries are required to formulate national development strategies by the end of 2006, by means of which the Millennium Development Goals can be achieved. The donor nations have agreed to support 'quick-win actions', e.g. the distribution of mosquito nets treated with insecticides as a means of combating malaria. In both these cases, the degree of implementation depends largely on the political will in each member state.

A large number of decisions in the Outcome document relating to the combat against poverty and to sustainable development are formulated in a rather general manner. The form and time of implementation will have to be specified within the scope of the operational activities of the UN or through detailed negotiations within ongoing processes. These resolutions include a self-commitment on the part of member states to make the goal of productive full employment and dignified employment for everyone, especially for women and young persons, a central objective of relevant domestic and in-

ternational policies and national development strategies, most notably those aimed at combating poverty. The authority of the Outcome document also gives general formulations of this sort a certain amount of ethical weight. For negotiations on specific topics at the 60th session of the General Assembly, they were regarded as a widely accepted basis for the formulation of resolutions. Finally, the implementation of other proposals and recommendations in the chapter on development policy is primarily the responsibility of organisations outside the UN system, e.g. the World Trade Organisation and Bretton-Woods institutions.

In the area of activities within the UN relating to development, there are five themes that Switzerland regards as especially important: the struggle against HIV/AIDS; migration and development; the World Summit on the Information Society and its follow-up activities; the International Year of Sport and Physical Education; and the Global Compact initiative.

HIV/AIDS pandemic: During the 2005 Summit, the problem of HIV/AIDS was pushed into the background by more political issues such as the reform of the Security Council, the creation of a Human Rights Council and development co-operation. However, this secondary role permitted a relatively sound formulation in the Outcome document with respect to integrated prevention, treatment and care. A review conference on progress in im-

plementing the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS is to be held in New York from 31 May to 2 June 2006. The aim here is to take stock of the situation and reinforce – and if necessary supplement – the commitments that were undertaken five years ago. A variety of preparatory processes and consultations are already in progress. This year it will be important to devote the attention to the HIV/AIDS pandemic that it deserves.

Global Commission on International Migration: The initiative launched by Switzerland and Sweden to create the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) is an important development in the debate on international migration. Kofi Annan inaugurated the GCIM on 9 December 2003 in the presence of Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey and Swedish Migration Minister Barbro Holmberg. The main duties of the Commission are to emphasise the positive aspects of international migration throughout the world, identify consensus and/or gaps in the debate on international migration, and formulate detailed instructions for action. The supporting core group, which comprised representatives from 33 countries, convened on a periodical basis under the co-leadership of Sweden and Switzerland for the purpose of exchanging findings and opinions with the GCIM. The management of the secretariat in Geneva was assumed by executive director Rolf Jenny. The GCIM submitted its report and presented it to Kofi Annan on 5 October 2005 in New York.

The report focused on the correlation between international migration policy and globalisation. Its authors demanded greater coherence between development, trade, security and human rights. In their formulation of migration policy, the states remain the leading players and are responsible for its implementation. National structures need to be improved and shaped in close harmony with international commitments.

The report of the GCIM forms a basis for the High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development to be held in New York on 14-15 September 2006. Switzerland will have a high-level representation at this event.

International Year for Sport and Physical Education: The 2005 International Year for Sport and Physical Education was concluded in December. Switzerland had actively campaigned for 2005 to be devoted to this theme, which heightened awareness of the fact that sport and health can play an important role in other political areas such as development and the preservation of peace. The four main conferences that were initiated by the UN Office of Sport – on health (Tunis), peace (Moscow), education (Bangkok) and development (Magglingen, Switzerland) – contributed significantly in raising awareness. The UN Office of Sport is headed by former Federal Councillor Adolf Ogi, who was appointed Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace by Kofi Annan in 2001. The Federal Council supports

Adolf Ogi's mandate with a contribution of 410,000 Swiss francs per annum, which is used for covering the costs associated with the performance of the mandate (travel expenses, personnel costs, operating costs)¹⁶. In New York, the activities of the UN Office of Sport are supported at the political level by the Group of Friends for Sport for Development and Peace, which was established by Switzerland and now encompasses almost a dozen countries from both the North and the South. During the International Year for Sport and Physical Education, the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC) was involved in a variety of ways. In addition to its ongoing projects, it carried out a wide-ranging programme of activities with the aim of reinforcing the development and peace dimension both within Switzerland and internationally.

The Global Compact was presented in Davos in 1999 by the UN Secretary-General. It contains ten guiding principles intended to motivate companies to voluntarily apply good governance and corporate social responsibility in their business practices. Switzerland has chaired the group of Global Compact donors for a number of years. Since some states expressed reservations, the General Assembly did not initially endorse the Global Compact, but at the urging of Switzerland and with the active support of other member states, it was expressly done at the Summit in September 2005 and agreement was reached on responsible business practices. This position was confirmed by the 60th ses-

sion of the General Assembly, which underscored the fact that the Global Compact Office can contribute towards the more efficient internal administration of the UN. In November 2005, the Secretary-General appointed Professor Klaus Leisinger (Novartis Foundation) Special Adviser on Global Compact. Switzerland will continue to support the Global Compact in 2006, and wants to secure the same level of goodwill from the new Secretary-General as that shown by Kofi Annan.

World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS): The second part of the World Summit on the Information Society was held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005. Having hosted the first part in Geneva in December 2003, Switzerland was especially anxious to ensure that part two would be successful, both in terms of content and from the point of view of observance of human rights in Tunisia. The issue of human rights was an important factor in the preparation and organisation of the second part of the WSIS.

In terms of content, Switzerland pursued the same main objectives in Tunis in 2005 as it did in Geneva in 2003: the creation of an information society into which all levels of society are integrated, including the less privileged, the aged and the disabled, as well as those who do not yet have access to information and communication technologies (ICT). It considers that these technologies must always merely be utilised as tools and not as an end in

¹⁶ Former Federal Councillor Adolf Ogi does not receive remuneration from the federal government for his activities at the UN. The UN pays him symbolic remuneration of one dollar.

themselves. Switzerland emphasised the importance of information itself, and in this connection the role of human rights too, especially freedom of information and freedom of speech, as well as the importance of independent and pluralist media in a free society.

The outcome of the WSIS in Tunis was in line with Switzerland's expectations in terms of content, and may be described as satisfactory. After long and difficult negotiations, an agreement was reached on all points in the policy and operational documents (Tunis Commitment, Tunis Agenda for Implementation). The results of the Geneva WSIS of 2003 were confirmed and the still pending issues – financing mechanisms for ICT for Development, Internet governance, implementation and follow-up mechanisms – were pursued and finalised. Switzerland has successfully pleaded for the establishment in Geneva of the secretariat of the newly created Internet Governance Forum (IGF). The purpose of IGF is to promote dialogue between all governmental and non-governmental players on issues relating to Internet governance, but it does not have any decision-making powers.

In order to meet the goals agreed in the Geneva action plan and utilise the new information and communication technologies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the Tunis document proposes a variety of specific measures at the national and international levels.

The UN is responsible for the global co-ordination of their implementation. The Secretary-General is to form a UN Group on the Information Society within the UN system Chief Executives Board for co-ordination. The main task of this working group will be to promote the implementation of the decisions adopted at the WSIS. The Secretary-General will inform ECOSOC and the General Assembly about the modalities of this inter-institutional co-ordination process by June 2006. The participants at the WSIS reiterated the desire that implementation at the international level should be carried out with the involvement of all players. They entrusted ECOSOC with the task of monitoring the follow-up activities to the WSIS within the UN system, and to examine, at its session in 2006, the mandate, duties and composition of the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development, which is based in Geneva. Switzerland submitted its candidacy for a seat on this Commission in order to participate in this debate to the fullest possible extent, and was subsequently elected on 7 February 2006.

Operational reforms of the UN system in the area of development

Since the section of the Outcome document dealing with development focused on speeding up the implementation of the existing commitments and goals rather than on new content, the institutional reforms of the bodies responsible for these tasks were among the most

important recommendations of the M+5 Summit. The Federal Council especially welcomes the reforms of the operational UN systems in the area of development. The term 'operational systems' refers to the apparatus of the UN within individual member states: here, the principal aim of the reforms is to co-ordinate and increase the efficiency of services rendered by the numerous funds, programmes and specialised agencies of the UN.

The follow-up measures relating to decisions taken at the Summit are primarily the responsibility of the Secretary-General. On 17 February 2006, he announced the creation of a panel of high-level persons to draw up proposals for the attention of the 61st session of the General Assembly concerning ways in which the administration of operational activities of the UN can be improved and more efficiently co-ordinated, and how facilities can be established that will lead to more effective administration and supervision in the areas of development, humanitarian aid and protection of the environment. Switzerland is able to make a qualified contribution in these three areas. It plays an important role in questions concerning the coherence and co-ordination of operational activities of the UN, especially in the areas of development and humanitarian aid. Switzerland will support the work of the new group in a variety of ways. For example, on 16-17 February 2006 it invited twelve like-minded countries, with which it has been working closely together in these areas for many years, to

attend a brainstorming seminar in Switzerland, and passed on the findings from this event to the new group.

Preservation of natural resources

The Federal Council regards the preservation of natural resources and the protection of the environment as high priorities. It notes that the results achieved in the various global environmental processes have been confirmed in the M+5 Summit Outcome document. Agenda 21, which was adopted in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and the results of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, have also been expressly confirmed. From Switzerland's point of view the inclusion of the areas of chemicals and forests in the Outcome document is especially welcome, as is the fact that, in the area of climate protection, member states have declared their readiness to pursue discussions concerning long-term international co-operation within the scope of the UN Convention on Climate Change. However, it was not possible to obtain a commitment from all the major producers of greenhouse gases to reduce their emission levels and co-operate within the framework of the above Convention.

The Outcome document acknowledges the necessity for promoting the coherence and co-ordination of UN environmental activities in order to strengthen its structure in this area. The problem of forming a structure that is more suitable for dealing with the growing challenges is being discussed by the General Assembly

since spring 2006. Jan Eliasson, President of the General Assembly, proposed the permanent representatives of Switzerland and Mexico at the United Nations as co-chairpersons in this process. This proposal was accepted, and the appointment of the two co-chairpersons entered into effect on 26 March 2006. The appointment of a Swiss official is an expression of the recognition of our country's forward-looking policies in this area. Initial informal consultations of the General Assembly were held on 19 and 25 April 2006 in New York. The Federal Council hopes that the member states will utilise this process to thoroughly examine and strengthen international environmental governance. The subject matter of the debate will include the future of the UN Environmental Programme, which some member states want to transform into a legal independent international organisation in the not too distant future, and the interaction of the many existing environmental treaties and conventions that can be the cause of inconsistencies, redundancies and additional costs.

Reforms in the area of humanitarian assistance

The Outcome document of the M+5 Summit contains two important developments for strengthening humanitarian activities within the UN, which were further reinforced by the General Assembly.

Firstly, the 'independence' of humanitarian aid was declared as a principle that may be equated with those of 'humanity',

'neutrality' and 'impartiality'. The UN is thus putting something into practice that humanitarian players, especially the International Committee of the Red Cross, have long since been advocating as a fundamental prerequisite of humanitarian action. Recognition of this principle within the UN is a decisive factor for ensuring that the independence of humanitarian aid can no longer be questioned.

Secondly, a Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was established with a targeted facility of 500 million US dollars (450 million as a contribution and 50 million in the form of a loan). The aim of this fund is to enable the UN to intervene in humanitarian situations, crises, conflicts and disasters more quickly, more effectively and in a more targeted manner. Switzerland contributed 5 million Swiss francs to this fund in 2006.

The increasing number and severity of natural disasters in all parts of the world, and in particular the tsunami that struck South-East Asia on 26 December 2004, have made everyone aware that preventive action is crucial if the impacts of such disasters on vulnerable population groups, infrastructure and supplies are to be reduced. The World Conference on Disaster Reduction that was held in Kobe, Japan, in January 2005, formulated and approved the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015. This plan, which bears the title 'Strengthening the resilience of nations and communities to disasters', presents specific measures aimed at pro-

moting a culture of prevention in industrialised nations as well as in developing and transition countries.

For many years now, Switzerland has been a pioneer in the area of disaster prevention, and is able to rely on its own experience both at home and abroad. Our country will continue to actively campaign at the international level for the creation of suitable institutional structures and an international strategy that will enable nations and communities to actively support efforts in the area of disaster prevention.

**Promotion of human rights:
Human rights as one of the three
main pillars of the UN system**

The promotion of human rights and rule of law is one of the three main pillars of the reform efforts within the UN system. Switzerland welcomes the value placed on human rights and rule of law in the Outcome document of the September 2005 Summit, as well as the clear commitment to international law and rule of law as the basis for a peaceful world order.

The efforts to 'mainstream' human rights, where the aspect of human rights is being systematically integrated into the various areas and levels of the UN system, and the concept of human security are explicitly cited in the Outcome document to the M+5 Summit. These are fields of action where Switzerland has been active for many years. Switzerland also welcomes the clear will of the member states to pay

special attention to the rights of women and children.

With the increasing number of civil wars, the protection of internally displaced persons, i.e. refugees in their own country, is gaining in importance. The human rights of internally displaced persons are summarised in a set of guiding principles. In Switzerland's view, it is especially important that these guiding principles are implemented as effectively as possible both locally and nationally, whether through legislation or national strategies for internally displaced persons. Switzerland supports Swiss Professor Walter Kälin's mandate as representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons. Through dialogue with governments, multilateral players and civil society, as well as with regional organisations such as the African Union and the Council of Europe, he is endeavouring to demonstrate specific ways of implementing the guiding principles.

Another aspect of special importance to Switzerland is the responsibility of the private sector in the area of human rights. Efforts to sensitise the sector to human rights issues have meanwhile become an integral part of Switzerland's international human rights policy, and possess a great deal of development potential.

One of the most significant institutional changes in the Outcome document concerns the decision to increase the budget



Impressions of the open doors day organised by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on 18 June 2006, at the Palais Wilson in Geneva

of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva. The General Assembly confirmed the desire to strengthen this Office by doubling the resources from the regular budget within five years. However, by far the most important move laid down in the document is the resolution to create a Human Rights Council.

Human Rights Council

The resolution to create a Human Rights Council to replace the Commission on Human Rights is the most important UN reform in the area of human rights. After almost 60 years of existence, the Commission on Human Rights was in need of renewal. In view of the efforts of the UN in recent years to improve the promotion and protection of human rights, it was necessary to re-examine both the institutional position of the Commission and its working methods, as well as its ability to take more effective and objective action against severe human rights violations. For this reason, Switzerland proposed the creation of a Human Rights Council that would be able to eliminate the shortcomings of the Commission on Human Rights. The head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) proposed such a far-reaching reform to the Commission in March 2004, and Switzerland was very active in the run-up to the creation of the new institution. It used all means at its disposal in the areas of bilateral and multilateral diplomacy to put forward convincing arguments in favour of the concept, including the organisation of a variety of seminars that were attend-

ed by representatives of numerous countries, and which set out to gain consensus on the working methods and modalities of the future Human Rights Council. During the negotiation stage, Switzerland also actively promoted efforts to find solutions that would be acceptable to all member states. In their official addresses and discussions with their counterparts at the M+5 Summit and the general debate at the 60th session of the General Assembly, both the President of the Swiss Confederation and the head of the DFA insisted on the importance of the creation of a Human Rights Council.

Once the heads of state and government at the M+5 Summit had agreed in principle on the creation of a Human Rights Council, it was then the task of the General Assembly to formally act on this proposal by passing a corresponding resolution, and thus to proceed to define its institutional framework. After several months of debate and lengthy and intense negotiations, the member states adopted Resolution A/RES/60/251 on 15 March 2006, by 170 votes to 4, with 3 abstentions, thus paving the way for the establishment of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. The new institution comprises 47 members who were elected in May 2006 for a term of office of three years, and may stand once for re-election. It will convene for at least ten weeks a year, and is entrusted with the task of strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights. It also provides a forum for discussions aimed at promoting international co-operation.

It may deal with severe human rights violations at any time, and if necessary convene emergency sessions. It also has an innovative mechanism at its disposal for universal periodic reviews of the UN member states. It is to assume all duties and functions of the Commission on Human Rights. In its first year of existence it will define its processes and working methods after conducting a thorough examination of all mandates and functions of the former Commission on Human Rights.

The Federal Council welcomes the creation of this new UN organ, and is pleased to note that there is now a powerful instrument for the promotion of human rights that represents an expression of the will of the member states to guarantee fundamental rights they have committed to observe. The Federal Council is also pleased that Geneva was confirmed as the seat of the Human Rights Council. This enhances Geneva's role as an international centre for the protection of human rights, and maintains the momentum that has been developed by the Commission on Human Rights since 1947. As host country, Switzerland will do everything in its power to support the activities of this new and highly important UN organ.

As a logical consequence of its candidacy for the Commission on Human Rights, and with the intention of continuing the commitment it showed during the inception phase, Switzerland also submitted its candidacy for the Human Rights Council.

Following a highly active campaign, Switzerland was elected to the new Council on 9 May 2006 for a period of three years¹⁷. This provides our country with the opportunity to proceed with its commitment in structuring the new organ. The first meetings of the Human Rights Council will be decisive for securing its efficient operation, defining its working methods (including the question of integrating NGOs), and specifying the issues on its agenda and its programme of activities.

The creation of the Human Rights Council, the choice of Geneva as its official seat and the election of Switzerland to the new Council are among Switzerland's most significant achievements since it became a member of the UN.

Strengthening the United Nations

The fifth section of the Summit Outcome document deals with the strengthening of the UN institutions. The member states are being asked to adjust the structures and operational methods to the changed circumstances. The document underscores the necessity of an efficient and responsible secretariat. This section contains an overview of ongoing developments in this area.

General Assembly

As the UN's most important and most representative global institution, the General Assembly has been at the centre of a revitalization process for a number of years. The aim is to increase its efficiency by streamlining its activities and through

the more consistent implementation of its resolutions, and thus to strengthen its overall role. The General Assembly adopted a corresponding resolution in September 2005. Its relationships with the other UN bodies – above all the Security Council – are to be broadened. The authority and discretionary powers of the President of the General Assembly relating to the organisation of debates are to be expanded. In addition, a working group that is open to all member states was created for the purpose of putting forward proposals to the General Assembly for improving the organisation of daily business and working methods. It is to be hoped that, thanks to the general reform of the UN, it will prove possible to proceed with the revitalization of the General Assembly at a faster pace than in the past. The Outcome document of the M+5 Summit cites the commitment on the part of member states to effect a revitalization of the General Assembly without delay.

Security Council

The focus of attention of member states and the media is above all on the expansion of the Security Council. The fact that its current composition no longer corresponds to present-day geopolitical realities is undisputed, but a reform will be very difficult since it requires an amendment to the UN Charter, which in turn requires a two-third majority of member states as well as all permanent members of the Security Council. A number of models have been proposed. Germany, Brazil, India, Japan and several African nations

are in favour of an expansion of both existing categories, i.e. the creation of new permanent and non-permanent seats. Other countries want the newly created seats to be filled through elections and the term of office to be increased, and the countries concerned to have the option of standing for re-election immediately after expiry of their term of office. Intensive efforts were made before, during and after the M+5 Summit to gain consensus, or at least strong support for one of the proposed options. Draft resolutions of the various models have been submitted to the General Assembly, but to date no vote has been carried out. Since membership of the Security Council is associated with a high level of prestige, and in view of the fact that strong regional rivalries have been formed over the past few months, it is very unlikely that agreement will be reached in the near future concerning the enlargement of the Security Council.

Switzerland campaigned strongly for another aspect of reform of the Security Council, namely the improvement of its working methods. In the M+5 Summit Outcome document, the member states expressly acknowledged this aspect¹⁸. It is a fact that most member states rarely have the opportunity to sit on the Security Council. They can only do so if they are elected as a non-permanent member for a term of office of two years. But is the duty of all UN member states to participate in the implementation of resolutions of the Security Council, i.e. in sanctions and peacekeeping operations. For this

¹⁷ In order to avoid the need to re-elect all Council members en bloc in three years' time, a draw was held among the elected members to decide which countries are to sit on the Council for one, two and all three years. In this way, one-third of the members of the Council were each allocated to the respective categories.

¹⁸ Paragraph 154 of the Outcome document of the M+5 Summit.



This year's „Fête de la musique“ in Geneva was dedicated to human rights

reason, a large number of member states want to improve the co-operation between the Security Council and all member states.

Together with a number of partners, Switzerland has put forward a variety of specific proposals for solving problems that have been acknowledged for many years. A draft resolution was submitted to the General Assembly on 17 March 2006 that refers to these proposals¹⁹, the main objectives of which are as follows:

- To strengthen the transparency of the decision-making process
- To increase possibilities of participation for all United Nations member states
- To intensify consultations between the Security Council, troop contributing countries, interested neighbouring states and regional organisations
- To derive greater benefit from lessons learnt in the implementation of Security Council resolutions
- To promote the responsibility to protect by preventing whenever possible the use of the veto in cases of genocide, crimes against humanity and severe human rights violations
- To establish fair and transparent procedures to enable people claiming to be unfairly affected by sanctions to express their point of view and protect their rights more effectively.

As far as the last point is concerned, Sweden, Germany and Switzerland have been working closely together for a number

of years on the fine-tuning of sanctions (Processes of Interlaken, Bonn-Berlin and Stockholm). These efforts resulted in the launching of a three-nations initiative to improve existing procedures for listing and delisting persons or entities against whom or which sanctions have been imposed. This initiative also aims to provide such people or institutions with more direct access to the sanctions committees appointed by the Security Council²⁰.

Economic and Social Council

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is the main institution for the co-ordination of UN economic and social activities. In this capacity it represents a high-level forum that is responsible for the implementation and support of resolutions of the major conferences and summits. Over the years, several ECOSOC presidents campaigned for reforms aimed at eliminating certain internal weaknesses, including the fact that, due to its large number of members and its heterogeneity, ECOSOC has difficulty implementing effective measures, and is unable to mobilise sufficient high-level officials for its debates. At the M+5 Summit, the member states therefore decided a variety of reforms to increase the effectiveness of ECOSOC as a forum for the co-ordination of policy review, dialogue and the formulation of recommendations on issues relating to economic development and for the implementation of international development goals.

¹⁹ UN document A/60/L.49.

²⁰ cf. reply by the Federal Council to the interpellation from Councillor of States Dick Marty dated 7 October 2005 (05.3697).

Within the context of the implementation of recommendations of the Summit, the President of the General Assembly resolved to combine the reform of ECOSOC with thematic resolutions in the area of development. Two draft resolutions have been submitted. The resolution relating to ECOSOC calls for a reform of internal dialogue on the tasks of ECOSOC and puts forward the following proposals: promotion of high-level global dialogue; organisation of a high-level development forum every two years; annual review of the implementation of international development goals at minister level; ad hoc meetings in crisis situations. The resolution is still in the consultation stage in the General Assembly. Switzerland will take special care to ensure that the main annual session of ECOSOC that is held in July each year will continue to be organised alternately in New York and Geneva, and that the roles of the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the executive and administrative councils of UN funds and programmes will continue to complement one another in the future.

Reform of secretariat and management

An efficient and effective secretariat is essential for the activities of the UN, and is also a prerequisite for bringing the ongoing reform process to a successful conclusion. In the same way as operational requirements within the UN have undergone pronounced changes over the past few years, the management structure and processes of the secretariat also need to

be adapted to the changed circumstances. On the one hand, the member states have to provide the Secretary-General and his leading officials with the necessary scope for manoeuvre in the form of financial resources and executive powers so that they can steer the organisation more flexibly. And on the other hand, the member states themselves need to have supervisory instruments at their disposal that enable them to hold the Secretary-General and his management to account for their selected strategies and actions.

The affair surrounding the 'Oil for Food' programme has clearly indicated that the UN and its internal oversight mechanisms need to undergo reform. The independent inquiry committee which was set up by the Secretary-General and concluded its work in autumn 2005 uncovered serious shortcomings in the administration of the 'Oil for Food' programme, together with a number of cases of corruption. However, the committee emphasised that the responsibility for this affair has to be shared among a variety of players. It criticised the Secretary-General for failing to adequately supervise the administration of the programme, the Security Council for failing to fulfil its responsibilities with respect to the definition and supervision of the programme, and a number of private individuals and companies for accepting illegal commission payments. In this connection, the humanitarian objectives of the programme, its size (103 billion US dollars) and the fact that the programme was able to finance the

control of disarmament in Iraq, should not be overlooked.

The inquiry into the 'Oil for Food' programme revealed the extent of the internal shortcomings and thus simplified the efforts on the part of member states to resolve measures to improve the administration of the organisation and strengthen its internal supervisory bodies. In December 2005, the General Assembly approved an initial package of reform measures announced by the heads of state and government in their Summit declaration. The measures here include the creation of an ethics office and the strengthening of the overall oversight mechanism by conducting an independent external audit of the existing oversight services, as well as the proposal to create an experts' committee for the purpose of professionally monitoring supervisory activities and advising the Secretary-General and member states as required. These measures thus largely answer the call for more efficient supervisory instruments.

A variety of major contributors to the UN, above all the USA and Japan, have declared progress with the implementation of reform measures as a prerequisite for their approval of the UN budget for 2006/2007 – a move that would bring the UN to the brink of a financial crisis. However, a compromise was reached at the last minute after lengthy and complex negotiations, that calls for the approval of a combined budget and reform package.

The approved two-year budget amounting to 3.8 billion US dollars is to be tied to an expenditure limit of 950 million, which roughly corresponds to UN expenditure over a period of six months. The release of the remainder of the budget will require a second decision by the General Assembly. By this time, the negotiations concerning the second and significantly more controversial reform package should be close to completion. This package includes the review of obsolete mandates and the reform of all budget and personnel regulations on the basis of which the UN operates.

Switzerland attaches a great deal of importance to the reform of the secretariat and management structure of the UN, and will continue to actively support the improvement of the efficiency, effectiveness, responsibility and accountability of the UN Secretariat through the rapid implementation of the reform measures outlined at the M+5 Summit. Within this process it is important to find a balance between on the one hand its role as an important contributing country that is actively supporting a more efficient and revitalized UN and is also exerting reasonable financial pressure, and on the other hand the sensitivities of the majority of states and our own interests as a host country.

As a major contributor and host country, Switzerland has been actively campaigning for a number of years in favour of strengthening the oversight and auditing

services. Within the scope of activities of the Geneva Group, which comprises the 15 largest financial contributors to the UN system, Switzerland strongly supported efforts that resulted in the formation by UN specialised agencies of internal audit services in addition to the already established external auditors. These bodies support management functions as well as the member states with their oversight functions, so that the organisation is able to more efficiently utilise the available financial resources and personnel, and thus focus on its objectives and principles. This calls for know-how that some specialised agencies do not have at their disposal. For this reason, Switzerland put forward a proposal together with Germany to the effect that the auditing and oversight services of smaller specialised agencies should be entrusted to the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). The feasibility of this proposal is currently being closely examined within the scope of the ongoing independent audit of the existing internal and external supervisory services.

In this connection it should be noted that the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) has for many years been acting as external auditor for a number of international organisations, most of which are domiciled in Switzerland. The expertise of the SFAO is greatly appreciated by these international organisations and their member states, and despite the special status of the SFAO as an auditing authority independent of the Swiss federal authorities,

this has had a positive effect on Switzerland's image and its commitments within the organisations concerned.

SWITZERLAND AND THE RESULTS OF THE SUMMIT

After almost four years' membership of the UN, Switzerland has established itself as a player that is actively and constructively committed to the principle of multilateralism and the search for concrete solutions within the UN. During his official visit to Bern on 7 October 2005, the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, emphasised the importance of Switzerland's commitments within the UN, stating that our country plays a more significant role in the organisation than one might expect for a country of its size. Switzerland's ideas and initiatives are generally warmly received. Within the reform debate, Switzerland is primarily active in areas to which the Federal Council attaches special priority: human rights, working methods of the Security Council, peacekeeping, administration of the organisation, development and coherence of the operational system. And it can be counted among the most active and credible member states.

Switzerland was one of the driving forces behind the process that led to the creation of a Human Rights Council in Geneva. In areas such as sustainable development, it sees itself as a builder of bridges

between the North and the South, and this was reflected in practice when it was appointed a moderator of the UN environmental activities. As one of the biggest financial contributors, Switzerland is joining other major donor nations in supporting a more efficient and responsible management of the organisation.

With its initiative to improve the working methods of the Security Council, Switzerland was actively involved in a process that called for extensive efforts to mobilise other member states. Switzerland succeeded in getting its message across to a number of important states – including permanent members of the Security Council and states that are keen to gain a permanent seat in the framework of the expansion of the Security Council.

Within the UN, Switzerland has developed a kind of 'Swiss model' for initiatives that takes the form of putting forward specific proposals, promoting them among a given group of member states and integrating them into the activities of the relevant UN organ. This model has proved to be sound, but it nonetheless has its limits. The reform debate clearly demonstrated that, while a country as small as Switzerland which does not be-

long to any major grouping or alliance has considerable room for manoeuvre during the creative phase of a multilateral process, its influence diminishes significantly in the concluding stage when the major players set the tone. Switzerland therefore has to remain constantly flexible and try to exert an influence by joining forces with various groups of like-minded nations (in general, member states of the EU, Canada/Australia/New Zealand, moderate countries of South America, Asia and Africa), in order to be able to initiate processes and develop ideas.





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THE FOCUS AND CHALLENGES OF SWITZERLAND'S HOST COUNTRY POLICY

Switzerland's host country policy regarding international organisations and conferences is an important instrument of its foreign policy and one of the characteristic features of our country. The policy has a long tradition and helps protect and promote our interests.

Numerous international organisations have their headquarters in Geneva, Basel or Bern. 22 of the total of 25 international organisations with whom Switzerland has concluded headquarters agreements are located in Geneva. More than 150 states have representations in Geneva and the European headquarters of the United Nations is located there, making that city together with New York one of the two major centres of international cooperation. It is for this reason that one speaks of 'international Geneva'.

From the political aspect, international Geneva gives Switzerland the opportunity to exercise an influence which is far greater than its objective weight in international relations. This influence thus contributes to the attainment of Switzerland's foreign policy goals. Also from the economic point of view, the presence of numerous inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations has a positive effect. Both the political and economic interests of Switzerland justify the active host country policy of the Swiss authorities regarding international organisations and conferences.

In view of strong international competition it cannot be assumed that the role played by Geneva as a centre of international cooperation is assured forever. Therefore it is crucial that the authorities, and particularly the Confederation, work tirelessly to keep this important platform for Swiss foreign policy.

The host country policy, as decided by the Federal Council, concentrates on specific spheres where synergies between the actors involved can be promoted with the goal of increasing the attractiveness of Switzerland as an advantageous location. Geneva is particularly strong in the following areas: peace, security and disarmament, humanitarian issues and human rights, health, employment, economy, trade and science, sustainable development and the environment.

For example for historical reasons that go back to the 19th century, Geneva has an advantage over other cities in the humanitarian field, particularly because of its role in the development of international humanitarian law. Geneva is the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross, ICRC, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, OHCHR. The Commission on Human Rights held its sessions in Geneva, as does its successor, the Human Rights Council.

The success a city has in the stiff competition for the role of host country for international activities depends on the conditions it can offer. These conditions are both tangible, such as infrastructure and security, and intangible, including the academic environment.

TANGIBLE CONDITIONS

Switzerland endeavours to offer the international organisations domiciled on its territory a comprehensive range of office buildings and, if necessary, also to find innovative solutions. Responsibility for this in the Geneva metropolitan area is in the hands of the Building Foundation for the International Organisations (FIPOI).

Infrastructure Real estate projects

The Building Foundation for the International Organisations helps international organisations in Geneva to acquire premises. FIPOI is a non-profit foundation under Swiss private law which was set up in 1964 by the Swiss Confederation and the Geneva cantonal authorities. Its mandate consists of making attractive premises available to international organisations and, exceptionally, NGOs. To do this, the Confederation can grant FIPOI interest-free loans repayable within 50 years which FIPOI, in turn, makes available to international organisations wishing to establish themselves in Geneva to build, buy or redevelop buildings in the city.

The reopening of the FIPOI-owned International Conference Centre, Geneva (CICG) on 6 October 2005 following an extensive year-long renovation was the major event of 2005. The centre has been equipped to meet the latest conference requirements and is once again fully able to play its role as an important instrument in Swiss host country policy.

Three construction projects, financed by interest-free FIPOI loans, which are close to completion or planned for the near future include the following:

- a new building for the World Health Organisation (WHO) which will offer more office space and house the headquarters of the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). This project will strengthen the presence of the health sector in international Geneva. Construction is financed by a maximum interest-free loan of CHF 59.8 million and should be completed in 2006.

- a planned new office building for the WTO. In November 2005, the Federal Council adopted a message in which it proposed to the two parliamentary chambers to grant FIPOI an interest-free loan of a maximum of CHF 60 million for the project. Parliament is to decide in 2006 and will be kept informed about developments in this project.

- a planned expansion to the headquarters of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) in Gland in the Canton of Vaud. The IUCN is a quasi-international organisation of which Switzerland is a member and with which it has concluded a tax agreement. This construction project is the first for FIPOI outside the Canton of Geneva. A CHF 2 million loan has been granted for the financing of the pilot study; the project itself is still in the preparation stage.

Innovative solutions

As in many other spheres, developments in international relations are accelerating and when the need arises for more office space, for example with the creation of a new international organisation, what is needed is a response that is as rapid as possible. If Switzerland is to remain competitive as a centre for international conferences then it must be flexible in adapting to changing needs.

Such flexibility was clearly in evidence in the case of the Human Rights Council, which was established on 15 March 2006 through a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly. The Federal Council was keenly interested that the HRC be based in Geneva where the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights was already located and where the Commission on Human Rights held its sessions. So the Federal Council made sure that Switzerland could make an attractive offer of premises. It took into considera-

tion that around 35 UN members belonging to the group of least-developed countries did not have a mission or any other kind of permanent representation in Geneva. The involvement of these states in the work of the Human Rights Council would mean a considerable financial outlay for them. To solve this problem, Switzerland will provide offices for the states concerned so that they can participate fully in the work of the Council.

Regional perspective

With an 'international community' of more than 35,000 people, international Geneva has a regional dimension which reaches beyond cantonal boundaries.

Besides the IUCN in Gland, the International Olympic Committee and around 30 other international sports federations and important NGOs are based in the Canton of Vaud. The canton should therefore have the chance to participate in the development of international Geneva beyond those individual cases in which FIPDI is already involved. At the moment studies are under way concerning the possible presence of the Canton of Vaud on the FIPDI board with the two original partners – the Confederation and the Canton of Geneva. At the moment, related financial and institutional questions are being studied.

Several of the conditions offered by international Geneva, in particular trans-

portation and housing, also depend on cross-border relations with France. Different bodies regularly discuss relevant issues on a bilateral basis. Relations with France will be intensified in the course of the further development of international Geneva.

Security

Since the attacks of 11 September 2001 in the United States and of August 2003 against the UN headquarters in Baghdad, security at all international organisations has been an extremely important issue. The Federal Council recalled in its 2005 report that states are bound under international law to guarantee the protection of international organisations based on their territory.

In concrete terms, in the case of the international organisations, Switzerland is obliged to take the required measures to protect the areas surrounding the premises of these organisations. The organisations themselves are responsible for security in the buildings and on their premises.

Over the past years, security measures have been tightened around the headquarters of the UNHCR at Montbrillant and OHCHR at Palais Wilson following an analysis concluding that such measures were a priority. The Montbrillant building belongs to FIPDI; the Palais Wilson, to the Confederation.

Because the measures at both these buildings were urgent, the related costs were shared ad hoc between the Confederation and the Canton of Geneva. The costs for the Montrillant administration building were assumed by the Canton of Geneva, while those involving the Palais Wilson were borne by the Confederation as the owner of the building.

It must be assumed that security concerns will play a major role in the years to come. Therefore what is required is a long-term provision governing the sharing of the costs of security measures for buildings which Switzerland as host country to international organisations has to undertake in the future.

Talks between the Confederation and the Canton of Geneva led to a technical agreement in June 2005 which was subsequently approved by the Geneva cantonal government in August 2005 and by the Federal Council in January 2006. It provides that the Confederation assumes 65% and the Canton of Geneva 35% of the costs of the measures needed to improve security in buildings.

This solution will apply for the financing of measures increasing outside security of those buildings belonging not only to FIPDI, but also to buildings owned by the international organisations in Geneva. As concerns buildings belonging to FIPDI, security measures for the



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International Environment House and the International Trade Centre of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the WTO are being prepared or implemented. As concerns the other buildings, several international organisations are studying preventive measures to improve security at their Geneva headquarters. Some of them have already informally turned to Switzerland and requested the support of the federal security service to assess their security needs. This involves both the organisations within the UN system and organisations outside the system such as the WTO, with which Switzerland has close contact on security issues.

THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF INTERNATIONAL GENEVA

Besides the tangible framework conditions such as infrastructure and security of people and property, there is a series of other factors which make Geneva attractive as a host city for international organisations and conferences.

It is especially important that the legal framework of the host country policy makes it possible to deal with different needs. At the moment, the foundations on which the activity of the Confederation rests in this area consist of different legislation which makes supervision difficult. Therefore on 11 January 2006 the Federal Council decided to submit a draft law on the host country policy for consul-

tation. This proposed law would regulate the privileges, immunities and concessions as well as the financial contributions which the international organisations and the foreign representation in Switzerland enjoy. This way, the Confederation can pursue a more transparent, predictable host country policy which better serves the interests of the country.

The host country policy also gives priority to the maintenance of the high standard of living in Geneva for the staff of international organisations and permanent representations. Surveys show that members of the diplomatic corps are generally satisfied with their environment in Switzerland. Their administrative, social and cultural integration in Geneva is facilitated by such institutions as the International Geneva Welcome Centre (CAGI) which was established jointly in 1996 by the Canton of Geneva and the Confederation. Nevertheless, the situation could still be improved in the areas of housing, hotel and conference infrastructure, transportation and education as well as the promotion of smoke-free public areas. Most of these matters come under the competence of the canton or the municipality which makes good co-operation between the Confederation and the Geneva cantonal and city authorities indispensable. The Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations Office in Geneva and its host country division work actively to promote this dialogue.

There are daily contacts between the federal and Geneva cantonal authorities at the technical level concerning international Geneva. On the political level various bodies (especially the Confederation – Canton of Geneva standing joined working group on the priorities of international Geneva) as well as ad hoc meetings permit a regular and substantive discussion on the optimal management of the framework conditions of Geneva as host for international organisations and conferences.

The attractiveness of our country as an important centre for international organisations relies on Geneva positioning itself as a hub of diplomacy and culture and as a dynamic city where negotiations and events with a major impact take place. With this in mind, in the autumn of 2005, the Confederation and the canton and city of Geneva, in cooperation with the UN and private partners, organised a series of events marking the 60th anniversary of the United Nations. They included a large concert at Palexpo on 8 October 2005 with the singer Youssou N'dour and many other internationally known singers. The concert, whose theme was 'United against Malaria', was attended by the head of the DFA and, as a surprise guest, the United Nations Secretary-General. The proceeds from the concert went towards the purchase of 50,000 mosquito nets treated with insecticide. The nets are a new weapon in the fight against ma-

laria and one of the "Quick Win" initiatives decided on at the Millennium+5 Summit.

At the initiative of Switzerland, a diplomatic conference was held 5-7 December 2005 in Geneva during which the third additional protocol to the Geneva Conventions was adopted with the aim of ending the controversy surrounding the emblems recognised by the Geneva Conventions and of achieving the universality of the International Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Academic pole in international studies

To continue to remain attractive, Geneva must hold its own as an intellectual centre in which academic circles maintain a fruitful relationship with the international organisations and in so doing offer a forum for important debate on the major issues of our time. In this respect, the Graduate Institute of International Studies (HEI), the Graduate Institute of Development Studies (IUED) and the so-called Geneva Centres²¹ play a major role. Aware of the strengths, but also the limits of these important partners, the Confederation has devoted increasing attention to strengthening their unique potential.

The Federal Council is convinced that the presence of a first-class academic centre, particularly in the field of international relations, can be an important

consideration whether an international organisation settles in Geneva or not.

To expand cooperation between the academic world and the international organisations, federal and Geneva cantonal authorities, represented respectively by the head of the Federal Department of Home Affairs Federal Councillor Pascal Couchepin and the President of the Geneva Department of Education State Councillor Charles Beer signed a declaration of intent on 7 April 2005 on behalf of three federal departments (DHA, DFA and DDPS) and the Geneva cantonal government. According to this declaration an academic pole focusing on international studies should be set up and be ready to begin work by 1 January 2008.

Through this initiative, federal and cantonal authorities and partner institutions including the University of Geneva, the Graduate Institute of International Studies (HEI), the Graduate Institute of Development Studies (IUED) aim to set up a world class centre of scholarship which would contribute to raising the international profile of Geneva and Switzerland. Special efforts should also be made to promote the quality of teaching and research as well as services provided by the academic pole. The networking of academic and non-academic circles in Geneva, Switzerland and the world around this hub should promote cooperation and the quality of work in this field.

²¹ The Geneva International Centre of Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF).

On 7 February 2005, in a step towards realising this academic pole, the Confederation, the Canton of Geneva, the HEI, IUED and the University of Geneva signed a protocol on the implementation of the declaration of intent. The boards of the HEI and the IUED ratified the protocol on 3 and 6 March 2005 respectively. According to the protocol a Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (HEID) is to be established in Geneva as a foundation under private law and which would begin work 1 January 2008. The new institute will replace the HEI and the IUED which would then be dissolved.

The new institute is to establish itself as a nationally and internationally recognised centre for university-level teaching and research as well as in expertise and continuing education. As the driving force behind the academic focus on international relations, the institute must have the required critical mass and the necessary resources.

At its meeting 17 May 2006, the Federal Council assigned the Federal Department of Home Affairs (project leader), the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sports to implement the projects for an academic centre focusing on international relations and for the 'Maison de la Paix' in Geneva. Pending definitive approval of the project, the amounts needed for the implementa-

tion as well as a substantial increase in financial guarantees for the new institute are included in the Federal Council's message on the promotion of education, research and innovation for the period 2008-2011. The new institute will be located in the Maison de la Paix, which is planned for completion by 2012, in the Villa Barton and in the present IUED premises on Rue Rothschild. The three Geneva Centres will also be housed in the Maison de la Paix with the physical proximity leading to synergies and a general dynamism.

An excellent example of fruitful collaboration between the academic world and international organisations is the Small Arms Survey programme. This independent research project of the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva began in 1999 with the support of the Confederation and other interested governments.

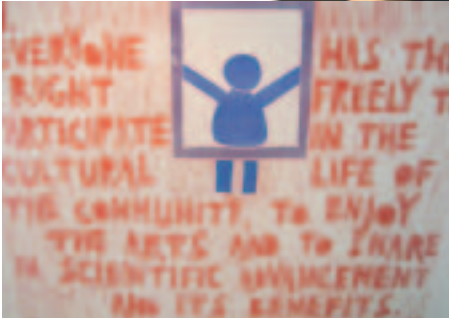
The main activity of the Small Arms Survey is the publication of a year book which analyses the worldwide problem of small arms. The fifth edition, *Small Arms Survey 2005: Weapons at War* was presented in July 2005 in New York at the United Nations biennial meeting of States to discuss the issue of small arms.

In 2005, the Small Arms Survey continued its cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

(UNIDIR). It investigated the impact of European Union aid programmes on the reduction of small arms in Cambodia and Liberia. The results were published in the *Small Arms Survey 2006*. It also works with the UNIDIR in other fields.

In 2005, the United Nations Development Programme commissioned the Small Arms Survey to carry out several investigations looking into the spread of small arms or armed violence in different regions of the world.

The Small Arms Survey also collaborated with the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs in organising workshops and a project to implement the United Nations action programme on small arms and light weapons. In this way, the Small Arms Survey is continuing its task of informing United Nations agencies objectively about the problem of illegal and legal transfers of small arms and analysing the disarmament programmes of the United Nations.



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The Geneva Centres and their co-operation with the United Nations

Established with the support of the Confederation, the three Geneva Centres are one of the pillars of Swiss offer within the Partnership for Peace. The work of the centres, their know-how and their target public make them an important part of Swiss security policy. The quality of their contributions has been recognised by numerous institutions of international Geneva which make regular use of the services of the centres. The following survey of the cooperation between the centres and the UN shows the possible synergies that can be achieved through Switzerland's host country policy.

The Geneva Centre for Security Policy

The Federal Council established the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) in 1995 as an international foundation. It offers training courses in security policy inside and outside Geneva. It also carries out research and promotes the networking of institutions and experts in the field of security policy. As an active member of international Geneva, GCSP works regularly with the United Nations. A cooperation agreement links the centre with the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) and has formalised its relations with several other UN agencies.

In 2005 the GCSP launched the UN Dialogue Series, a series of meetings aimed at supporting the UN reform process by raising the profile of the work of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change appointed by the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2003.

Supported by the DFA, GCSP also initiated a project at the end of 2005 related to the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office of the UN Secretariat. The GCSP project enabled discussion of the implications of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office for Geneva-based international organisations and NGOs working in the field of peace-building.

GCSP is also active in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation working closely with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). UNIDIR staff regularly participate in courses at the centre, and GCSP lecturers are frequently invited to participate in UNIDIR projects.

In addition, GCSP cooperates with different UN entities in training programmes, for example with the UN Department of Political Affairs, the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining

For almost 10 years, Switzerland has made the fight against anti-personnel landmines one of its priorities. Following the ratification in December 1997 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (Ottawa Convention), Switzerland and other states founded the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) in April 1998.

The contribution the Confederation makes to GICHD is an important element in Switzerland's 2004-2007 strategy against anti-personnel mines. In September 2001, the States Parties to the Ottawa Convention commissioned the centre to implement the agreement, following which, in February 2003, the Federal Council signed a headquarters agreement with GICHD recognising the centre as a neutral and independent international organisation of which 18 governments are members.

GICHD supports the efforts of the international community to reduce the effects of anti-personnel landmines and unex-

ploded ordinance by actively participating in research and providing operational assistance. In close cooperation with the United Nations, the Centre develops instruments such as the database of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) and the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) used in the fight to eliminate anti-personnel mines. Such standards are a matter of life and death for people living in mine-affected countries. In November 2003, the UN Security Council recognised the use of these instruments. Other products are distributed in cooperation with the UN. These include instructional backup for awareness-raising programmes and the prevention of accidents involving mines. These programmes were developed together with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Finally, cooperation with the various UN actors involved with the problem of mines has been institutionalised with the signing in 2002 of a cooperation agreement with United Nations Development Programme and in 2004 with the UN's Mine Action Service. In Geneva, the centre maintains especially close contact with the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces

The UN is increasingly occupied by the subject of reform and good governance in the security sector, an area with which the Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) has been deeply involved since its foundation in 2000.

Therefore it comes as no surprise that DCAF has had increasingly close relations with the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) whose Director-General Sergei Ordzhonikidze is also a member of the international DCAF board. This cooperation takes the form, in part, of annual high-level seminars attended by permanent representatives, members of the diplomatic corps, UN officials and scientists involved in research in the area of reform and good governance in the security sector and in part of the publication of reports on these seminars. In October 2005, an important conference was held to discuss 'Security in Post-Conflict Reconstruction'. This conference was attended by several UN Undersecretaries-General.

Since 2003, DCAF has maintained a regular exchange of information and knowledge with the Bureau for Crisis

Prevention and Recovery of the UNDP on issues in the field of justice and security sector reform as with the Bureau for Development Policy of the UNDP on matters related to strengthening the authority of parliaments.

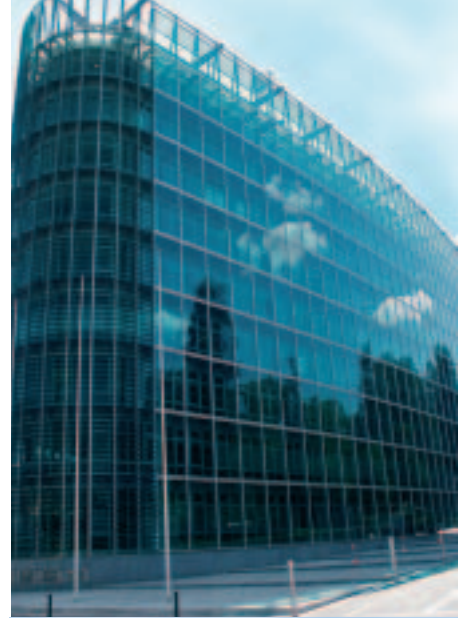
In the context of this exchange, in 2005, the UNDP office in Bratislava financed the project proposed by DCAF on 'Parliamentary Control of the Security Sector in the Commonwealth of Independent States'. The result was a three-day roundtable meeting in Prague on 24-26 October, which was attended by a number of parliamentarians from the CIS.

DCAF is also involved in a project with the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs to set new standards for confidence-building measures. This project is being carried out on behalf of the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland with the support of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations. DCAF has also expanded its cooperation with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Division for the Advancement of Women in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

The Henry Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue

A further strategic partner in Geneva for Switzerland's peace policy is the Henry Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue which was founded in 1999 and which also contributes to the attractiveness of international Geneva.

The centre is active mainly in the areas of peacekeeping, humanitarian aid and human rights and maintains regular contacts with the relevant UN institutions. The centre also supports research in the fields of small arms control, protection of civilian populations and rule of law. Besides these contributions, the centre makes its premises available as needed by different UN agencies.



The World Meteorological Organisation (top picture) temporarily hosts the Geneva Centre for Security Policy and the Geneva Centre for Humanitarian Demining. These two centres as well as the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces will later relocate to the “Maison de la Paix”. The Henri Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (bottom picture) is beautifully situated on the shores of the Geneva Lake

A portrait of Mrs Micheline Calmy-Rey, a woman with short dark hair and bangs, smiling. She is wearing a dark brown blazer over a white collared shirt and a blue lanyard with the UNHCR logo. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**Mrs Micheline Calmy-Rey,
Federal Councillor, met with
Mrs Wangari Maathai, the 2004
Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, on
the occasion of the first meeting
of the Human Rights Council**



SWISS CANDIDACIES AND THE PROMOTION OF SWISS NATIONALS IN THE UN AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

In its report of 2003 on Switzerland and the United Nations the Federal Council stressed that Switzerland's entry into the Organisation opened the possibility to elect and be elected to governing bodies or senior positions within the UN. This was a significant step forward for the promotion and safeguarding of Swiss foreign policy interests at the multilateral level. The support that can be provided to Swiss citizens competing for posts in the various multilateral organisations, thus strengthening the Switzerland's presence in such organisations, is also regarded as important by the federal Council²².

In its written reply to a parliamentary interpellation on 17 June 2005 (Kaufmann, 05.3415) the Federal Council said that when it presents candidacies, Switzerland tries to make optimum use of the instruments available for the defence of its national interests and the achievement of its foreign policy objectives. The Federal Council also indicated it would present in the 2006 report the policies it had pursued in the past few years.

SWISS CANDIDACIES IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Planning and administration of candidacies

Thanks to the efficient planning and administration of candidacies after its entry in the United Nations Switzerland has succeeded in making itself well represented in the various organs, funds and pro-

grammes of the UN System as well as in the specialised agencies. Such planning is possible however only when complete information is available about the positions that are filled by election, as soon as these become vacant. The DFA has created a database entitled 'EDA-IO-Vote' for this purpose. All posts about to become vacant are stored in this database, as are the candidacies of all member states and requests for Switzerland's support from other nations. It is thus possible to view at any time all candidacies for which Switzerland and other nations have offered mutual support or an exchange of votes.

Each year Switzerland must take a position on hundreds of candidacies and requests for support, and consider possible options for exchanging votes. Since June 2004 more than 3000 items of information relating to elections and candidacies have been stored in the database and evaluated. On the basis of this data it will be decided whether or not to submit a Swiss candidacy for an elective post that becomes vacant in the UN System, or in certain cases to support the candidacy of another member state, taking into account the position's significance from the point of view of foreign policy and the chances of success. In the past two years there have been some 20 campaigns in support of Swiss candidacies, and in 500 cases an exchange of votes has been contemplated or agreed.

Due to the large number of member states in the UN organisations, the very

²² A distinction must be made here between candidacies for elective posts or governing bodies of the international organisations, which are subject to a decision of the member states, with candidates either being elected or co-opted and the candidacies of Swiss citizens for management positions within the international organisations. The latter are selected by the human resources sections or the general management of the organisations in question.

limited number of elective seats becoming free at any time and the insistence of many of the member states on geographically balanced representation, positions in the UN System are in certain cases filled on the basis of a pre-arranged rotation scheme, with quotas for the various regional groups of nations.

As a new UN member Switzerland has to find a place in the existing rotation scheme, and this is not always easy. Switzerland tends to be isolated within the 'Western European and Other States Group' (WEOG), not being a member of the European Union or any sub-regional association of member states such as the Benelux or the Scandinavian countries, for example.

If no satisfactory rotation arrangement can be found, perhaps because member states are unable to agree, Switzerland's only hope of representation in elective posts is to announce its candidacy and campaign for election. Such campaigns are long and difficult in most cases, despite the high quality and motivation of Swiss candidates. Each candidacy requires a campaign tailor-made for the post and the candidate. Success may depend on diplomatic initiatives in the capitals of the member states, visits by the Swiss candidates as well as agreements on vote trading.

It is important to note in this context that these campaigns are not conducted purely on the basis of voting arithmetic.

Switzerland's other interests are given the fullest consideration in negotiations for exchanges of votes. It is a question of offering support for the candidacies of other countries and speaking out for candidates who have the necessary professional and moral qualifications for the post in question.

Each year many countries seek Switzerland's support for individuals or country candidacies for the various posts available in the UN System. Working with the other federal offices concerned, the DFA co-ordinates Switzerland's voting strategy and seeks the greatest possible number of agreements on behalf of Swiss candidacies. The EDA-IO-Vote database mentioned above is an indispensable instrument in the campaigns for Swiss candidacies, supported by the network of Swiss representatives abroad and the missions in Geneva, New York and Vienna.

Results

The latest campaigns have been intended both to strengthen Switzerland's presence in the main organs of the UN, and to win seats in the funds, programmes and specialised agencies that are of particular importance to Switzerland, either because of the particular field of activities in question, or because of Swiss interests as a UN host country (notably 'international Geneva').

General Assembly: in the only organ of the United Nations that is open to all

member states, Switzerland also plays a very active role including through candidacies. Members of the Swiss delegation have already been elected vice-president of one of the six main commissions on three occasions (in the 57th, 59th and 60th sessions). Moreover, on October 2005 a Swiss was seconded to the staff of the President of the General Assembly to assist in the negotiations for a new Human Rights Council.

Security Council: Switzerland has not yet been a candidate for a seat as a non-permanent member of the Security Council and does not plan to do so in the immediate future. As the government made clear in its campaign for UN membership in 2001, the parliamentary foreign affairs committees will be consulted before any candidacy is considered.

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC): this is the organ that steers and co-ordinates the UN's economic, social, cultural and humanitarian activities, meeting every second year in Geneva. So it is important to international Geneva. But the fact that it is active in areas that are relevant for Switzerland's foreign policy alone justifies our active participation in the work of ECOSOC. Consequently, since its entry in the United Nations Switzerland has been negotiating with members of WEOG for a place in the rotation scheme of this regional group. Unfortunately this has not been possible in the four years Switzerland has been a UN member. This non-integration in the WEOG rotation

scheme for ECOSOC is particularly disturbing, since it means that Switzerland cannot sit in the Peacebuilding Commission as an ECOSOC representative. The Swiss Federal Council therefore intends to make the conclusion of an agreement on the inclusion of Switzerland in the ECOSOC rotation scheme one of its priorities for the present year. If necessary Switzerland will bypass the scheme and propose itself as a candidate for a seat in ECOSOC.

ECOSOC functional commissions: Switzerland was able to increase its representation in ECOSOC's functional commissions. Its candidacy for a seat on the Commission on Population and Development for the 2005-2009 period was successful. When the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) handed a large part of the follow-up work over to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), Switzerland submitted its candidacy for the still vacant WEOG seat on this Geneva-based commission for the year 2008, and was elected in February 2006. Since 2003 Switzerland has also been represented on the UN Committee on Programme and Coordination. Also worth mentioning is the seat occupied by the Swiss national, Robert Waldburger, in the Committee of Experts on International Co-operation in Tax Matters of the Economic and Social Council.

Peacebuilding Commission: since at present Switzerland is unable to offer itself as a candidate for a seat on the commission, either as a member of the Security Council, as a member of ECOSOC or as a major contributor of troops or financing, it has lobbied against the a priori exclusion of any regional group from the category of member states eligible for election by the General Assembly.

Human Rights Council: as of 2003 Switzerland has been a candidate for a seat on the Commission on Human Rights for the 2007-2009 period, launching its first campaign in 2004. Following the creation of the Human Rights Council on 15 March 2006 Switzerland immediately (27 March) became a candidate for a seat on the new body. After an extremely vigorous campaign, Switzerland was elected by the UN General Assembly on 9 May 2006 to occupy a seat for three years. This marks Switzerland's most important success in terms of candidacies since joining the United Nations.

Treaty bodies and international tribunals: Switzerland managed to strengthen its presence in the human rights treaty bodies with the election of Prof. Giorgio Malinverni to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and of Prof. Jean Zermatten to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. In October 2005 Prof. Stefan Trechsel was elected judge ad



Swatch watch and commemorative stamp on the first meeting of the Human Rights Council in Geneva

litem of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. In the current year of 2006 the candidacy of Prof. Walter Kälin will be presented for the re-election to the Human Rights Committee. The campaign for the candidacy for the election of Prof. Luzius Caflisch to the UN International Law Commission began in the second half of 2006.

United Nations Funds and Programmes: as already mentioned the candidacies that interest Switzerland do not just concern the principal organs of the United Nations, but also its funds and programmes, as well as the specialised agencies. The existing agreements on rotations within WEOG for the seat on the Executive Board of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and in the joint Executive Board of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) come to an end in 2006. On the basis of these agreements Switzerland had a seat in the Executive Board of the UNDP in 2005. Switzerland was appointed by the other WEOG members as a so-called 'facilitator' charged with negotiating a prolongation of this rotation system. A provisional solution has now been found according to which Switzerland will take a seat in the UNICEF Executive Board in 2007.

Specialised agencies: at the General Conference of the member states of the United Nations Educational Scientific and

Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in October 2005 Switzerland was elected to the Legal Committee of the General Conference, the Executive Committee of the 'International Campaign for the Establishment of a Nubian Museum in Aswan and a National Museum of Egyptian Civilisation in Cairo', the Council of the 'International Hydrological Programme' and the Committee of the 'Second Protocol of the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict'. In 2004 the former Federal Councillor Ruth Dreifuss was appointed to chair the Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health, of the World Health Organisation (WHO), created one year earlier by the World Health Assembly. The candidacy of Marc Furrer for the post of Secretary-General of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) was submitted at the beginning of 2006, in good time for the election due to take place in November 2006 at the ITU Conference of Plenipotentiaries in Antalya (Turkey). Switzerland is also a candidate for re-election to the ITU Council. Despite an active campaign on behalf of one of the most highly qualified candidates for the presidency of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), Philippe Rochat, Switzerland was beaten to the post in the vote of 2 March 2006 by the Mexican candidate.

SWISS CITIZENS IN THE UN SYSTEM

In addition to efforts to ensure that its interests are represented in the elections to the organs of the above-mentioned international organisations, Switzerland also tries to place qualified Swiss citizens at all levels of the hierarchy in the Secretariats of these organisations. Their presence enables the Confederation to benefit from the know-how they acquire in the course of their duties, which can still be put to good use even after they leave the organisations in question. Entry in the United Nations has thus provided new opportunities for increasing Switzerland's presence in the various secretariats of the UN System.

A fresh start

Following Switzerland's entry to the UN in September 2002 its citizens were eligible to compete for any post falling vacant within the UN System. Moreover since 2003 Switzerland has been able to enter the annual competition for posts reserved for states that are underrepresented on a geographical basis. Despite these advantages there was no noticeable increase in Swiss representation between June 2000 and September 2004²³. This means that even following Switzerland's admission the number of Swiss nationals leaving the UN due to retirement or for other reasons has not been made up by the number of new Swiss staff members recruited. The

²³ The staff of the UN Secretariat in the year 2005 amounted to a total of about 8000 in all categories (Report A/60/310). The total number of Swiss was 172 in 1999, 150 in 2000, 164 in 2001 and the same in 2002, 161 in 2003 and 169 in the year 2004. In the case of specialists with a university degree a similar pattern of development emerges: out of a total of 3500 posts for professionals available in the Secretariat there were 11 Swiss in 2000, 12 in 2001, 10 in 2003 and 12 in 2004.

promotion of Swiss nationals in the UN Secretariat and the Secretariats of the international offices of the organisations in the UN System must therefore remain a priority in the years ahead.

General context

The fact that access to international posts has become increasingly difficult for Swiss candidates in recent years is mainly due to two factors: stronger competition from other member states, and the toughening up of selection criteria and procedures by the international organisations. Globalisation of the channels of communication is one of the causes of the increase in the number of candidacies for posts advertised internationally. There are often hundreds and on occasion even thousands of applicants.

Thanks to the internet, invitations to apply for vacant UN positions can be seen by a worldwide audience, and would-be candidates can easily respond within the time limits. Another factor is the rapid improvement of university level education in the countries of the Third World as well as in Eastern Europe. There has also been an increase in the quality of the competition in the international labour market. In countries like China, India, Egypt, Mexico, Brazil and Chile university degrees are not only formally equivalent to the diplomas of North America and Europe (Bachelor's, Master's, Doctor-

ate) but in substance too need fear no comparison. Furthermore, thanks to the considerable increase in mobility that has taken place in recent years the candidates from these countries can in many cases present university degrees from the most prestigious universities of Europe and North America. Finally there are countries with recruitment and training programmes designed to train candidates with the profiles the international organisations require.

This increased competition has impacted negatively on the candidacies from Switzerland. While the number of highly qualified candidates from other member states has increased exponentially, those from Switzerland have entered a period of relative stagnation²⁴. This is due to widespread ignorance about the international organisations, the positions they offer and the career possibilities, as well as a certain reluctance, particularly on the part of young university graduates, in the face of the unfamiliar recruitment and selection procedures of the international labour market with its competitive candidacies and junior recruitment programmes. Many young Swiss jobseekers also seem unwilling to consider postings that would take them far from home and involve them in an unfamiliar international working environment. The increased competition in the international labour market has also caused the international organisations,



Reception in honor of the inauguration of the Human Rights Council in Geneva

²⁴ Between 2003 and 2005 the UN Secretariat received about 1.2 million electronically transmitted applications for the vacancies advertised during this period. The number from Switzerland amounted to 4688.

in an effort to stem the flow of electronic applications all more or less of the same quality, to adopt lengthy new selection procedures that are often computerised and lacking in transparency. It is also a fact that it has become more difficult to join the international organisations. This is due above all to the drop in the number of positions being advertised²⁵.

In an effort to reverse this trend the Federal Council decided in 2005 to strengthen its 'Swiss presence', with the aim of increasing in the medium term the number of Swiss nationals working in the UN System to a level corresponding to the geographical distribution quota. This is to be accomplished with the help of various measures that will take effect at two levels in the international labour market: on the supply side, measures to increase the number of high-quality candidacies from Switzerland, and on the demand side measures to facilitate the access of Swiss applicants to jobs in the international organisations.

Increasing the number of Swiss candidacies

As already mentioned, it has come to the attention of the Federal Council that the general public, and in particular young people from the universities, know very little about the international organisations and the career opportunities they offer. With this in mind a campaign com-

plete with presentations and workshops tailor-made for young people was carried out in 2005. A special section within the DFA created to promote Switzerland's presence in the international organisations made about 20 presentations during the year at secondary schools, universities and also in the centres that offer specialised advisory and recruitment services to the international organisations, such as the SYNI Programme of Lausanne. As in the previous year the DFA conducted an International Career Day in collaboration with the University of Lausanne in March 2005, giving students at all of Switzerland's universities the opportunity to meet with the human resources representatives of about 25 of the organisations and obtain information on the career opportunities in the international labour market. The DFA also participates in the annual meeting of 'Connexion, HEI career forum' of the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva. This offers students a unique opportunity to learn all about the international organisations and career possibilities available in 'international Geneva'.

The DFA operates an internet site²⁶, through which the general public can easily access information on some 120 organisations in which Switzerland is a member. Visited between 5000 and 6000 times each month on average this site provides information on vacant posi-

tions in the international organisations as well as about special recruitment programmes and competitions for posts in the international organisations that are open to candidates from Switzerland.

Facilitating access to positions in international organisations for Swiss citizens

Now that Switzerland is a member of the United Nations its citizens can compete for the 2500-odd places in the Secretariat that are attributed on the basis of geographical distribution criteria, until the relevant quota is filled. The National Competitive Recruitment Examination (NCRE) is open to the citizens of countries that are under-represented in the UN Secretariat²⁷. In the years 2003, 2004 and 2005 the NCRE was held in Switzerland and 800 applications were received, on the basis of which 300 candidates were admitted to the examination. Twenty of these were accepted for positions within the UN Secretariat. The competition of 2006 will probably be the last for which Switzerland is eligible, as it should bring the Confederation up to its full quota under the geographical distribution system²⁸.

Another measure to improve the success of Swiss candidates for the executive organs of the specialised agencies of the UN System and the UN Secretariat is for Switzerland to finance the posts in

²⁵ Recruitment for the less well paid specialist positions in the UN System open to university graduates is almost exclusively through special recruitment programmes (Junior Professional Programme, Lead-Programme, Associated Experts) or by means of competitions open to the citizens of geographically underrepresented UN member states. Switzerland itself in fact finances one such Junior Programme designed to facilitate entry to the UN System. Management positions that fall vacant are subject to particularly strong internal competition.

²⁶ <http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/e/home/foreign/intorg/ijobs.html>.

²⁷ The quota for Switzerland calculated by the UN Secretariat is 1 per cent, which amounts to some 19–28 posts. In September 2004 there were 12 Swiss employed in the Secretariat.

question, either partially or totally. In its UN report of 2003 the government proposed to finance a programme to help place young Swiss. By the end of 2004 there were about 30 Swiss Junior Professional Officers (JPOs) in various organs, funds and programmes as well as in the UN Secretariat. In 2005 there were about 360 candidates for the 14 places in the DFA's JPO Programmes. Two additional JPO posts were to be created in 2006 in UNESCO, including one at the World Heritage Centre.

The government's measures ensure that Swiss candidates receive the necessary support throughout the selection process for the positions in question, including assistance with the candidacy procedure, dialogue with those in charge of human resources, lobbying at the diplomatic level, and consultations. The measures ensure that support goes to candidates with the right profile. It is also a question of identifying positions that are of special interest to Swit-

zerland, at the medium level and in the higher ranks as well as for junior posts. For four years special efforts have been made to secure the recruitment of Swiss in the UN funds and programmes that count as the most important multilateral partners for Swiss development co-operation programmes²⁹. With the help of special measures it has been possible to significantly increase the number of Swiss in these organisations, notably the UN Development Programme (UNDP), which counted just six Swiss in 2002 and today has 16. High-ranking posts that involve political nominations rather than being open to public competition are also valuable, as they give Switzerland maximum visibility in areas of particular importance at the level of multilateral co-operation. In this way Switzerland hopes to make it clear that, as a full member of the United Nations it has no intention of playing a passive role. Indeed Switzerland is committed to an active presence in key areas such as human rights and international humanitarian law.

Switzerland was successful in 2004 and 2005 in promoting the candidacies of its citizens, including for important posts in the UN Secretariat. Worth mentioning in this context are the appointments of Prof. Nicolas Michel as Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and Legal Counsel to the UN, Prof. Walter Kälin as Special Representative on the human rights of internally displaced persons, and former Federal Councillor Adolf Ogi as UN Special Adviser for Sport, Development and Peace.

As already indicated Switzerland considers it important to occupy management positions in the funds and programmes as well as the specialised agencies in the UN System in order to defend its multilateral interests. In this context Switzerland had in the recent past two successes in the appointment of the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Georgia as well as of a director of the World Food Programme in Rome. In the case of posts at the medium level it is less a matter of

²⁸ In the course of 2005 about nine Swiss were accepted for posts on the basis of the NCRE results for the previous two years. This should bring the Swiss complement in the UN Secretariat to 21 persons, which would mean that Switzerland would no longer be underrepresented on the basis of the geographical distribution criteria.

²⁹ These include the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP) and UN Volunteers (UNV).

the political interests at stake than of ensuring that our own citizens are given an equal chance of success, bearing in mind the support other member states provide for their candidates.

In the past two years many individual candidacies for posts in the UN System coming from civil society have been given support by the relevant services of the DFA or by the missions to the international organisations. Moreover the Federal Administration has provided its own experts or specialists to the organisations, funds and programmes of the UN System. The legal basis for this is provided by the DFA ordinance of 8 March 2002, governing leave, secondment, financial compensation and resumption of service in the case of federal staff (SR 172.220.111.310.1).



The group 'Signe d'espoir' by the Swiss sculptor Carl Bucher was offered by Switzerland as a welcome gift on the occasion of the inaugural day of the Human Rights Council on 19 June 2006



CONCLUSIONS, AND SWITZERLAND'S PRIORITIES FOR THE 61st SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

CONCLUSIONS

1. Although the Millennium+5 Summit did not lead to a complete reorganisation of the United Nations, the member states nonetheless reaffirmed at the highest level their commitment to multilateral cooperation within the UN, and to its system of collective security as defined in the UN Charter. Furthermore the heads of state and government made several important decisions for the reform of the UN, creating several new bodies including the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council. The objectives adopted by the member states correspond with Switzerland's priorities as set out by the Federal Council prior to the Summit.
2. The implementation of the decisions taken at the Summit and of the various reforms has been resolutely pursued, with Switzerland taking an active part. The creation of the Human

Rights Council is an historic event which opens new avenues for the international community. As in 1946 with the foundation of the United Nations, and in 1948 with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the member states succeeded in overcoming differences of opinion and putting the common good above individual interests. This particular reform has been a success for our diplomacy, being the result of a far-sighted Swiss initiative which ultimately won support from the vast majority of member states.

3. The federal law on the host country policy, which is now in the consultation process, will enable Switzerland to meet the challenges arising from the presence of the international organisations on its national territory. The Swiss government together with other concerned parties will continue to pursue an active, dynamic and credible policy in support of Switzer-

land's status as the host country for so many international organisations, a role which projects a positive image of Switzerland throughout the world.

4. Since joining the United Nations Switzerland has adopted a policy of actively supporting Swiss candidates, improving their chance of success as candidates for posts awarded through elections as well as for posts at the level of director, as part of its effort to ensure the presence of Swiss in the international organisations. Even so, and despite the considerable interest Swiss candidates have shown in the international organisations, the numbers have not increased significantly in the past four years. The Federal Council will continue its policy of safeguarding Swiss interests in this area and will above all do more to inform Swiss citizens about international career possibilities and how to improve their chances of success.

SWITZERLAND'S PRIORITIES FOR THE 61st SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. Human Rights Council: Switzerland plans to contribute actively to the work of the Human Rights Council in a spirit of cooperation and genuine dialogue and will submit itself to the universal periodic review. It is committed to the emergence of a new culture for the promotion and protection of human rights, based on cooperation rather than confrontation. The Federal Council, in keeping with Switzerland's host country policy, will take care to ensure that this new institution is able to operate with suitable working conditions and infrastructure.
2. Security Council: following the submission on 17 March 2006 of the draft resolution on the reform of the working methods of the Security Council, Switzerland and its partners are doing everything possible to ensure

that the proposed measures are implemented. The formal submission makes this draft resolution an official document of the United Nations and thus a reference document for further discussions.

3. ECOSOC: Switzerland remains committed to the reform of ECOSOC, so that it can again play a prominent role in the promotion of sustainable development and the co-ordination of UN actors in this area. Switzerland will intensify efforts to ensure its own inclusion in the rotation system of the Western members of ECOSOC at the earliest possible moment. Switzerland will also do its utmost to ensure that ECOSOC sessions continue to alternate between Geneva and New York.
4. General Assembly: Switzerland will continue to support the process of revitalisation of the General Assembly in an effort to make this universal

body more efficient and effective. This process must also lead to greater co-operation with the other UN organs and in particular the Security Council.

5. Management and internal oversight of the United Nations: as an important financial contributor Switzerland has a particular interest in making sure that the financial resources provided to the UN by member states are utilised in an appropriate and transparent manner. The Swiss government will stand by its commitment to this end and will also monitor the situation to see that the measures decided or proposed lead to concrete results and a tangible impact.
6. Operational activities and institutional coherence: on the basis of the decisions taken at the Millennium+5 Summit with a view to strengthening the UN, Switzerland will contribute to ensuring that particular attention continues to be paid to the reinforce-

ment of the UN's operational activities and that the efforts of UN institutions in such areas as development co-operation, the environment and humanitarian activities remain coherent.

7. Sustainable development: Switzerland remains committed to sustainable development in all its aspects – economic, social and environmental – and to achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Switzerland will in particular work for the strengthening of international governance in relation to the environment. Furthermore the Confederation will try to play an active role in the high-ranking review conference that takes place between 31 May and 2 June 2006 in New York, to ensure that world leaders remain fully committed to international efforts to combat HIV/Aids. Switzerland will also be represented at the high-level dialogue on international migration and development taking place in

parallel with the beginning of the 61st session of the General Assembly in New York in September 2006.



ANNEX

SWITZERLAND'S ASSESSED CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UN 2004–2006 (in Swiss francs)

	2004	2005	2006
Regular budget	23 205 540	26 625 903	26 556 374
- Contribution to Capital Master Plan fund		266 362	2 391 695
UN tribunals			
- International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia	2 498 882	2 432 929	2 165 390
- International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda	1 794 187	1 868 347 ³⁰	1 920 927 ³¹
Peacekeeping operations	54 137 240	84 697 540	48 100 000
Contribution to funds for two-year budget period			
- Working capital fund	- 103 950		
Total	81 531 899	115 891 081	81 134 386

USD/CHF exchange rates: 2004 = 1.35 2005 = 1.25 2006 = 1.30

The contribution rate for Switzerland for 2001 to 2003 was 1.274 %.

For 2004 to 2006, this was reduced through a resolution of the UN General Assembly to 1.197 % .

³⁰ Including an additional credit of CHF 41.1 million.

³¹ Preliminary cost estimate for 2006. The actual expenditures for peacekeeping operations will not be known until the end of 2006.

THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN SWITZERLAND IN FIGURES

International organisations in Switzerland with Headquarters agreements (22 in Geneva)	25
UN Office at Geneva (UNOG)	1
UN specialised agencies For example: World Health Organisation (WHO), International Labour Organisation (ILO), Universal Postal Union (UPU, Bern)	7
International organisations outside the UN system For example: European Free Trade Association (EFTA), Bank for International Settlements (BIS, Basel), European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN), World Trade Organisation (WTO)	17
International organisations of a quasi-intergovernmental nature in Switzerland, with tax agreements	5
For example: International Air Transport Association (IATA), Airports Council International (ACI), World Conservation Union (IUCN, Gland/VD)	
Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with an international character	
NGOs based in Geneva, with consulting status in the United Nations	ca. 170
International sports associations and organisations	ca. 30
Foreign States, permanent missions and representative bodies	
Representatives of foreign States at the UN, WTO or the Conference on Disarmament	155
Conferences, delegations, official visits	
Meetings and conferences of international organisations in Switzerland	ca. 2 500
Participating delegates and experts	ca. 130 000
Participating Heads of State and Government, ministers	ca. 3 000
Financial data (in Swiss francs)	
Annual total budget of international organisations in Geneva	ca. 8 billion
Switzerland's contributions to international organisations based in Geneva	ca. 237 Mio.
Estimated expenditure of international organisations in Switzerland with Headquarters agreements	ca. 5 billion
International community in Switzerland (in round numbers)	
Employees of international organisations in Switzerland	ca. 18 000
Employees of international organisations in Geneva	ca. 16 000
Employees of diplomatic missions in Geneva	ca. 3 600
Employees of quasi intergovernmental organisations in Switzerland	ca. 900
Employees of international NGOs in Geneva	ca. 2 400
International community (employees and family members)	ca. 35 000
Other employees of 'international Geneva'	ca. 14 000

Additional information is available on the website of the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the Office of the United Nations and other International Organisations in Geneva (http://www.eda.admin.ch/geneva_miss/e/home/numbe.html) and the website of the Statistics Office of Canton Geneva (www.geneve.ch/statistique).

IMPRESSUM

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