

A bronze sculpture of a man, likely representing a global leader or a symbol of international relations, holding a large globe. The man is depicted in a dynamic, forward-leaning pose, with his right arm raised and his left hand resting on the globe. The sculpture is set against a solid blue background.

# SWITZERLAND AND THE UN

**The 2008 Report of the Federal Council**



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

**Federal Department of  
Foreign Affairs FDFA**



**The Universal Postal Union celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of membership in the UN system in 2008.**

This monument in Bern recalls the founding of the Universal Postal Union in the Swiss capital in 1874 and where its headquarters are located. Entitled "Autour du monde" (Around the world) this bronze and granite monument was inaugurated in 1909 and is based on the design of French sculptor René de Saint-Marceaux (1845–1919).

The monument is an allegorical representation of the five continents exchanging letters.

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# SUMMARY

**In the report for 2008, the Federal Council presents the main developments that marked the course of events at the United Nations last year. It reviews a number of challenges for Switzerland's host state policy and lessons to be learnt from recent Swiss candidacy campaigns within the UN. In the conclusions, the Federal Council presents Switzerland's priorities for the next session of the United Nations General Assembly, which begins in September 2008.**

The growing interdependence of states as a result of globalisation highlights the importance and uniqueness of the United Nations as an instrument for addressing current global challenges. Switzerland intends to make full use of the opportunities presented by this forum for defending and promoting its interests at the global level.

The geopolitical constellation that underpins current relations between the UN Member States is characterized by post Cold War transition. New regional powers are gradually emerging, in particular in Asia and Latin America. The forceful resurgence of Russia as a world power is also contributing to the assertiveness of new players seeking a greater role in the management of international affairs. This constellation is creating growing tensions which manifest themselves in very different ways and create the setting for the debates within the United Nations.

The 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the General Assembly was the first to take place under the aegis of the new Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon. As a pragmatic manager, the new Secretary-General has progressively developed the themes of his mandate, placing clear emphasis on climate change. With regard to the reforms of the Organization, his first priority has been the reorganization of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, on which major demands are being placed in the current period.

Concerning initiatives within the Organization, Switzerland continued to pursue its activities last year. In the context of the reform process of the Security Council, for instance, Switzerland was especially active in efforts to improve the working methods of this body.

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Switzerland has a long tradition as a host state. On 22 June 2007, the Federal Parliament approved the Federal Act on the Privileges, Immunities and Facilities as well as financial aid that Switzerland grants as a Host State (Host State Act). The new law came into effect on 1 January 2008. It provides the Federal Council with a more transparent host state policy, one that is both more strongly oriented to Switzerland's interests and offers the international organizations based in Switzerland a clear legal framework.

On the subject of Switzerland's presence within the United Nations, one of Switzerland's major concerns is to be represented in those executive bodies that are important to Switzerland for achieving its foreign policy objectives and whose activities are in harmony with Swiss foreign policy priorities. For this reason, Switzerland will seek re-election to the Human Rights Council for the 2010–2013 period.

The Federal Council draws an overall positive assessment of Switzerland's participation in the activities of the United Nations, which it considers to be an indispensable instrument for safeguarding Switzerland's interests and achieving its foreign policy objectives. As one of its priorities for the next session of the General Assembly, Switzerland will also resolutely pursue its commitment for greater efficiency of the United Nations System through strengthening its capacities for launching initiatives in the coming years.

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# THE UNITED NATIONS: CONTINUITY AND NEW DIRECTIONS





The situation in Sudan was one of the main concerns of the United Nations throughout 2007. The photo shows food being dropped in an emergency relief operation.

The year just past marked a major change and a new direction for the United Nations. The new Secretary-General, who began his term of office on 1 January 2007, has undertaken to strengthen confidence in the Organisation and above all to seek solutions for its main problems while generally improving the management of the UN Secretariat. Consequently, a number of reforms were launched in the period under review.

In the area of peacekeeping the Secretary-General reorganized the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, subdividing it into two separate political and logistical domains. The purpose of this reform is to increase the powers of the Secretariat, enabling it to better cope with the escalating demand for UN "blue helmets".

In the area of human resources management the focus is on greater staff mobility, performance targets for managers and improved legal procedures for handling staff disputes.

Insofar as general reforms are concerned, the General Assembly has continued to deal with the follow-up to the 2005 World Summit: coherence of the operational system, reform of environmental governance, management and controls, a review of mandates, institutional consolidation of the Human Rights Council and of the Peacebuilding Commission, and reform of the Security Council.

At present only a limited assessment of the reforms already carried out is possible, since most are still in the implementation stage. The desire for greater transparency, accountability and a results-oriented approach is clear however, and is to be welcomed.

The institutional reforms must continue. In a subsequent stage the staffing of the UN's Department of Political Affairs must be increased, in particular to develop capacities in the area of conflict prevention. At the same time the Department of Economic and Social Affairs needs to be provided with more staff and given a new orientation. Both of these reforms will require lengthy negotiations since they will lead to additional costs and the nations of the South want the two reforms to be linked.

As for regional conflicts, the Secretary-General has assigned first priority to détente in the Darfur conflict. The decision to deploy the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) is a positive step forward. Major problems in the provision of troops and equipment and their deployment to Darfur are symptomatic however of the clearly difficult conditions in which blue helmet operations are carried out. At the political level too efforts to bring about political dialogue between the hostile parties in Darfur have proven extremely difficult and have so far failed to produce the desired results.

Generally speaking one can say that, far from showing signs of détente, the situation in many conflict areas has worsened in the past 12 months. Conditions in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region, in the Middle East as well as in some parts of Asia, are less stable today than one year ago. Moreover the differences concerning Iran's nuclear programme as well as the status of Kosovo have created rifts within the Security Council.

If there has been one defining feature in the activities of the Secretary-General it has been in relation to climate change. This is an area in which he has shown considerable leadership, acting with caution and skill, fully able to recognize the signs of the time. On the occasion of the mid-term assessment for the 2015 Millennium Development Goals and the Financing for Development Conference in Doha, in November 2008, the focus will again be on development policy themes.

Ban Ki-moon maintains very good relations with Switzerland. He first visited Geneva and Bern in the spring of 2007, and has since returned regularly, notably to attend the opening of the ECOSOC high-level segment, to chair the Summit of the UN Global Compact in July 2007, and to participate in the high-level segment of the 7<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council, on 3 March 2008. He has confirmed Nicolas Michel in his post as Under-Secretary-General



for Legal Affairs and Legal Counsel to the United Nations, and appointed Professor Konrad Osterwalder Rector of the United Nations University, also with the title of Under-Secretary-General. Switzerland has succeeded in establishing extremely good relations with the Secretary-General and his team.

## THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW GEOPOLITICAL CONSTELLATION

The growing interdependence of States due to the process of globalisation underlines the importance of the United Nations, and its uniqueness as an instrument with which to meet the international challenges of today. Switzerland intends to make full use of the opportunities this platform offers for the defence and promotion of its interests.

The geopolitical framework that currently underpins relations between UN member states reflects this period of post Cold War transition. New regional powers, notably in Asia and Latin America, are gradually emerging. The resurgence of Russia as a world power has also contributed to the assertiveness of new players seeking a greater role in the management of international affairs. This newly emerging geopolitical constellation has resulted in increased tensions that take a very wide variety of forms and has created the background to discussions within the United Nations System. These tensions

reflect the emergence of a multi-polar world.

The following is an outline of the main fracture lines that exist at present within the United Nations:

- tensions between the US superpower – which is ambivalent in its view of the United Nations and multilateralism – and the majority of UN member states, following the unauthorized intervention in Iraq;
- lack of trust between the West and the Muslim world, exacerbated by the terrorism question and the “war on terrorism” as well as by the UN’s low profile in the conflicts that plague the Middle East;
- an ever greater lack of understanding between the industrialized nations, the countries in transition, and the developing countries;
- tensions between the Security Council, in particular its five permanent members, and the rest of the UN member states, aggravated by the lack of progress in discussions on reforms of the Council;
- lack of trust between the UN Secretariat and certain members of the Non-aligned Movement (NAM) which are accusing the former of being too dependent on the main financial contributors.

Combined with the consensus culture that prevails at the United Nations this new geopolitical context inevitably re-

sults in a laborious approach to all questions, and the slow pace that goes with a constant effort to find the “lowest common denominator”.

Switzerland, which belongs to no alliance including the European Union or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for example, occupies a special place within the United Nations System. While relative isolation enables the Confederation to be more free and creative in its actions, it also deprives it of “critical mass” and of automatic support from allies at crucial moments. Switzerland must therefore constantly lobby on behalf of its initiatives and candidates for positions.

This means a reliance on flexible and trans-regional cooperation strategies in various areas and an effort to bridge the North-South divide. Switzerland benefits from privileged relations with some of the major actors, notably with its neighbours and in particular the European nations that are permanent members of the Security Council, and attempts to involve these in the initiatives it promotes. Switzerland also makes use of the stock of empathy it enjoys with other French-speaking nations, particularly those of Africa, notably by playing an active role within the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie. There is also a “fellow feeling” with about a hundred small countries with populations of less than 10 million, informally grouped in New York and known as the Forum of Small States (FOSS), to whose needs and con-

cerns Switzerland pays particular attention.

## UNITED NATIONS REFORMS AND SWITZERLAND'S COMMITMENT

Switzerland has a strong interest in the existence of an effective universal organization dedicated to the promotion of an international order based on law, peace and freedom. No one would deny that there is room for improvement in the way the United Nations operates. Its legitimacy however is without parallel. Switzerland therefore feels it is in its own interest to continue its commitment to UN reforms that aim to strengthen the Organization and ensure that the best possible use is made of the resources available.

### PEACE AND SECURITY Security Council

Discussions on the reform of the Security Council intensified in the first half of 2007. The President of the 61<sup>st</sup> General Assembly appointed five facilitators in January and entrusted each with general consultations on the five aspects of the reform (number of new seats, categories of the new seats, geographical distribution, vetoes and working methods). The group presented its report in April of that year after an intensive round of informal talks and debates. This report was further developed by two other facilitators. In June the facilitators enlivened the debate with a proposal for

the creation of a third category of seats (long term but not permanent) in the Security Council as a transitional solution. This proposal also calls for a general reform of the working methods.

The facilitators' proposals were unable to bridge the gap however between the G-4 group (Brazil, Germany, India and Japan), which is seeking permanent seats, and the "Uniting for Consensus" group (which among others includes Argentina, Italy, Canada, Mexico, Pakistan and South Korea) which are opposing this proposal. The debate on enlarging the Security Council was thus unable to reach a final decision in 2007. Switzerland played an active part in the discussions, and with certain other countries gave its support to the facilitators' proposals, lobbying for a slight enlargement of the Security Council in the interest of greater efficiency.

Insofar as reform of the Security Council is concerned, Switzerland has concentrated its efforts above all on improving working methods both in the framework of the already mentioned reform discussions of 2007 and through cooperation with the Security Council's Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions. In July 2007 Switzerland together with its partners Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein and Singapore (known as the "Small Five" or S-5) presented a position paper summing up the most important demands, as follows:

- implementation of measures for improving working methods decided by the Security Council itself in the presidential note of July 2006;
- a greater role for the troop-contributing countries and those that make large financial contributions in the preparation and modification of mandates for blue helmet missions;
- a greater role for interested and directly concerned States in the work of the subsidiary organs;
- improvement of the sanctions regime, in particular through the creation of an effective and independent verification mechanism for the persons and entities affected by sanctions (cf. the remarks below on sanctions mechanisms);
- voluntary renunciation of the right of veto in cases of genocide or other serious violations of human rights or international humanitarian law.

The measures for the improvement of its working methods adopted by the Security Council in July 2006 are a direct result of the commitment of Switzerland and its partners. In future it will be a question of pressing for the systematic implementation of these measures while making additional concrete proposals to the Security Council.

Switzerland is closely watching developments concerning the targeted ("smart") sanctions mechanisms introduced by the Security Council, and in particular the procedures for the inclusion of individu-

als and entities on the lists maintained by the Al-Qaeda and Taliban Sanctions Committee, or their removal. In this context Switzerland welcomed the adoption in December 2006 of resolutions 1730 and 1735, establishing a focal point to which requests for de-listing can be addressed. These measures make it possible to act without necessarily having to involve the country of residence or citizenship, and for the first time set out a list of criteria for de-listing. However Switzerland feels that although these developments mark considerable progress

they deal only partially with the basic problem of the sanctions mechanism in its present form, namely the lack of procedural guarantees that correspond to national and international norms for the persons affected by the sanctions. These shortcomings in relation to rule of law principles are in any case receiving increased attention, notably in the context of the European jurisdictions appeals procedures.

It is for this reason that Switzerland and a group of other States (Denmark,

Liechtenstein, Sweden, joined recently by Germany and the Netherlands) have taken initiatives intended to eliminate these shortcomings. In particular this group is studying the possibility of proposing the establishment of an appeals procedure, together with an independent authority which would be responsible for reviewing the reason for adding a particular individual or entity to the list, and which would also be able to make recommendations to the sanctions committees with regard to the removal of an individual or entity from the sanctions

**1948–2008**  
**60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Postal Union (UPU), a specialized agency of the United Nations**



## THE FOUNDERS

The Universal Postal Union (UPU) was created in Bern, Switzerland, based on an idea of international cooperation in postal operations conceived by Heinrich von Stephan, a high-ranking post office official from North Germany. At his suggestion the Swiss government organised a conference in Bern, in which the representatives of 22 countries participated. The Treaty of Bern, signed on 9 October 1874, established the General Postal Union which in 1878 was renamed the Universal Postal Union. The Treaty made it possible to remove the obstacles obstructing the free circulation of postal items between countries and thus stimulated the growth of international postal services.



list. The creation of such a procedure would render the mechanism of inclusion on the UN lists more transparent and equitable, thus improving the legitimacy and indeed the effectiveness of the system, while respecting the special role of the Security Council. Naturally any such proposal would have to bear in mind the extreme political sensitivity of this matter.

### Combating terrorism

Combating terrorism remains one of the United Nations' priorities. The adoption of a Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by the UN General Assembly in September 2006 marks an important step, being the first time that the member states in their entirety committed themselves to a concerted effort, in contrast to the former predominance of action by the Security Council and its subsidiary organs. National governments, UN bodies, regional organizations and civil society all have an important role to play in the implementation of this strategy. Implementation will indeed be a real challenge, due in particular to the lack of coordination and information sharing, as well as the duplication which impairs the present system. The creation of a Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, bringing together the various UN actors in this area, is a promising development in this context, but the mandate and resources of this new entity remain inadequate.

In this context, on 7 December 2007, Switzerland in partnership with Costa Rica, Japan, Slovakia and Turkey launched an "international counter-terrorism cooperation process" in an effort to promote reflection on the implementation of the strategy. Experts from some 40 countries, UN bodies, and regional and private organizations meet at various seminars to devise ways in which UN institutions could more effectively support the implementation of the counter-terrorism strategy. In January 2008 Switzerland organized the first seminar on "Institutional Challenges in Implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy". The recommendations that result from the process will be presented to the General Assembly during the first formal review of the strategy in September 2008. As for the negotiations for a comprehensive global convention against terrorism, these remain stalemated, once again indicating the extreme political sensitivity of this issue.

### Mediation and conflict prevention

Switzerland has a high profile in the area of mediation and conflict prevention. Together with Germany it chairs a group of like-minded member states. Switzerland also provides expert know-how, staff and financial resources to the Mediation Support Unit (MSU), formed two years ago within the UN's Department of Political Affairs (DPA). The MSU provides concrete support to peace processes in Bolivia, Georgia, Kenya,

Myanmar, northern Uganda, Somalia, Sudan, Western Sahara and elsewhere. Another important task of the MSU is to promote the relevant expertise within the UN itself. Switzerland also assists the DPA with specific projects that fall within the area of Switzerland's peace policy commitments. The Confederation provided initial financing for the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala for example. The purpose of this Commission is to investigate and prosecute the worst crimes, which to this day have remained unpunished due to the infiltration of Guatemala's justice and police system by criminal groups.

Conflict prevention is one of the main concerns of Swiss foreign policy. The view defended by Switzerland in the relevant bodies is that the UN devotes a great deal of resources to post-conflict processes, whereas through greater commitment to prevention much suffering could be prevented and at less cost. It is to be welcomed therefore that the Secretary-General and the Security Council recognize the importance of conflict prevention.

Operational support for conflict prevention is provided by the United Nations Development Programme's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (UNDP/BCPR). In the area of conflict prevention the BCPR focuses on the improvement of national capacities, for example through the promotion of a conflict-sensitive ap-

proach to development, national conflict management and dialogue forums for national actors. Switzerland is an important donor for the BCPR and an active member of the BCPR Group of Friends.

The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) created in 2006 is another UN body concerned with conflict prevention, both directly and indirectly. In 2007, the PBC managed not only to clarify its internal procedures but also to make substantial progress with the development of peacebuilding strategies for Burundi and Sierra Leone and the discussion of specific challenges. At the end of 2007 the PBC added a third country to its agenda, Guinea Bissau. The financing of projects in several countries by the Peacebuilding Fund has increased, as has the number of donor countries.

Finally, Switzerland also endeavours to promote peacebuilding and conflict prevention at the conceptual and institutional levels. The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) commissioned the Center for Security Studies at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich and the Bern-based peace-research institute swisspeace to investigate the connection between the overexploitation of renewable resources and armed conflicts, and to make concrete recommendations for action by the United Nations. This study is entitled "Linking Environment and Conflict Prevention: The role of the United Nations". Furthermore, Switzerland supports various

"think tanks" in efforts to develop innovative instruments.

### **Alliance of civilizations**

The first Forum of the UN Initiative for an Alliance of Civilisations was held on 15 and 16 January 2008 in Madrid and attended by political, religious, cultural, academic and media representatives at the invitation of the Spanish Prime Minister, Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero. The "Alliance of Civilisations" initiative, launched in 2004 by Spain and Turkey in the framework of the United Nations, is intended to improve understanding between the West and the Islamic world. The Madrid Forum served as a platform for the launch of a number of projects in areas on which the Alliance focuses, notably education, youth, migration and communications media. The Swiss foreign minister, Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey, represented Switzerland at the Forum.

Switzerland has amassed valuable experience and expertise with projects on the theme of "religion and politics" in the context of its development and peace policies, which it shares with partners in the Alliance. For example, in Tajikistan Switzerland is supporting a dialogue between secular and Islamic elites, which among other things is considering reform of the curricula in Islamic schools. Moreover through drafting financial guidelines intended to increase transparency, Switzerland is helping to build confidence between Islamic charities and

Western governments. And finally the Confederation is promoting exchanges on women's questions between Swiss and Egyptian faith-based NGOs.

### **Disarmament**

Within the UN, questions of disarmament and international security are primarily addressed by the Conference of Disarmament in Geneva and in the meetings of the First Commission of the General Assembly in New York. The other major international forums dealing with arms control are the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna (IAEA), the Preparatory Committee of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO) and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in The Hague (OPCW).

Switzerland took over the chair of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva for four weeks in 2007. The CD is the only permanent forum for multilateral negotiations on disarmament questions. Switzerland is strongly committed to negotiations on a treaty on the prohibition of the production of fissile materials for military purposes. It supports efforts to prevent the deployment of weapons in space and to ban the use of force against objects in space. Switzerland also supports measures to promote transparency and confidence in space activities as a means to strengthening security.



Questions concerning disarmament and international security are dealt with in the First Committee of the UN General Assembly. Switzerland's position on nuclear issues is based on the three pillars of disarmament, non-proliferation and the right to peaceful use. In 2007, Switzerland, together with Chile, Nigeria, New Zealand and Sweden, submitted a resolution inviting the nuclear powers to reduce the level of operational deployment of their nuclear weapons (de-alerting). 139 states adopted this resolution and only three opposed it. Switzerland intends to continue its activities on this question.

In the area of conventional weapons Switzerland is pursuing its longstanding commitment with regard to small arms and light weapons and the ban on landmines. Switzerland is consequently one of 28 members of the group of governmental experts set up by the Secretary-General in 2007 to study the feasibility of a binding legal instrument and to develop a set of international standards on trade in conventional weapons. The working group has been instructed to report back by autumn 2008.

As it has in previous years, at the Conference of States Parties in November 2007, Switzerland actively advocated for the adoption of a negotiating mandate on cluster munitions. This mandate provides for a total of seven weeks of negotiations in 2008 within the governmental group of experts. Switzerland

will attempt to obtain binding rules banning certain types of cluster munitions and stipulating the modalities of use with the aim of improving the protection of civilians in situations of armed conflict and strengthening international humanitarian law.

Finally, Switzerland supports the struggle against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1540. In Switzerland, there are overall controls on exports which govern the transfer of sensitive materials and technologies. Switzerland is also part of the four export control regimes dealing with the international trade in dual use goods (for civilian and military uses), chemical and biological substances, as well as nuclear and missile technologies.

#### **Peacekeeping operations**

Switzerland currently (March 2008) has 37 citizens serving as military observers, staff officers or police officers in the UN peacekeeping missions, a small but highly qualified contingent. Missions purely concerned with observation are now generally considered to be unrealistic, operating in circumstances which are increasingly unstable and complex. The UN is particularly interested in Swiss assistance in the areas of transport (air and ground), medical support and military engineering. French-speaking Swiss are much appreciated in particular.

## **DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN COOPERATION**

Social and economic development together with security and human rights are among the traditional core concerns of the United Nations. Various UN bodies, specialized agencies, funds and programmes are active in these areas. The UN is equally important as an intergovernmental forum, in which the international community can agree on the basic principles of development cooperation.

Following a number of major UN thematic conferences held during the 1990s, and in particular during the Millennium Summit in 2000, the international community agreed on eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These interconnected and mutually supportive goals add up to a common agenda for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Each goal sets out one or more concrete targets for achievement by 2015. Progress is measured with the help of social, economic and ecological indicators.

In 2002 on the occasion of the UN International Conference on Financing for Development, the international community also agreed on the so-called "Monterrey Consensus" of common and reciprocal responsibilities for the developing and industrialized countries, for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and achievement of the MDGs. While the developing countries promised to improve their political and

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## **AID**



Tsunamis in South Asia, floods in Guatemala, earthquakes in Pakistan and Iran: postal services often play a vital role in helping the victims of natural disasters. As well as informing member states when there is an interruption of postal services in a given country due to a disaster or some other cause, the UPU helps the country affected to assess the extent of damage to its postal service and determines what measures need to be taken to restore normal service. The Union works with partners to set up relief operations and emergency aid projects. In such cases the UPU appeals for funds to its member states, which rarely fail to respond generously.

economic framework conditions, the industrialized nations agreed in particular to open up their markets and to provide more and better development aid.

This last promise was made more concrete by the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005, which commits the developing countries to greater self-reliance in terms of development and the donor countries to greater concertation and harmonization with respect for the development priorities of the recipient countries. Moreover both sides agreed to “managing for results” and “mutual accountability” principles.

One of the main challenges is the fact that although the UN plays a central role as a forum for development policy debate, its efforts do not always have a corresponding impact in individual countries. Indeed less than 10 per cent of international development funds are channelled through the UN System. The UN also has to synchronize with the International Financial Institutions and with bilateral donors. This problem is aggravated by the fragmentation of UN actors.

Furthermore, the UN faces increasing competition from new actors, such as the Gates Foundation, which focus their efforts on specific areas and are able to

operate more flexibly thanks to leaner governance, and which have considerable resources at their disposal. The booming economies of various countries in transition – including China and a number of Gulf States – have shaken the customary division of roles between the “industrialized nations” and the “developing countries”. This raises the question as to how these new development actors can be integrated in the existing development cooperation governance and coordination mechanisms. It is increasingly clear that the challenges involved in economic development cannot be considered in isolation. This fact needs to be taken into account both at the policy and at the operational levels.

Whereas the interplay between economic development, social security and the conservation of natural resources has at least to some extent been integrated into policy, it is now a question of paying greater attention to the interrelations between security and development as well as between the protection of human rights and development. In this context, Switzerland has demonstrated its concern as to the interrelation between armed violence and development.

The framework for global development cooperation as described above is in constant need of adaptation to new circumstances. There are three important dates in this context in 2008. In July the first Development Cooperation Forum is due to take place at this year's high-level segment of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in New York. This is the only permanent, intergovernmental forum, open to all States, for the discussion of fundamental development cooperation questions. In September the third high-level follow-up conference to the Paris Declaration of 2005 on Aid Effectiveness meets in Accra (Ghana). The meeting with the highest political profile however is the Monterrey follow-up, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Conference on Financing for Development, at the end of November 2008 in Doha.

Summing up, one can say that the nature of development cooperation is undergoing a change. Long viewed mainly

as a charitable activity, development cooperation is today increasingly seen by the international community as an item on the agenda of "global domestic policy". Progress in areas considered important to the North – including efforts to combat climate change and terrorism, to regulate migration flows and to protect human rights – increasingly depend, both at the policy and operational levels, on general implementation of the development policy agenda described above. The quality as well as the quantity of Switzerland's development cooperation is carefully monitored with this in mind. It has a direct influence on Switzerland's political influence in the international forums.

#### **"Delivering as one" – reforming the UN's operational activities**

The World Summit of 2005 set in motion a reform process in the area of development cooperation that was intended to address such problems as the UN's fragmentation at the national level, inadequate resources, uncertainties concerning mandates and the sharing of tasks between the various funds, programmes and agencies within the UN System.

The Report of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence – "Delivering as one" – commissioned by Kofi Annan and published in November 2006, served as the basis for a series of consultations between the member States in the following year. The debates made clear the

divergence of positions between these States, notably relating to governance of the operational work of the UN, its financing and certain normative aspects. This political divide between the majority of developing countries, which are unenthusiastic about the reforms, and the main financial contributors, which are anxious to move forward with the agenda to improve the coherence of the UN System, has resulted in a tense political climate and added to the difficulty of all negotiations at the intergovernmental level having anything to do with the efficiency, effectiveness and coherence of the operational system, particularly in the area of development.

It was in this climate, not very favourable for consensus, that negotiations began in October 2007 on the important General Assembly Resolution concerning the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities of the United Nations Development System (TCPR). In its role as facilitator of this resolution, Switzerland had to adopt a particularly prudent posture in guiding the process, encouraging the member States to confirm their commitment to reforms undertaken on the occasion of the World Summit of 2005, while taking care not to extract too many elements directly from the recommendations of the "Delivering as one" report. After three months of negotiations the member States were able to adopt a resolution which reflects the current state of intergovernmental consensus on the reforms

and the coherence of the System. This resolution is now the reference text for the UN's operational system, and several recommendations of the "Delivering as one" report have been included de facto. The Swiss Federal Council sees this underlining of what has been agreed so far as a positive step.

In the meantime the consultations on the "Delivering as one" report have resumed. The challenge which the two co-facilitators (Tanzania and Ireland) responsible for guiding the process are likely to face will almost certainly be as follows: how to achieve progress while at the same time recognising and appreciating the value, utility and complementary nature of other platforms and processes which have an equally direct link with the coherence of the System. The Federal Council hopes that the member States will use these consultations as a platform for exchanges, accepting that this process leads to specific resolutions on some of the report's recommendations. Switzerland will continue actively to promote and support this approach.

### **Climate and environmental governance**

In 2007 climate change became one of the main concerns of the new Secretary-General and a priority of the UN agenda. It is Ban Ki-moon's personal intention to become closely involved in efforts to combat climate change, adding the environment to the three other principal commitments of the United

Nations – peace, development and human rights. Thanks to its global nature and the variety of its instruments and specialized agencies, the UN is ideally placed to make a significant contribution in all of the many fields affected by climate change. This diversity of actors presents the Secretary-General at the same time with a real challenge in coordinating UN efforts so as to avoid duplication of efforts and missing links.

In this context the publication of the 4<sup>th</sup> Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is an important step for the UN. Furthermore with the holding of a high-level event on climate change on 24 September 2007 in New York prior to the climate negotiations in Bali, the Secretary-General was able to send a positive signal. The successful conclusion of the negotiations in Bali in December 2007 was due to a great extent to the personal commitment of Ban Ki-moon. In January 2008 the Secretary-General presented a report on the UN's climate-related activities. As well as a summary of these activities, the report contains the first-ever proposals on how to achieve urgently needed coordination in this area within the UN System.

The Secretary-General's efforts were further supported by two thematic debates on this subject, in July 2007 and February 2008, initiated by the then President of the General Assembly. Whereas the first debate greatly reflect-

ed the Bali Agenda and focused on such questions as reducing emissions, adaptation measures, technology transfer and financing, the debate of February 2008 was more concerned with matters of coordination and governance. Switzerland took an active part in the debates, arguing for the start of negotiations on legally binding regulations in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The debates in New York are an important catalyst for international consensus building.

The international community has decided in fact, on various occasions including the World Summit in Johannesburg (2005), that there is an urgent need to make international environmental regulations more coherent. As a result of this decision the informal consultation process for the strengthening of international environmental governance in New York, chaired by the permanent representatives of Mexico and Switzerland, has received greater attention from the delegations. In June 2007 the two ambassadors presented a paper with a catalogue of proposals for the improvement of environmental governance and then held wide-ranging consultations with the State representatives, secretariats of the multilateral environment conventions, UN agencies and NGOs. It is planned to bring this consultation process to a temporary halt with the adoption this year of a resolution in the General Assembly. In particular the efforts of the United Nations Environmen-

**1948–2008**  
**60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Postal Union (UPU), a specialized agency of the United Nations**



## **GLOBAL? UNIVERSAL!**

The UPU has 191 member states, which meet every four years for the Universal Postal Congress, the Union's supreme authority. The 24<sup>th</sup> UPU Congress was held in Geneva (Switzerland) from 23 July to 12 August 2008. As well as addressing questions of strategy and general policy, the Congress elects the director-general of the UPU International Bureau in Bern, and his deputy. At the end of each congress new products and services are integrated in the international postal system. Between congresses the work of the Union is carried on by elected representatives of the member states in the Postal Operations Council (40 members) and the Council of Administration (41).



tal Programme (UNEP) to strengthen environmental governance must be further developed and supported together with additional efforts to strengthen international environmental management.

### **Humanitarian affairs**

The United Nations is also an ideal platform for the implementation of Switzerland's humanitarian policy. On the occasion of the ECOSOC substantive session in 2007, Switzerland participated actively, notably in the thematic discussions on the use of military resources for natural disaster relief, distributing an informal guideline document on this question. In this document Switzerland reiterated the need for States to fol-

low, at the national level, the principles and the division of tasks between civilian and military actors recommended in the Oslo Guidelines of 1994 (revised in 2006). The document also stressed the potential of regional organizations for effective reinforcement of national and regional response capacities as well as the essential role of the United Nations in standard-setting at the global level.

The Confederation also strengthened its support of the Secretary-General's Representative on the human rights of internally displaced persons. This increased cooperation has in particular taken the form of support for specific programmes and projects concerning

the role of displaced persons in peace processes, the implementation of guiding principles on internal displacement and respect for the fundamental rights of the individual in situations of natural disaster.

During the 63<sup>rd</sup> session of the General Assembly, the independent external evaluation of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), to which Switzerland contributed CHF 7.5 million in 2008, will make possible an initial assessment of this additional instrument for financing the UN's humanitarian activities, launched at the end of 2005.



## HUMAN RIGHTS – THE CHALLENGES FACING THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The meetings of the Human Rights Council in the period covered by this report were of particular importance in that they enabled the Council to complete its institutional consolidation (review of the mandates of the Special Rapporteurs, new directives for the Universal Periodic Review, and election of the members of the Council's Consultative Committee).

The Council had to decide on the renewal of some 20 special procedures, for the most part relating to human rights defenders, violence against women, freedom of expression, in Myanmar, Sudan, Somalia, Congo, North Korea and elsewhere. The negotiations were difficult, particularly in relation to the mandates concerning political and civil rights, negotiations which are traditionally conducted by the European Union or in any case by other nations of the Western group. For the Council it was a question of establishing "good practices" and ensuring that the processes for selecting the mandate holders were transparent and were conducted in a manner that ensures the highest possible levels of expertise and independence.

One of the main challenges facing the Human Rights Council remains the institutionalization of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), one of the Council's main innovations. The proper functioning of

this mechanism will be an important aspect of the review of the Council, which will take place in 2011. It is very much in Switzerland's interest, as both host state and member of the Council, that the UPR takes place in optimum conditions. The challenge is not simply to promote a transparent and efficient mechanism but also to ensure the greatest possible participation of the States that do not have a permanent mission in Geneva. In this context the highest possible level of representation would be a great asset. As a transitional solution, Switzerland has made available temporary offices for States undergoing review in 2008 that lack a permanent mission in Geneva.

Switzerland was examined by the Human Rights Council on 8 May 2008 on the basis of its country report. As a preliminary measure the Confederation organized a wide-ranging consultation involving the cantonal authorities and civil society, with a day of discussions in Bern on 26 February 2008, the main points of which were added to the Swiss report in a separate annex.

The elections to the Human Rights Consultative Committee were held in Geneva on 26 March 2008. Among the candidates for seats reserved for Western nations, the Swiss candidate Jean Ziegler obtained the best score with 40 votes out of a total of 47.

The Consultative Committee is made up of 18 experts who must have exceptional

abilities and a great deal of experience in the area of human rights. Acting as the Council's own "think tank" this body carries out research on the most important human rights, advises on their interpretation, and monitors human rights violations.

In the period covered by this report, the Council held two extraordinary sessions on emergency situations involving violations of human rights: Myanmar in October 2007 and Palestine in January 2008. In the context of extraordinary sessions Switzerland does its utmost to promote dialogue and to rise above group-based defences to help the Council become a UN body capable of promoting and protecting human rights throughout the world, rather than a mere forum for the unwarranted politicisation of such rights.

The question of the relationship between the 3<sup>rd</sup> Committee of the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, and in particular their division of tasks, remains pending. A suitable solution must be found to this problem, one that avoids duplication and helps to make the UN System as effective and credible as possible in its universal mission to promote and protect human rights. The experience of the past two years has shown that the UN member states use these two organs according to criteria that do not sufficiently take into consideration the coherence of the System as such.

As far as Switzerland is concerned, due to its universal nature, the General Assembly should primarily be used as a general frame of reference. The Human Rights Council, as an operational body, should provide a geographical and thematic focus to the implementation of the political commitments endorsed by the member States. A division of responsibilities along these lines would make the two bodies complementary to an ideal extent and reinforce the effectiveness of the System.

#### **Principal Swiss initiatives**

Switzerland together with Morocco presented a draft resolution with the aim of mandating the Human Rights Council's Consultative Committee to prepare a draft declaration on education and training in the area of human rights. This resolution was supported by 67 countries and adopted by consensus. Switzerland, Morocco, Italy and Costa Rica decided to establish an informal partnership on human rights education and training, each of these countries having presented resolutions on this subject.

The link between human rights and transitional justice was the subject of a thematic resolution which Switzerland presented at the 61<sup>st</sup> session of the Commission on Human Rights in 2005. The importance of this link in the consolidation of a peace process has been fully demonstrated in recent years. Indeed establishing the facts, rendering justice and providing compensation to

the victims are important objectives that must be viewed from different angles. Switzerland will defend this point of view within the Council in the years ahead, notably with the presentation of a draft resolution on the conservation of the archives relating to human rights violations.

#### **The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) faces a number of challenges, resulting from the complexity of the missions and duties required of it and the need to manage its rapid growth, notably in staffing levels. Furthermore, the post of High Commissioner for Human Rights is increasingly coming under pressure from countries that wish to see the Human Rights Council exercising greater control, alike a Board of Directors, on the priorities and activities of the OHCHR, allocating to it a growing number of technical cooperation mandates in a wide variety of fields. As far as Switzerland is concerned it is important that the independence of the OHCHR is guaranteed. It goes without saying that the member States are free to air their views on its activities, but this must be done in the framework provided expressly for this purpose: at the time of budget negotiations within the relevant forums of the General Assembly.

Against this difficult background the serving Higher Commissioner, Mrs Louise Arbour, has announced her decision not to seek a second mandate. Mrs Arbour has fully demonstrated her commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and has given the Human Rights Council much support.

#### **60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

Switzerland will contribute to the celebrations of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with an initiative proposing a "human rights agenda for the next decade" in December 2008 in Geneva. At Switzerland's invitation a panel made up of eminent persons would be invited to identify, study and describe specific topics in the area of human rights and draw up an agenda for submission to the international community.

In the context of this celebration Switzerland published a book entitled "Regards sur les droits humains – Focus on Human Rights" in December 2007, the aim being to bring the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the attention of a more general audience. This book gathers the thoughts of a wide range of eminent personalities, including the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Nobel Peace Prize laureates Shirin Ebadi, Jimmy Carter, and the Swiss author Adolf Muschg.

## GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

When taking office in January 2007 the new Secretary-General made it clear that management reform would have the highest priority. In the year covered by this Report the strengthening of governance and of internal oversight – areas to which Switzerland has devoted much attention – have been accorded great importance. Although a new Independent Audit Advisory Committee (IAAC) has now been created, other important steps towards modernization have had to be postponed. It is now clear that the introduction of state-of-the-art management techniques throughout the UN System – results-based management, enterprise risk management and a systematic mandate review – will be possible only in a time perspective of several years.

The appointment of a Chief Information Technology Officer (CITO) in the summer of 2007 has given a new impetus to the modernization of the UN Secretariat's information and communication technology (ICT). This year the General Assembly is expected to decide on a new ICT strategy and on the replacement of outmoded and incompatible ICT systems with state-of-the-art technology. This aspect of reform is a prerequisite for modern enterprise resource planning, integrating the essential management processes such as accounting and human resources management, and making them more easily utilisable by all departments at headquarters as well as by field missions.

In the autumn of 2007 the General Assembly decided to speed up the renovation of the UN headquarters in New York (Capital Master Plan). This renovation, which started in 2008 and is due for completion in 2013, will not only modernize all offices and meeting rooms, but will improve the security and energy efficiency in the headquarters building. Switzerland is particularly interested in the Capital Master Plan, since the Palais des Nations in Geneva is also in need of renovation.

One important aspect of the management reform is the renewal of the UN's internal system for the administration of justice. This was completed to a great extent in 2007, providing a solid basis for the fair and just treatment of UN employees. The internal justice system has been professionalized and decentralized. A new court of first instance has been created with chambers in New York, Geneva and Nairobi. The existing UN Administrative Tribunal based in New York is to be transformed into the "United Nations Appeals Tribunal". This new system of justice is an essential prerequisite for progress in the reform of the UN's human resources management, an issue the General Assembly will tackle in 2008.

The regular UN budget for the 2008–2009 biennial period was approved in December 2007. Switzerland used its influence in the budget negotiations to ensure that sufficient funds would be

made available in those policy areas that have priority for Switzerland. It also defended the cause of financial discipline and argued in favour of efforts to reduce spending, particularly in areas that are not important for the proper functioning of the Organization and the fulfilment of its core tasks. In this way Switzerland helped to reduce the budget volume to USD 4.17 billion, which is slightly less than the consolidated statement for the previous budget period (additional information on the budget and Switzerland's contribution will be found in the annexes 1 and 2).

Switzerland supports institutional reforms intended to strengthen capacities in the UN's priority areas and promote sustainability, without disproportionate financial consequences. In the 5<sup>th</sup> Committee of the General Assembly, which deals with reform of the management and the Secretariat, Switzerland lobbied actively for greater efficiency, effectiveness, responsibility and accountability within the UN Secretariat.

Switzerland is in particular concerned about improving the accountability of the executive bodies and – in the context of reform of the so-called "Accountability Framework" – strengthening internal oversight and control. A workshop on this subject in New York in October 2007, attended by UN delegates from over 50 countries, helped to raise Switzerland's profile in this area. Switzerland also co-chaired a working group of the

15 biggest UN financial contributors on the subject of „internal oversight“.

Switzerland's second main concern in this area is the modernization of the UN Secretariat's information and communications technology, in an effort to speed up the political processes in the UN and increase general efficiency throughout the UN System. In November 2007, Switzerland presented to the Chief Information Technology Officer (CITO) and his team the platform for the coordination of Switzerland's UN policy that has been successfully introduced in the federal administration (CH@UN-Plattform).

This system supports political processes such as the consultation of documents, the writing of reports, decision-making and the dissemination of practical know-how. The CITO is indeed dependent on close collaboration with member States in areas of great political sensitivity, hence the interest in Switzerland's expertise. Furthermore, Switzerland's Permanent Representative to the United Nations was appointed president of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics for 2008, thus ensuring Switzerland's long-term commitment in this area.

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**1948–2008**  
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## **DISTINGUISHED GUESTS**

On 28 April the UPU Director General, Edouard Dayan, welcomed the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, who came to chair a meeting of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) at the UPU headquarters. Ban Ki-moon underlined the importance of the 60 years of the UPU as one of the specialized agencies of the United Nations. Since 1 July 1948, the UPU has worked with a great many UN and other international bodies to promote development, improve customs clearance procedures for international mail, ensure the safe transport of hazardous materials, reduce the risk of money laundering, prevent the shipment of drugs by post, protect the environment and promote international trade.



# KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR SWITZERLAND'S HOST STATE POLICY





International Geneva, which is home to the main European headquarters of the United Nations and to the largest number of UN specialized agencies in the world, illustrates the important links between Switzerland and the UN. This picture during a conference in the Palais des Nations is a typical illustration of the city's international dimension.

Switzerland has a lengthy tradition of hosting international organizations and conferences. Geneva is home to 22 of the 25 organizations that have concluded a headquarters agreement with the Swiss government; the others are in Bern (2) and Basel (1). In addition, numerous other institutions such as programmes and secretariats of international conventions, quasi-governmental and non-governmental organizations are also based in Switzerland. Together with New York, Geneva – which is home to the European headquarters of the United Nations – is the world's second most important centre of multilateral co-operation. 160 states including Switzerland maintain a permanent mission in Geneva. As a result the city has become widely known as "International Geneva". Each year, several thousand international conferences are held in the city and are attended by many thousands of delegates.

From the political point of view, International Geneva enables Switzerland to exercise a disproportionately strong influence in international relations, and thus makes a valuable contribution to achieving our country's foreign policy objectives. At the economic level too, the positive effects for Switzerland resulting from the presence of a large number of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are considerable.

However, this undoubtedly enviable situation also gives rise to a variety of

obligations and challenges for Switzerland with regard to the hosting of international organizations and conferences. This especially concerns the financial consequences of remaining competitive in the international arena, meeting the constantly increasing security requirements and assuring the will of Geneva to maintain its international character. On 14 November 2007, the Federal Council instructed the FDFA to prepare documentation for a debate to take place towards the end of 2008 on the subject "Switzerland's host-state policy: current status and outlook".

## CHALLENGES FOR SWITZERLAND'S HOST-STATE POLICY

Switzerland's host-state policy focuses on five main areas:

- peace, security and disarmament;
- humanitarian affairs and human rights;
- public health;
- employment, the economy and science;
- sustainable development and the protection of natural resources.

It has recourse to the following instruments: the Building Foundation for International Organisations (FIPOI), which helps intergovernmental organizations to find suitable premises in Geneva and grants loans; updating of legal bases (entry into effect of the Swiss Federal

Host-State Act on 1 January 2008); and responsibility for the external security of buildings occupied by intergovernmental organizations.

Since the end of the Cold War, competition in hosting international conferences and organizations has increased strongly, with the consequence that traditional host centres such as Geneva are being placed under constantly growing pressure. To ensure its position as a major centre for international cooperation, it is essential that the public authorities – in particular the federal government and the Geneva cantonal authorities – actively continue to pursue their commitment to this important platform for Switzerland's foreign policy.

The fact that there is increasing international competition as well as a growing need for host nations to strengthen their security measures means that the costs associated with Switzerland's host-state policy are constantly rising. Another major challenge faced by Switzerland concerns the need to renovate and maintain buildings occupied by intergovernmental organizations domiciled in Geneva, including the Palais des Nations which houses the United Nations Office at Geneva. On this question, the position of the Federal Council is clear: the organizations that own the real estate are responsible for their maintenance and renovation. This means that they are required to accumulate the necessary financial resources in a special mainte-

nance and renovation fund. However, more than one international organization has neglected this duty and the situation is becoming critical with respect to some of the older buildings such as the headquarters of the ILO and the Palais des Nations, where the costs of the now urgently required renovation amount to tens of millions of Swiss francs, and the organizations concerned do not have the necessary resources at their disposal at this time.

#### **ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE NEW SWISS FEDERAL HOST-STATE ACT**

In view of the importance of Switzerland's host-state policy, the Federal Council decided it was necessary to draw up a single body of law that would both incorporate suitable legal provisions and define the main practices and instruments. On 13 September 2006, it submitted a Message to Parliament concerning legislation governing privileges, immunities and facilities, as well as financial aid granted by Switzerland as the host state (Swiss Federal Host-State Act). On 22 July 2007, Parliament formally adopted the new legislation, and the Federal Council went on to approve the associated ordinance on 7 December 2007. Both the Act and the Ordinance entered into force on 1 January 2008. Together they incorporate in a single legal instrument all the previous laws and instructions on practices in the area of host-state policy, thus greatly facilitating the tasks of all involved parties (federal government, cantons, intergovernmen-

tal organizations, etc.). No new headquarter agreements were concluded in 2007.

#### **INFRASTRUCTURE AND FINANCING (FIPOI BUILDINGS)**

As a host nation, Switzerland has a vital interest in offering international organizations operating within its sovereign territory the best possible working conditions. The principal purpose of FIPOI is to help such organizations establish themselves in Geneva. The FIPOI is a foundation under private law and was established in 1964 by the federal government and the Canton of Geneva. According to its statutes, its purpose is to make office space permanently available to international organizations so that they can operate under the best possible conditions. Following a revision of its statutes in 2004, FIPOI is now also permitted to offer its services in the Canton of Vaud if this should become necessary in the interests of Switzerland's host-state policy.

To help FIPOI fulfil its mandate, the federal government grants it interest-free loans that are repayable in 50 years, and the Canton of Geneva assigns it areas of land with development rights. FIPOI permits international organizations to purchase, construct or convert buildings. It is also authorized to buy or develop property itself, as well as rent it out and manage it.

On 31 December 2007, the outstanding loans granted by the federal government to FIPOI amounted to CHF 348 million, of which 339 million were for international organizations and 9 million for FIPOI itself. By way of comparison, the figures as of 31 December 2006 were CHF 370 million, 360 million of which were for international organizations and 10 million for FIPOI.

In 2008, the following real estate projects have either been, or are to be, submitted to Parliament for approval: financing of a new administrative building for the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Gland (Canton of Vaud); financing of an extension to building No. 40 on the complex of the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva; financing of the renovation of the Centre William Rappard, headquarters of the World Trade Organization in Geneva; financing the construction of a logistics centre for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva.

#### **SECURITY**

In accordance with the provisions of international law, Switzerland is obliged to protect intergovernmental organizations and foreign missions (embassies, consulates, permanent missions) operating within its territory. It is standard international practice that the host nation assumes responsibility for protecting the external perimeter of the premises. The organization concerned is however

responsible for financing security equipment installed in and on the buildings, for the enclosure, including fencing. The foreign States concerned are also responsible for protecting the internal perimeter of their diplomatic and consular missions.

Having suffered a number of terrorist attacks, the United Nations has had to acknowledge the fact that it can no longer rely on its flag for protection. The renewed threats by Ayman al-Zawahiri, one of the leaders in the Al Qaeda network who has called the United Nations an enemy of Islam and Muslims, will undoubtedly increase the pressure on Switzerland to implement preventive measures. Switzerland takes its security obligations as a host nation very seriously. In 2006, the Swiss federal parliament approved a credit facility of CHF 10 million for the period from 2006 to 2010 for the purpose of financing the security of buildings occupied by international organizations in Geneva.

Over the past few years, security has become a matter of immense importance for all international organizations, especially following the attacks on the offices of the UN in Baghdad in 2003 and Algiers in 2007. Following these attacks, the UN emphasized the need for a radical change in its security policy regarding its employees, while underscoring the overriding responsibility of host nations to protect the personnel and property of the UN, and asking govern-

ments to work more closely with the UN on this issue. In January 2008, the UN Secretary-General announced the creation of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security, a commission entrusted with the immediate task of evaluating the security measures necessary to protect UN personnel and facilities throughout the world.

## **MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN SWITZERLAND**

The status of host nation for international conferences and organizations enables Switzerland to benefit from a special role within the United Nations Office at Geneva. Switzerland was a full member of a number of specialized agencies of the UN system long before it joined the UN itself. While it is more in New York – the seat of the UN General Assembly – rather than in Geneva that Switzerland's change of status in 2002 has had its most tangible impact over the past five years, its membership has nonetheless had a positive effect in terms of safeguarding the interests of International Geneva. Switzerland now benefits from its status as a fully fledged member, and participates actively and unreservedly in multilateral co-operation within the framework of the UN. It possesses all the necessary rights to which a member State is entitled to safeguard its interests, including that to propose candi-

dacies for positions within international organizations.

In its capacity as a full member of the UN, Switzerland sets out to ensure that international organizations in Geneva benefit from suitable working conditions and can function efficiently. This involves promoting activities that meet its own interests within the particular areas of expertise of the organizations concerned, and which further the image of International Geneva throughout the world.

The priority currently attached within the UN to greater coherence of operational activities in the field means that the specialized agencies need to coordinate their actions throughout the entire UN system more closely. This has consequences of a practical nature for the organizations based in Switzerland. Switzerland supports all measures to increase coherence within the UN system, and underscores the unique character of International Geneva. The many organizations, agencies, programmes and funds based in Geneva and the broad variety of their interactions are a good example of the successful utilisation of existing synergies within the UN system.

### **WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION**

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is one of the most important international organizations domiciled in Switzerland. Since it was founded in 1995, its head-



quarters have been in Geneva at the Centre William Rappard (CWR), which formerly housed the secretariat of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Due to the growing number of its members, new rounds of negotiations and new missions, as well as intensive efforts by member States to resolve various existing disputes, the needs of the WTO for office space and personnel have greatly increased during the past few years.

The WTO recently asked Switzerland as host nation to approve a loan of CHF 60 million from FIPOI for the purpose of financing an additional building in Geneva. In line with its policy of supporting the development of the WTO, the Federal Council responded positively to this request in November 2005 and submitted a Message to Parliament to this effect. The Council of States gave its approval during the spring session in 2006. Shortly afterwards, Pascal Lamy,

the new Director-General of the WTO, stated his longer-term goal of accommodating all WTO personnel under one roof, and that the project concerning an additional building would thus merely take the form of an interim solution. The parliamentary debates on this project were therefore adjourned until more detailed information on the new strategy of the WTO becomes available. In 2006, the General Council of the WTO – which embodies all member states and is re-

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World Post Day in  
China



World Post Day  
in South Africa



World Post Day in Costa  
Rica

## **WORLD POST DAY**

Each year on 9 October post offices around the world celebrate World Post Day. Many events are organized in an effort to remind the general public that the postal service is central to a country's economic and social life: the issue of special stamps, guided tours of post offices and sorting offices, demonstrations of new technology, open days, competitions, and special activities for post office workers. It is also on this day that the winners of international letter-writing competitions for young people, organized jointly each year since 1972 by the UPU and UNESCO, receive their prizes.





sponsible for deciding strategic issues – and the Federal Council entrusted Pascal Lamy and the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) with the task of initiating official talks. The outcome was to favour the concept of renovating and internally expanding the Centre William Rappard, the current domicile of the WTO. At its session on 4 July 2007, the Federal Council announced its approval of negotiations on this option, and entrusted the head of the FDFA with the task of conducting them.

During the negotiations that were conducted until mid-December 2007, the two delegations closely examined the option of renovating, expanding and extending the internal capacity of the Centre William Rappard, and incorporated the plan of the Director-General into the development project. In addition to the construction work mentioned above, it also includes the temporary rental of premises in the vicinity of the WTO on chemin des Mines to accommodate its personnel while renovation work is in progress. According to the Federal Council's mandate to the FDFA, the total costs of the project (including the rental of temporary premises) must not exceed CHF 130 million. Of this, 60 million are intended as an interest-free loan to the WTO that is repayable in 50 years, and 70 million are to take the form of a non-repayable financing contribution by the federal government. On 19 December 2007, at the recommendation of its Budget, Finance and Administra-

tion Committee, the General Council of the WTO formally entrusted the Director General with the task of negotiating a solution according to which the Centre William Rappard could be developed as the single location for its headquarters as foreseen in the development project outlined above. On 21 December 2007, the Federal Council approved the result of the negotiations and at the same time authorized the FDFA to request the payment of the following amounts via an initial supplement to the 2008 budget:

- A total of CHF 7.5 million for planning activities and studies relating to the renovation/capacity expansion of the Centre William Rappard, and for organising an architectural competition for the extension to the existing complex.
- CHF 3 million a year for a period of 5 years for rental of office premises on chemin des Mines starting from 1 January 2008.

On 21 February, at its first session in 2008, the parliamentary finance delegation approved the above-mentioned credit facilities so that the most urgent planning activities and preparation work could be initiated without delay.

The long-term concept of the project is to provide the WTO with a single complex with capacity for 1,100 workplaces. The aim is for the complex to meet this capacity requirement following the ren-

ovation/capacity expansion of the current premises and the completion of the planned extension.

As far as the schedule is concerned, the planning stage has been completed and the preparatory work has now been initiated. The FDFA is currently formulating a Message to Parliament regarding the renovation project, which has to be approved by the Federal Council before the 2008 summer session. The renovation work can commence as soon as the respective credits have been approved by Parliament.

Later on, the Federal Council will have to submit two additional Messages to Parliament: one on extending the internal capacity of the Centre William Rappard and the other on expanding the existing complex.

## **WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION**

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has been facing criticism for a number of years, as well as problems concerning credibility, especially with regard to the retiring Director-General, Kamil Idris, and the management of the Organization. A variety of shortcomings have been brought to the attention of its member States and documented in internal and external audits.

During the last general assembly of the WIPO, held in Geneva from 24 Sep-

tember to 3 October 2007, a number of member States – including Switzerland – opposed the adoption of the 2008/2009 budget, which was subsequently not approved due to the lack of a qualified majority.

As host nation to numerous international organizations, Switzerland is strongly committed to the promotion of good governance and management principles based on integrity, transparency, reliability and effectiveness. It is in the interests of multilateral cooperation that international organizations based in Switzerland (and indeed elsewhere) comply with these standards.

Switzerland's current priority is to play a role, together with other member States and in accordance with the provisions of the Organization's statutes, in appointing a new Director-General so that WIPO's future existence can be secured and its reputation as a respected UN institution restored.

15 candidacies were received by 13 February 2008, the deadline for the submission of candidacies for the position of Director-General. The WIPO Coordination Committee, which comprises 83 member states, met on May 13 and designated Francis Gurry (Australia) to the position of Director-General. Its nomination must be formally adopted by the General Assembly of WIPO at its meeting of September 2008.

## CONFERENCES AND MAJOR EVENTS

The international conference on the humanitarian situation of refugees and internally displaced persons in Iraq and its neighbouring countries, convened by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, was held in Geneva on 17 and 18 April 2008. The main objective was to sensitize the international community to the humanitarian situation and suffering of refugees and to look for common solutions. Switzerland emphasized the need for humanitarian support from the international community, especially for the most vulnerable groups. To date, approximately 5,000 Iraqi nationals have been granted asylum or temporary protection in Switzerland.

The 15<sup>th</sup> Congress of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) was held in Geneva from 7 to 25 May 2007, at which a resolution was adopted that had been submitted by Switzerland and other member States calling for greater transparency in governance issues. In addition, Switzerland warmly welcomed the decision by the member States to hold the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Climate Conference in Switzerland in the autumn of 2009.

The 60<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization (WHO) was held in Geneva from 14 to 23 May 2007. This is by far the most important global conference on health. Another institution in the area of health has constantly gained in importance since it opened its headquarters in Geneva in 2002: the

Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM). The GFATM has received contributions or pledges amounting to more than USD 20 billion, and is now one of the world's leading development organizations with an investment potential of more than USD 3 billion annually to support public health in developing countries. Switzerland concluded a headquarters agreement with the GFATM and has contributed CHF 21 million for the period from 2008 to 2010.

The 30<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent was held in Geneva from 26 to 30 November 2007. Switzerland supported and promoted its stance in each of the areas covered by the conference (humanitarian challenges, clarification of the auxiliary role of the various national Red Cross/Red Crescent societies, international humanitarian law, strengthening of the legal framework during interventions and disasters) in line with the Swiss Confederation's humanitarian commitment as approved by the Federal Council in its 2000 Foreign Policy Report. This conference was widely regarded as highly successful, above all because it was able to restore the unity of the movement.

The importance Switzerland attaches to humanitarian issues was also demonstrated by the creation of the Global Humanitarian Forum on 25 June 2007, presided by the former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. The aim of this

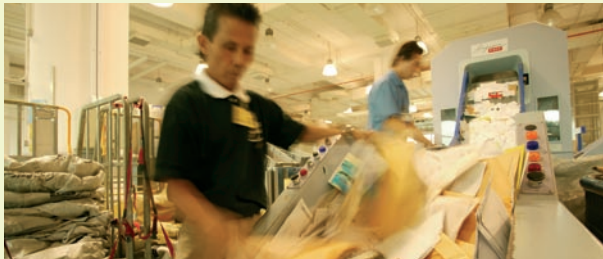
institution, which takes the form of a foundation under Swiss law, is to become a platform for dialogue on existing and evolving humanitarian challenges. The federal government contributed CHF 1.3 million to its start-up capital. The first conference of the Forum will be held in June 2008.

The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) met in Bern on 28 and 29 April 2008. This body, which is chaired by the UN Secretary-General, comprises the heads of UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies and of organizations linked with the UN (WTO, IAEA). It is the highest coordination body of the UN system at the level of the secretariats. The Universal Postal Union (UPU) in Bern hosted this internal UN meeting. The main items on the agenda were climate change, security of food supply, security of UN personnel and buildings, and current political and economic issues. Switzerland primarily contributed by providing logistics and security, and

the President of the Confederation, Pascal Couchepin, hosted an official dinner in honour of the UN Secretary-General and the members of the CEB.

Subject to the approval of the Federal Council, Geneva will also host the 24<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Universal Postal Union, which is held every four years. The Congress was originally planned for Nairobi in summer 2008, but in view of the violence that broke out in Kenya between the end of 2007 and the beginning of 2008, on 8 February 2008 the Administrative Council decided to change the venue. According to the general regulations of the UPU, if circumstances prevent the designated host state from organizing its congress, the International Office of the UPU, which is based in Bern, can hold it in Switzerland with the approval of the Swiss federal government. The 24<sup>th</sup> Congress, which will be attended by around 1,500 delegates from the 191 member States of the UPU, will be held from 23 July to 12 August 2008 in Geneva.

**1948–2008**  
**60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Postal Union (UPU), a specialized agency of the United Nations**



## **439.5 BILLION LETTERS**

As well as ensuring the proper functioning of a truly universal network offering modern products and services, the UPU determines the rules for international postal operations and makes recommendations to stimulate growth in the volume of these exchanges and improve the quality of service. Each year the 5.5 million post office employees process and distribute some 434 billion letters within national borders, as well as 5.5 billion letters for international distribution and more than 6 billion parcels. In addition many post offices offer online services as well as logistical and hybrid mail services.

# SWITZERLAND'S PRESENCE WITHIN THE UN SYSTEM







Switzerland's presence at the United Nations headquarters in New York is marked not only by its flag but by the impact of its concrete initiatives as an active member.



In order to effectively defend its interests and pursue its objectives within the United Nations, Switzerland not only needs to be represented in intergovernmental institutions but also needs to have personnel in the secretariats and executive bodies of the various organizations. Switzerland supports its candidacies for representative bodies through election campaigns among the member States of the respective organizations. Candidacies for executive bodies are promoted through lobbying activities directed at the people and committees responsible for nomination.

## ELECTED SWISS REPRESENTATION IN UN BODIES

In part through its representation on administrative and intergovernmental bodies, Switzerland is able to play an active role within the United Nations. Like all other member States, Switzerland is represented in the UN's plenary institution, the General Assembly. It is also actively involved in various subsidiary and specialized organs of the General Assembly. One of Switzerland's main goals is to be represented in those UN bodies that are of importance for achieving its foreign policy objectives and whose objectives are in harmony with its foreign policy priorities. Here, the Human Rights Council is of particular interest in view of Switzerland's traditional commitment in this area. Switzerland made a significant contribution to the creation of this important

institution that has its headquarters in Geneva.

Professor Lucius Caflisch has represented Switzerland in the UN International Law Commission since 2006. This commission is responsible for the ongoing development and codification of international law, and comprises 34 independent law experts. On 19 May 2008, it celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary on an occasion that was attended by Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey and numerous prominent guests, including the President of the International Court of Justice, Mrs. Rosalynn Higgins.

Switzerland is candidating for a seat in the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 2010. It is already involved in a number of its subsidiary bodies, including the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

Switzerland is also represented on a variety of committees in the area of human rights. In 2006, for example, Professor Barbara Wilson, a Swiss international law expert, was elected to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), which focuses on a variety of areas, including the right to work under fair and favourable conditions, the right to social security, the right to education and the right to a reasonable standard of living. In 2006, Professor Walter Kälin commenced his term of office on the Human Rights Committee (his second

mandate), which is the civil and political rights counterpart to the CESCR. He resigned from this office in May 2008 to devote his full attention to his other mandate as the UN Secretary-General's representative for the human rights of internally displaced persons. Finally, in 2005 Jean Zermatten was elected as an expert in the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child for a term of office of four years.

## CANDIDACIES

### Renewed candidacy for the Human Rights Council

In 2006, Switzerland was elected by the UN General Assembly to serve on the Human Rights Council for a term of three years. When this mandate expires in 2009, Switzerland does not intend to renew its candidacy immediately, rather it will aim to seek re-election to the Human Rights Council for the period from 2010 to 2013. For this purpose it submitted its official candidacy on 22 October 2007. Since the UN General Assembly will be carrying out a fundamental review of the statutes of the Human Rights Council in 2011, it is especially important for Switzerland to occupy a seat at that time so that it will be able to defend its interests as effectively as possible.

### Candidacy for the World Heritage Committee in 2009

Another priority for Switzerland is its candidacy for the UNESCO World Heritage Committee which comprises

21 members and is responsible for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. Its members are elected by the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention which will convene for its next session in 2009. If Switzerland's candidacy is successful it will serve on the Committee from 2010 to 2013. The main aim of Switzerland's candidacy is to strengthen awareness among the general public of the universal concept of world heritage.

New challenges such as global warming and the debate on sustainable development have led to the politicisation of the Committee's activities, and this has also affected Switzerland. In addition, the immense success of the Convention has given rise to certain management and efficiency problems. Membership of the Committee would enable Switzerland to tackle some of these challenges and problems at the international level.

For the purpose of coordinating the campaign for election to the World Heritage Committee, a special committee has been formed comprising representatives of all involved Swiss federal departments (FDFA, DETEC and FDHA).

### **Security Council**

As a full member of the United Nations, Switzerland is entitled to temporary representation in all of the main UN bodies. This means it can also stand for one of the ten non-permanent seats on the Security Council. In order to strengthen

Switzerland's position within the UN, the Federal Council has already set out in its previous Report on relations between Switzerland and the UN (2007) the possibility of candidating for a seat on the Security Council in the medium term. Such a step would demand very careful examination and an in-depth domestic debate.

### **PRESENCE OF APPOINTED SWISS NATIONALS**

In addition to pursuing its foreign policy objectives through election to representative bodies, Switzerland also aims to ensure that it is represented at all levels of UN executive bodies and secretariats through highly qualified personnel.

### **CURRENT SITUATION**

The number of Swiss nationals at the UN Secretariat has risen from 172 to 204 since 2002. The total number of personnel is around 20,000, which means that Switzerland's share is about 1%. For Switzerland it is important to be represented by an appropriate number of its citizens at all hierarchical levels of the Secretariat. Of the 204 Swiss nationals, 117 provide general services and 87 are active at higher levels. As of 1 January 2008, the latter group includes two Under-Secretary-Generals, Nicolas Michel (Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and UN Legal Counsel) and Konrad Osterwalder (Rector of the United Nations University).

In the year under review, Adolf Ogi and Carla Del Ponte stepped down from their respective posts. In February 2001, the then-UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, appointed Adolf Ogi (a former Federal Councillor) as Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace. During his 7-year term of office, Adolf Ogi succeeded in establishing sport as an effective UN instrument for promoting peace and development throughout the world, and as such for disseminating the ideals and values of the United Nations. Last year, Carla Del Ponte stepped down as chief prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, a post she had occupied since her appointment in 1999. From 1999 to 2003, she was also chief prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Through her commitment she provided major impetus to strengthening international jurisdiction. At the beginning of 2008, Nicolas Michel announced that he would resign as Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and UN Legal Counsel in the middle of the year. During his term of office he made a significant contribution to adapting UN institutional law to the needs for reform and the changing legal and political conditions.

### **CHALLENGES**

The above-mentioned resignations have greatly reduced Switzerland's presence at the top level. Furthermore, they underscore a fundamental problem that

presents a difficult task for both the UN and Switzerland over the near and medium terms: retirement of high-level personnel and the shortage of young, qualified personnel to replace them.

Both the average age of international officials when they join the United Nations and the average age of UN employees have increased during the past ten years. The average age of high-level personnel is currently 45.9. The reduction of Switzerland's presence is partly attributable to the high requirements and the limited number of positions open to potential top-level officials at mid- and high-level cadre. But it is also attributable to the fact that other international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector often offer equal or better employment conditions, and are thus more attractive employers than the United Nations.

As a result of the existing age structure of the UN workforce, around 22.7% of UN officials will reach retirement age within the next 5 to 7 years. This means that the UN, and Switzerland, must face the problem of finding qualified personnel to replace those entering retirement. In view of this, the FDFA is endeavouring to identify gaps and posts that are of relevance for Switzerland's foreign policy objectives, to find well qualified and suitable candidates to take over these positions, and to support their applications.

The FDFA finances a variety of Junior Professional Officer (JPO) positions, thus helping them to enter the UN system. In doing this it incorporates Switzerland's foreign policy interests and, as a competence centre for JPO programmes, the FDFA also supports other federal departments in their efforts to recruit candidates.

The annual career forum, "International Career Day", which is held in Lausanne and is attended by more than 20 international organizations, provides an opportunity for interested young people to find out about the requirements and employment conditions of a UN career and to identify candidates.

Some medium and high-level positions of relevance to Swiss foreign policy are identified by our missions abroad, but the majority are identified in the missions in Geneva and New York. The FDFA in Bern then looks for suitable candidates, who then receive specific and individual support.

In addition to a presence in the Secretariat, Switzerland also seeks representation in the special mandates of the Secretary-General. Following the resignation of former Federal Councillor Adolf Ogi as Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace (see above), the only remaining representative at this level is Professor Walter Kälin, who has held the office of the UN Secretary-General's representa-

tive on the human rights of internally displaced persons since 2004.

In August 2007, the Secretary-General appointed Professor Konrad Osterwalder (former Rector of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich) to the post of Rector of the United Nations University. Following the resignation of Under-Secretary-General Nicolas Michel (see above), Professor Osterwalder will be the only remaining Swiss representative at the level of under-secretary-general.

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## **MODERNIZATION**

Modernizing the world's postal network to ensure a fast and reliable service of irreproachable quality is one of the greatest challenges facing the UPU. The introduction of new technologies makes it possible to develop new services and modernize existing ones. The Union encourages post offices to join its international payments system for example, enabling them to offer an electronic money transfer service that is safe and reliable, a service much in demand by the public in general, and especially popular with migrant workers. International money transfers are the second most important source of direct foreign investment.



# SWITZERLAND, CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE UNITED NATIONS



On the occasion of the first annual conference of the Swiss "UNO Academia" research network, which was launched in Lucerne on 18 October 2007, Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey looked back on the first five years of Switzerland's UN membership. A new network named "Youth UN-Network Switzerland" (JUNES) was founded the same day.



The Federal Council is convinced that a civil society that is dynamic, active and committed is as important for the smooth and efficient functioning of the UN as the material conditions such as infrastructure and the protection of people and property. A stronger partnership with civil society in general and the academic world in particular enhances both the quality and the legitimacy of the activities of the United Nations.

### **SWISS CIVIL SOCIETY – AN ESSENTIAL PARTNERSHIP**

For Switzerland, promoting a first-class academic environment is a decisive factor for maintaining the attractiveness of Switzerland and “International Geneva”.

On 18 October 2007, the FDFA officially launched the “UNO Academia” network, the aim of which is to stimulate research in the areas of activity covered by the UN, and to promote exchanges and co-operation between academic circles and international organizations based in Switzerland. On the same day, the new network held its inaugural conference that was attended by a very large number of participants and offered an opportunity for academics, professionals and members of Parliament to exchange views and ideas with the then President of the Swiss Confederation, Micheline Calmy-Rey, on the topic of “Switzerland and the UN five years after accession – results and outlook”. On

26 October 2007, the network proposed a colloquium on the same topic to be held in Geneva at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

Within the scope of its efforts to promote academic involvement and expertise in support of the activities of the UN, Switzerland is able to turn to the United Nations University for support. The appointment of Konrad Osterwalder to the post of Rector of the UNU, with the title of Under-Secretary-General reporting directly to Ban Ki-moon, is a rare opportunity that offers Switzerland a privileged channel for pursuing its goals.

The process of strengthening relations with civil society called for by the Federal Council has also been boosted by the creation of JUNES (Youth UN-Network Switzerland), which promotes thought and debate, and draws attention to youth activities associated with the UN. On 1 and 2 March 2008, it held its first Swiss Model United Nations (“JUNESMUN”) in Bern, which was attended by around 50 participants and simulated UN debates and activities. Finally, students of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies again held its “International Geneva Model United Nations” session at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 29 March to 4 April 2008, which was attended by almost 200 young people from all over the world.

### **GRADUATE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, IHEID: BIRTH OF A NEW INSTITUTION**

The establishment of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in January 2008, resulting from the unification of the Graduate Institute of International Studies (HEI) and the Graduate Institute of Development Studies (IUED), is a tangible outcome of the concerted efforts that have been made during the past few years to increase the range of opportunities for international and development studies in Geneva. The federal and cantonal authorities, as well as the various partners in the project, have set out to create a new driving force in these two fields of study.

The required funding and creation of this new institution were the subject of a Message to Parliament relating to the promotion of education, research and innovation in the period between 2008 and 2011. It was adopted by the Federal Council and submitted to Parliament on 24 January 2007. Following consultation with the two former institutions (Graduate Institute of International Studies and Graduate Institute of Development Studies), the Federal Council and the Conseil d’Etat (State Council) of Geneva adopted the statutes of the new institution and approved the composition of its inaugural Foundation Board on 16 May 2007. After the deed of foundation had been signed, the new Institute concluded an

agreement with the federal and cantonal authorities concerning its declared objectives on 26 November 2007.

The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies relies on co-operation between the academic world and international players as well as on Switzerland's international studies network in order to increase the attractiveness of Geneva and the country as a whole. It aims to establish competence centres that offer the international community high quality platforms for research, expertise and education.

The Institute is to be housed in the Maison de la Paix, located in the section of the city where many international organizations are situated, and is expected to be ready for occupancy by 2013. An international architectural competition was launched in January 2008, with the winning project to be announced in the autumn. Villa Barton and the building on rue Rothschild (seat of the former Graduate Institute of Development Studies) will also remain at the disposal of the new Institute.

## EXAMPLES OF CIVIL SOCIETY'S PARTICIPATION IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The Federal Council is pleased to note that its policy of encouraging participation by Swiss civil society in activities associated with our country's UN policy is taking shape in a variety of ways.

For example, within the scope of its participation in the Human Rights Council and the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), in which Switzerland has been involved this spring, Switzerland has worked closely with a coalition of locally based organizations active in the promotion and protection of human rights. The federal authorities organized a one-day conference with civil society representatives on 26 February 2008 in Bern. The main aim was to initiate an open and comprehensive dialogue on the protection of human rights in Switzerland. This initial debate on the report by the federal authorities concerning the Universal Periodic Review was an opportunity to bypass the strictly sectoral approach and thus obtain input from broader circles. The main points arising from this discussion have been included as an appendix to Switzerland's report. By choosing to adopt this more open approach – especially important in the area of human rights – Switzerland aims to draw attention to the added value associated with the expertise civil society has to offer, and the additional positive contribution civil society can make to

the federal government's policies and visions.

A group of around 30 non-governmental organizations submitted its own report to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights at the beginning of February 2008. Switzerland's report on the Universal Periodic Review was submitted on 24 March 2008. Switzerland was reviewed by the UPR working group of the Human Rights Council on 8 May 2008. The Swiss delegation participating in the review was led by the head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. The report on the review will be adopted by the Human Rights Council during its June session.

Another example concerns the creation of a Welcome Desk by non-governmental organizations to facilitate the participation of NGO delegates in the activities of the Human Rights Council. This service is managed by the NGO "Mandat International" in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations at Geneva, the secretariat of the Human Rights Council and a number of NGOs, and it receives financial support from the FDFA. During its 7-month trial period, i.e. the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> sessions of the Human Rights Council, the Welcome Desk assisted about 3,500 visitors and answered more than 4,000 enquiries.

Finally, on 19 and 20 November 2007 a conference was held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva as part of the ongo-

ing debate on UN reforms and ways in which the UN can be brought closer to the general public. The aim was to prepare the launching of an initiative calling for the creation of a UN parliamentary assembly.

This conference, which was organised and presided over by the secretariat of the initiative committee was attended by some 30 participants (members of NGOs, six members of Parliament, aca-

demics, and Switzerland as an observer) who discussed the next steps to launch such an initiative, while taking account of the intergovernmental nature of the United Nations. The presence of former National Councillor Remo Gysin and of National Councillor Geri Müller (who was appointed by the Foreign Policy Committee of the National Council as an official observer) clearly indicated the importance attached to this issue by Parliament.

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## OWN BRANDS

Stamp collecting is a passion shared by millions of people. Each year there are ever more attractive and innovative issues of new stamps. The stamps displayed here are the UPU's very own. Roughly every three years a new stamp is created. Each has a special theme and they are used for mail sent by the UPU International Bureau. These stamps are a collector's item. They cannot be used for normal mail. The theme of the most recent stamp (bottom left) is humanitarian postal services, part of a joint issue by the Swiss Post Office and the Postal Administration of the United Nations.



# CONCLUSIONS AND SWITZERLAND'S PRIORITIES FOR THE 63<sup>rd</sup> SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY







Nature's beauty, which is threatened by climate change, is an important part of Switzerland's heritage. This threat is most noticeable in the retreat of its glaciers. The environment will be one of Switzerland's main priorities at the 63<sup>rd</sup> session of the UN General Assembly.



While taking account of current geopolitical realities and the experience it has acquired in many areas since it became a full member of the UN, Switzerland intends to utilise its particular position within the UN system to defend and promote its interests.

Since it is not a member of any alliance, Switzerland is in a good position to act freely and creatively. On the other hand, this independence also results in a certain degree of isolation, which however deprives Switzerland both of the automatic support of allies and critical mass at crucial moments. In view of this situation, it is important for Switzerland to implement cooperation strategies that are flexible and that can be adapted according to theme and region. In order to exercise an influence and safeguard its own interests to the greatest possible extent, Switzerland needs constantly to develop innovative ideas that are likely to meet with acceptance among various moderate groups.

Switzerland's commitment within the United Nations will continue along the same lines as before:

- Financial commitment: With a contribution equivalent to 1.216% of the UN budget, Switzerland is the 14<sup>th</sup> biggest contributor and is thus a significant player in terms of financial commitment.
- Commitment through initiatives (Human Rights Council, improvement of working methods of the Security Council, fight against terrorism, administrative reform).

- Commitment through the presence of Switzerland and of Swiss experts at all levels of the UN system.

At the operational level, Switzerland's priorities at the 63<sup>rd</sup> UN General Assembly are based on the activities it has been pursuing since its accession:

- To campaign for the implementation of the mandate of the Human Rights Council, in particular its innovative instruments such as the Universal Periodic Review;
- To pursue its efforts to improve the working methods of the Security Council, including improvements to the sanctions regime (listing/delisting);
- To bring to fruition its contribution to the General Assembly's global strategy against terrorism;
- To strengthen the UN's internal administration and supervision;
- To work together with its partners on strengthening the operational system, particularly in the area of environmental governance;
- To increase its diplomatic contributions in the area of conflict transformation.

The Federal Council is ever aware of the fact that the United Nations is a supplementary but increasingly indispensable instrument for Switzerland in safeguarding its interests and accomplishing its foreign policy objectives.

Switzerland uses its scope for manoeuvre within the UN system for safeguarding its interests and pursuing its foreign policy

objectives. It has a strong interest in the existence of a universal organization that promotes international order based on law, peace and freedom. The UN is the main global forum in which States can join forces to deal with all common problems. It is therefore in Switzerland's interest to pursue its commitment to reforms that set out to strengthen the UN and ensure its efficient utilisation of the resources at its disposal.

The Federal Council also intends to continue pursuing its policy of direct dialogue with Parliament which it has conducted since Switzerland became a full member of the UN, while abiding by the commitments it undertook during the campaign for Switzerland's accession. This dialogue is conducted at several levels: within the Foreign Affairs Committees and during plenary sessions of the federal parliament (National Council and Council of States), on the occasion of the review of this annual report or during debates on current issues. Both houses are required to approve the annual report of the Federal Council, and at the same time they have an opportunity to comment on Switzerland's priorities for the next session of the UN General Assembly.

The Federal Council will continue to attach the degree of importance to Switzerland's relations with the UN that such an irreplaceable universal instrument commands so that our country can continue to safeguard its own interests and those of its citizens.

# ANNEXES

## DEVELOPMENT OF SWITZERLAND'S ASSESSED CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UN (2006–2008)

(in Swiss francs)

	2006	2007	2008
<b>Regular budget</b>			
- Annual contribution to Capital	26 556 374	30 411 471	27 801 050
- Master Plan fund	1 691 449	5 902 769	5 218 769
<b>UN tribunals</b>			
- International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia	2 165 389	2 401 470	2 693 595
- International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda	1 920 927	1 995 950	1 916 575
<b>Peacekeeping operations</b>	46 939 029	85 143 319	85 651 311 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Contributions to funds for the biennial budget period:</b>			
- Working capital fund		252 781	
- Reserve fund for peacekeeping operations			
<b>Total</b>	<b>79 273 168</b>	<b>126 107 760</b>	<b>123 281 300</b>

USD/CHF exchange rate: 2006 = 1.30      2007 = 1.25      2008 = 1.25

The rate applied for Switzerland's contributions in the period from 2004 to 2006 was 1.197%. In accordance with a resolution of the UN General Assembly, this rate was raised to 1.216% for the period from 2007 to 2009.

<sup>1</sup> Estimate only – the expenses associated with peacekeeping operations will only be calculated precisely with effect from the end of 2008.

## DEVELOPMENT OF SWITZERLAND'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UN SYSTEM (2003–2005)

(in Swiss francs)

		2003	2004	2005
<b>1. UN</b>				
- UN regular budget (including assessed contribution)		27 956 836	26 086 001	30 153 190
- Peacekeeping operations		50 810 702	60 923 791	91 773 642
- Tribunals, programmes, institutes, commissions <sup>2</sup>		228 269 079	254 180 058	243 251 428
<b>2. Specialized agencies<sup>3</sup></b>		76 365 778	67 542 847	73 825 406
<b>3. World Bank, International Monetary Fund, (Bretton Woods) and associated institutions<sup>4</sup></b>		196 666 047	216 216 542	212 184 546
<b>Total</b>		<b>580 068 442</b>	<b>624 949 239</b>	<b>651 188 212</b>

USD/CHF exchange rate: 2003 = 1.50      2004 = 1.35      2005 = 1.25

<sup>2</sup> In the areas of development, humanitarian aid, human rights, environmental protection, research, education.

<sup>3</sup> FAO, IAEA, IFAD, ICAO, ILO, ITU, IMO, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WHO, WIPO, WMO

<sup>4</sup> CGIAR, EMF, AID, IFC, MIGA

## INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS BASED IN SWITZERLAND

<b>International organizations in Switzerland with a domicile agreement (22 in Geneva)</b>	<b>25</b>
Office of the United Nations at Geneva (UNOG)	1
Specialized agencies of the United Nations <i>Including: World Health Organization (WHO), International Labour Organization (ILO), Universal Postal Union (UPU, Bern)</i>	7
International organizations outside of the UN system <i>Including: European Free Trade Association (EFTA), Bank for International Settlements (BIS, Basel), European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), World Trade Organization (WTO)</i>	17
<b>International organizations of a quasi governmental nature in Switzerland, with tax agreements</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Including: International Air Transport Association (IATA), Airports Council International (ACI), World Conservation Union (IUCN, Gland, Canton of Vaud)</i>	
<b>Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with an international character</b>	
NGOs based in Geneva with consulting status in the United Nations	ca 250
International sports associations and organizations	ca 30
<b>Foreign states and permanent missions</b>	
Representations of foreign states at the UNOG, the WTO or the Conference on Disarmament (CD), missions and delegations	227
<b>Conferences, delegations, official visits</b>	
Meetings and conferences of international organizations in Switzerland	ca 2,100
Participating delegates and experts	ca 125,800
Participating heads of state and government, ministers	ca 3,000
<b>Financial data (in Swiss francs)</b>	
Annual total budget of international organizations in Geneva	ca 8 billion
Estimated expenditure of international organizations in Switzerland with domicile agreements	ca 4,4 billion
<b>International community in Switzerland (rounded figures)</b>	
Employees of international organizations in Switzerland	ca 20,000
Employees of international organizations in Geneva	ca 18,000
Members of diplomatic missions in Geneva	ca 3,600
Employees of quasi-intergovernmental organizations in Switzerland	ca 1,000
Employees of international NGOs in Geneva	ca 2,400
International community (employees and family members) in Switzerland	ca 40,000
Other employees of "International Geneva"	ca 14,000

Additional information is available on the web site of the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the Office of the United Nations and other International Organisations in Geneva (<http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/fr/home/topics/intorg/un/unge.html>) and the web site of the Statistics Office of the Canton of Geneva (<http://www.geneve.ch/internationale/la-geneve-internationale/>).

## IMPRESSUM

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