



## **Switzerland's priorities for the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly**

Switzerland's values and foreign policy interests largely coincide with the objectives and basic principles of the United Nations. This makes the UN a central instrument for Switzerland to implement its foreign policy objectives, safeguard its interests and promote its values as they are set out in the Federal Constitution. Switzerland's priorities are based on the two main strategic areas of its engagement at the UN for the 2012–22 period: peace and security, and reform of the UN.

Switzerland has set the following priorities:

### **Peace and security**

In the area of peace and security, strengthening conflict prevention, for example by systematically including human rights as an integral part of security policy debates, remains a Swiss priority. The recently created cross-regional group of member states for human rights and conflict prevention, which Switzerland co-chairs, provides an important platform for Switzerland's activities. Peacebuilding and the concept of sustaining peace, which Switzerland actively promotes, remain priority areas of action. Switzerland will continue its chairmanship of the Burundi Configuration in the UN Peacebuilding Commission and pursue its commitment to dealing with the past and the prevention of atrocities. In the area of combating terrorism and preventing violent extremism, Switzerland gives special priority to addressing the causes of it and to the rule of law. Switzerland's commitment to 'women, peace and security' will be continued. Building on its successful presidency of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, Switzerland will also continue to engage in the area of disarmament in order to meet the challenges posed by nuclear weapons, conventional weapons and new technologies. It will continue its commitment to reforming the working methods of the UN Security Council.

### **Human rights**

Switzerland is committed to strengthening the Human Rights Council and human rights throughout the UN system. Thereby, Switzerland also strengthens International Geneva as a global centre of expertise in human rights. In the field of human rights, Switzerland pursues the following priorities: abolition of the death penalty, enforcement of the ban on torture and promotion of humane conditions of imprisonment, particular respect for the rights of women and children as well as the human rights of migrants, support for civilian human rights actors, protection of human rights defenders, respect for human rights in the context of peaceful protests, fighting impunity and corruption with consequences for human rights, and specific country situations. In addition, Switzerland is actively involved in the discussions in Geneva on improving the working methods of the Human Rights Council.

### **Sustainable development**

Switzerland supports the reform efforts of the UN leadership to strengthen the UN Development System and the international community through concrete recommendations for the efficient implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It also contributes to the further development of an effective follow-up and review mechanism for the 2030 Agenda. A major objective is to better exploit synergies between the General Assembly, its committees and the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and to reduce overlaps. In the area of financing for development, Switzerland is especially active in promoting innovative financing models. Partnerships between the UN and the private sector are to be strengthened. In addition, Switzerland will continue to take an active part in the negotiations on a

'Global Pact for the Environment'. It continues its commitment to improve the water governance within the UN system. As part of its health foreign policy, Switzerland will promote the fight against non-communicable diseases and tuberculosis at two high-level events and will work to ensure the improved implementation of healthcare provision in emergency situations, as well as policies in the area of addiction focusing on public health and human rights.

### **Migration**

Switzerland is committed to the adoption of an ambitious 'Global Compact on Migration' in December 2018 in Morocco together with appropriate implementation and review mechanisms. It supports the objective of this global framework to structure future global migration in a safer, more orderly and regulated manner on the basis of existing norms and obligations. Switzerland also supports the adoption and implementation of the second framework, the 'Global Compact on Refugees', which is currently in development.

### **Humanitarian aid**

Switzerland is committed to strengthening and reforming humanitarian aid. It calls on the UN to work with new actors, ideas and methods to ensure more efficient and effective provision of aid and protection for people in need. Thematic priorities are the protection of civilians, access for humanitarian actors to people in need, the protection of medical missions and facilities and, in general, respect for and compliance with international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles. Switzerland is continuing its commitment to disaster risk reduction, strengthening crisis prevention and the resilience of affected people. In May 2019, Switzerland, as host country, will co-chair the 'Global Platform', the largest international meeting in the area of disaster risk reduction.

### **Management and budget**

Switzerland is committed to a UN that is capable to deliver on its mandates effectively and efficiently. It supports the reforms at the UN for strong leadership and efficient administration, as well as adequate funding to ensure that the organisation is able to implement its mandate effectively. The establishment of a modern management culture at all levels of the UN is a central concern. Switzerland is also strongly committed to ensuring that the zero tolerance policy against sexual exploitation and abuse in UN field missions and harassment at the workplace will effectively be implemented.

### **International Geneva**

Promoting International Geneva as a centre of global governance is an overarching aspect of Switzerland's UN policy. The aim is to use the unique concentration of international organisations, actors, and expertise in Geneva even more extensively in international efforts to tackle the increasingly complex global challenges. Switzerland gives special priority to the promotion of Geneva as a hub to address new topics at the interface of politics, society, innovation, science, and business, in particular in the area of internet governance. In order to maintain this comparative advantage, the institutional framework conditions to deal with future themes and challenges must be optimised. At the same time, Geneva will continue to position itself as the host venue of peace talks. An additional priority is the modernisation of the buildings that house the international organisations in Geneva.