

The Fourth Annual Caux Forum for Human Security
Opening speech by Secretary of State Peter Maurer
Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
Caux, 10.07.2011

**“The Challenge to Human Security in the context of the present world situation:
What is Switzerland’s role?”**

**« Les défis pour la sécurité humaine dans le contexte mondial actuel –
Quel rôle pour la Suisse ? »**

Excellences,
Mesdames, Messieurs,

C'est un grand honneur pour moi d'être parmi vous aujourd'hui et d'ouvrir la quatrième édition du forum de Caux sur la sécurité humaine.

L'importance de cette manifestation n'est plus à démontrer. Elle permet à des artisans de la paix du monde entier, issus d'horizons variés de se rencontrer, de partager leurs expériences, d'évaluer les nouveaux défis en matière de sécurité humaine, et de proposer des solutions pour les surmonter. Ce forum est à la fois l'occasion d'apprendre et de développer de nouvelles initiatives pour améliorer les conditions de paix et de sécurité humaine dans le monde. Ces échanges ont notamment abouti, l'année passée, à l'adoption de l'Appel à l'action de Caux, qui rappelle l'importance cruciale des gens de conscience pour le bien-être des sociétés.

Le gouvernement suisse est fier de soutenir la tenue d'une telle rencontre et remercie chaleureusement Initiatives et Changement pour l'organisation de ce forum, ainsi que pour ses efforts continus visant à promouvoir un dialogue interculturel et une réflexion innovante dans le domaine de la sécurité humaine.

The concept of human security is cherished in this country: the promotion of peaceful coexistence, power-sharing and democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law are important in our domestic and foreign policy alike. Our vision of human security has been based on the protection of individuals and communities – it has been individual and collective at the same time and has focused on protection from political violence, armed conflict and from the arbitrary use of power. This is important as we face present day challenges to human security.

While the number of conflicts and battle deaths has decreased since the end of the Cold War, intrastate conflicts and the involvement of all kinds of armed non-state actors have become a central challenge to freedom from fear. Violence below the level of armed conflict – suburban crime is just one example – threaten day-to-day lives of people. Underdevelopment, poverty and the breakdown of health systems leave us with unacceptable death tolls. Implosion of governance systems result in increasing numbers of people unprotected. The rapid increase in technological, commercial, and human linkages between the four corners of the earth has exposed new vulnerabilities.

In such an environment, the international response to conflict and insecurity is facing Kofi Annan's famous say that "we will not enjoy security without development, we will not enjoy development without security, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights".

Switzerland has created several years ago specific legal and institutional tools to defend and promote human security.

Embedded in the Federal Constitution and in Law, the promotion of human security has been concretized in supporting infrastructures for peace through multi-year funding schemes in support of mediation efforts, peace building and human right programs:

- Switzerland offers good offices and expertise by supporting peace building efforts and human rights projects in many theaters of conflict: engaging in mediation efforts in the Southern Caucasus or the Balkans, proposing humanitarian access regimes for the occupied Palestinian territories, facilitating DDR efforts in Nepal or reconciliation processes in Latin America.
- Switzerland has launched diplomatic initiatives to strengthen and transform institutions such as the Human Rights Council, the Peace-building Commission and most recently by proposing the transformation of ECOSOC into a Sustainability Council. She has promoted universal rules such as the abolition of the death penalty, the fight against impunity and the respect for human rights by private security firms. And she has pushed for the inclusion of such issues in the Agenda of the Security Council.
- The Geneva Declaration on armed violence and development is an example recognizing that armed violence is both a cause and consequence of underdevelopment, and constitutes a major obstacle when it comes to realizing the Millennium Development Goals. The Declaration calls on the Member States – 108 since its launch in June 2006 – to work towards a quantifiable reduction in the burden of armed violence as well as an improvement in human security from now until 2015. My country will be organizing a Ministerial Conference to review and concretize progress on the Declaration this autumn.
- Today, one of the main challenges in the field of human security is the protection of civilians fleeing from violence in their country. In order to address such challenges and improve the management of migrant flows at the international level, Switzerland has engaged in the Global Forum for Migration and has developed innovative approaches around the concept of migration partnership, including in countries, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia and Nigeria. These partnerships offer a platform for dialogue with the migrants and their home country touching on various activities, including the promotion of voluntary return and reintegration, reinforcement of the home country's state administration and the support for legal migration (e.g. related to training and development).
- In developing infrastructures for peace Switzerland has created a pool of experts for matters relating to human security, including 630 volunteer experts, made available for civilian peacekeeping operations. To date, Switzerland has deployed several peace building and human-rights advisors to spearhead our civilian peace building program, notably in Colombia, Mali, Chad, Burundi, the Balkans, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Nepal.

In order to pursue its efforts and activities, the Government has just renewed its commitment by asking Parliament for a new credit line for a next period of four years.

The government's proposal focuses on regions with important strategic interests for Switzerland, such as the Balkans, the Middle East, North Africa, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Northern Africa, of course is a new and important focus of this program where new opportunities to reinforce democracy, democratic transition and the rule of law are unfolding.

On 11 March, the Federal Council identified the main guidelines of its future strategy in Northern Africa in order to focus more closely on Switzerland's action and give new momentum to its bilateral relations with countries

under transformation. This strategy comprises a series of short- and medium-term measures and close involvement of different government departments as part of an integrated plan of action.

Where our expertise is required, we will continue to support democratic transition processes and help support efforts which will be used to strengthen the media, train security forces and draft security policies, as well as reform the judicial system and fight against impunity. We believe these to be crucial factors in combating inequality and poverty, while promoting sustainable economic growth.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The increased involvement of my country in North Africa does not mean that we are reducing engagements in other regions of the world, which are experiencing conflict or undergoing transitions.

In the case of the Sahel-Saharan States, for example, or more precisely Mali, Niger and Chad, Switzerland has been developing a civilian peace-building program for the past few years.

The impact of the Arab Spring – and in particular the Libyan crisis – on this region is taking its toll: several hundred thousand citizens from across the sub-region were living and working in Libya, and many have fled the country since the start of the coalition’s armed offensive to find refuge – in difficult conditions – in Europe or in other countries in the sub-region. Many have returned home: countries such as Nigeria and Chad have borne the brunt of these mass returns. In June 2011, more than 100,000 citizens returned to Nigeria and more than 70,000 to Chad. This influx of vulnerable people, who have left everything behind to flee their homes, places a significant socio-economic burden on countries with very limited resources and which have already been affected by the 2010 food crisis.

These mass returns – as well as the likely return of young men who are fighting or have fought alongside Gaddafi – represent a major source of concern as they threaten to upset the already precarious balance in these regions and spark further acts of rebellion.

It is within this framework that the DFA – in collaboration with Initiatives of Change – organized a workshop yesterday and the day before on the topics of leadership, building trust and Dealing with the past.

This workshop brought together participants from Mali, Niger and Chad, with the goal of promoting exchange and supporting the efforts of those working locally to help people deal with the trauma of the past and the challenges, which exist with respect to reconciliation. Indeed, we believe that in the aftermath of violent conflict the victims have the right to know what actually happened and to know the fate of their missing relatives. Those responsible for the most serious crimes must be held accountable, reparation program must be built up and institutional reforms implemented in order that the system and mechanisms, which allowed these atrocities to take place, be dismantled. The way the past is dealt with must inspire public confidence and generate new practices in the field of democratic governance and a new culture in terms of citizens’ rights and the duties of the States.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The growing complexity and interdependence of changes and crises, which are shaking the world, are paving the way for future challenges. While some geopolitical developments have great potential,

areas of instability and tension remain and whole segments of populations have been weakened by financial and economic crises and the breakdown of environmental systems

While I have dwelled a while on our positive effort to mobilize forces for promoting Human Security, the challenge in government is broader:

Next year, for the first time, the government will present to Parliament an overall package of aid and trade related support measures for poverty reduction. We are presently laying the conceptual basis for this 11 billion Sfr package over 4 years, focusing on the link between poverty reduction and some key global issues like climate change, water, food security, health and migration.

In a country

- which on a global scale is 120 in terms of size, 96 in terms of population, 20th in trade and which has the 7th largest financial centre and the fifth most used currency worldwide;
- in a country which trades more than half of the gold and oil traded on the global market, human security is also an issue of policy coherence with values advocated in an through a democratic system. This is not an easy task:
 - It needs engagement with economic and financial operators for the voluntary respect of codes of conduct and guidelines to promote human security. And it needs eventually government support so that voluntary codes become standards and norms.
 - It needs the engagement with companies with headquarters in this country or operating out of this country with regard to their behavior and practice in conflict areas, as we have done with the Code of Conduct on private military and security companies.
 - It needs national legislation on corruption, which outlaws unacceptable practices.
 - It needs financial market legislation preventing misuse, money laundering and financing of criminal activity;
 - It needs legislation on asset recovery in cases of Politically Exposed Persons (PEP) and more. As you may have noted, Switzerland was quick to intervene in the recent unrest in Tunisia and Egypt. On 19 January and 11 February 2011, the Federal Council ordered the freezing of financial assets belonging to the former Tunisian and Egyptian presidents with immediate effect in order to protect the interests of the local population. Such measures in the meantime have also been taken with regard to the Syrian leadership. The long-term objective of the Swiss government is to ensure legitimate ownership and to prevent misappropriation of public funds.

Switzerland's commitment in the field of human security is thus much a broader effort than the merely political efforts in favor of peace and human rights. It is the responsibility of both the States the private sector and the individuals concerned to advance peace and human security. It belongs to the shared responsibility of all actors to work for greater coherence between their ideas and ideals and their action.

It is also in this perspective that I am delighted about our gathering today; such meetings enable us to jointly reflect on the challenges, to form lasting alliances and to embark on more constructive and creative approaches, which eventually will allow us to promote a culture of peace and security and to build societies which are respectful of human rights.

I would like to thank you for listening and welcome you once again to this 4th edition of the Forum for Human Security.