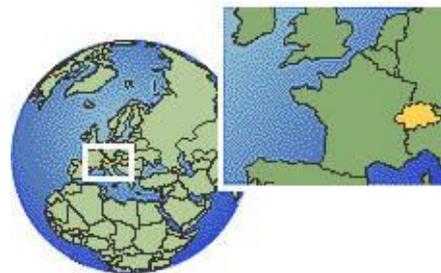


II-K. Profile of Switzerland

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1. Switzerland's Approach to Environmental Security

While Switzerland does not have a formal environmental security policy per se, recent policy statements and important political speeches all point to increasing the roles that environmental degradation and resource scarcity play in conflict. For example, in a recent speech entitled "Swiss Foreign Politics and Challenges", Swiss National Councillor and President of the Security Policy Committee of the National Council, Dr. Barbara Haering acknowledges that:

*"All OSCE member states are facing the same shifting paradigms. Traditional military risks at our borders have almost disappeared since the fall of the wall in Berlin. However, new security risks arise. They are of trans-national character and at the same time they are cross cutting political issues. Ecological problems can develop into security risks. Failed states can be sources of migration causing problems of integration in countries of immigration."*¹

Dr. Haering adds that military discussions must now become "security discussions with comprehensive security approaches". This also means that armed forces become instruments of foreign policy, of international policies, and also instruments of a collective security concept.

The Swiss Government does recognise that the relationship between environment and security is multi-dimensional. Any attempt therefore to define the relationship in the coming years will have to take into account this complexity. In turn, the complex nature of the interactions between environment and security will necessarily call for a broadening of the conventional understanding of security.²

Despite differing views regarding the causal link between environmental degradation and conflict, Switzerland maintains that the focus should address both the direct and indirect environmental factors, which threaten to trigger collective and violent conflict, and which interact with other factors such as political, economic, social, and cultural considerations.

2. Switzerland's Environmental Security Priorities

Switzerland's priorities can be discerned in part, from the five policy objectives that are enshrined in its new Federal Constitution, which came into effect 1 January 2000. These include:

- 1> Alleviation of need and poverty in the world
- 2> Peaceful co-existence of nations
- 3> Respect for human rights and promotion of democracy
- 4> Preservation of natural resources
- 5> Safeguarding of the interests of Swiss economy abroad

¹ Haering, Barbara. "Swiss Foreign Politics and Challenges." 27 Jan 2006: Bern.

² Schmid, Urs. "What Should Governments Do Now". May 2004: The Hague Conference on Environment, Security and Sustainable Development.

http://www.envirosecurity.org/conference/presentations/ESSD_Session_9_Urs_Schmid.pdf

In addition, in its Foreign Policy Report of 2000, Switzerland highlights its most pressing environmental concerns as including: climate change, biological diversity and hazardous chemicals and their impact on human health, as well as the need for stronger international regimes to protect forests and water. The growing water crisis is a particularly serious concern for Switzerland because of the environmental and security implications of global water stress. Since one third of the world's population lives in countries with decreasing water sources, the conflict potential is growing exponentially. Switzerland is also increasing its focus on unsustainable resource use and the implications for global poverty. In light of the trans-boundary nature of environmental decline trends around the world, Switzerland recognizes the need for enhanced international cooperation.³

The global increase in civil wars has prompted Switzerland to promote a comprehensive approach to security and has also resulted in the increasing shift of focus towards the human security dimensions of conflict. Swiss priorities have shifted accordingly in light of this evolving environmental threat. In a recent speech entitled "Promoting Human Security through Swiss Foreign Policy", Ambassador Thomas Greminger, Head of Political Affairs Division of the Swiss Federal Department for Foreign Affairs outlined Switzerland's priorities in the implementation of a broader concept of human security. First, the prevention of uncontrolled proliferation and misuse of small arms is regarded as one of the main challenges to human security. Second, Switzerland pursues an active policy in promoting the ban on antipersonnel landmines at the multilateral level. It also finances mine action in a number of mine-affected countries. Third, promoting the implementation of human rights and international humanitarian law has been an important aspect of Swiss activities to foster human security. Fourth, Switzerland has developed an open policy with regard to engaging armed non-state groups in order to help end conflict and build peace. Fifth, as part of promoting human security worldwide, Switzerland, through its conflict transformation activities, works closely with civil society organisations and local and national governments.⁴

3. How Switzerland Mainstreams Environmental Factors into Foreign and Security Policy

It is important to highlight that the environment has been elevated on the political agenda of the Swiss Government with a special status in the new Swiss Constitution that was adopted in 1999. The Swiss Foreign Policy Report of 2000 notes that the mandate given to the Federal Government specifically regarding foreign relations includes environmental considerations, highlighting the need to "*contribute to alleviate need and poverty in the world, and to promote respect for human rights, democracy, the peaceful coexistence of nations, and the preservation of natural resources*". Moreover, the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs also has identified the protection of the environment as a necessary precondition for global conflict prevention, stability, and security. And finally, the Swiss Foreign Policy Report of 2000 identifies protection of the environment among the five goals of Swiss foreign policy. The other four are: peaceful coexistence of nations; respect for human rights and democracy; protection of Swiss economic interests abroad; and relief of suffering and poverty around the world.⁵

Despite these efforts to advance environmental security concerns, senior officials

³ Swiss Foreign Policy Report 2000. Federal Council. 15 Nov 2000. Unofficial English Translation.

⁴ Greminger, Thomas. "Introduction to 27th Annual Colloquium on Human Rights Policy". 11-12 Oct 2004: Lausanne. Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. 14 Jun 2006. <<http://www.eda.admin.ch>>.

⁵ Swiss Foreign Policy Report 2000. Federal Council. 15 Nov 2000. Unofficial English Translation.

contend that it is indeed the concept of human security, rather than environmental security, which is recognised as the ethical precept guiding Swiss foreign policy in all relevant areas. As Ambassador Thomas Greminger has noted in the above mentioned speech entitled "Promoting Human Security through Swiss Foreign Policy", "*the concept of human security underpins Swiss foreign policy in its endeavours to promote human rights and humanitarian law, as well as to transform conflicts and build peace.*"⁶

4. How Switzerland Mainstreams Conflict Prevention and Livelihood Protection into Development Cooperation

International cooperation is one of Switzerland's foreign policy instruments. Indeed, the five goals of Swiss foreign policy also underlie Swiss development policy, which is elaborated further in two important policy documents, "Guiding Principles"⁷ and "Strategy 2010"⁸. These two documents call for Swiss development cooperation contributes to three goals: enabling all humans to live in peace, freedom, security, justice and well-being; ensuring that future generations have sufficient resources for their development; and demonstrating Switzerland's openness to the world, its generosity and its solidarity.

In order to achieve these three specific goals of development cooperation, the Swiss Foreign Policy Report 2000 has committed Swiss Development Cooperation to the following poverty eradication-related priorities: crisis prevention and conflict management; good governance; income promotion and employment; social justice; and natural resource protection.⁹

5. Switzerland and Environmental Cooperation

Switzerland supports environmental and other forms of cooperation through its involvement in a number of international organizations:

The Swiss Government has been actively involved in UNEP's Environmental Security Initiative and has contributed to the promotion of the peaceful resolution of environmental conflicts by facilitating meetings, drafting legal instruments, supporting access to media and enabling involvement of civil society.

With NATO and the Partnership for Peace (PfP), the Swiss are working to destroy and dispose of arms and ammunition leftover from previous conflicts. The Swiss are contributing financially to the civil conversion of a military site in Georgia, as well as to the destruction of mines in Serbia and Montenegro.

Switzerland has taken part in the PfP since 1996, whose aim is strengthen democracy, peace, and security in Europe and to jointly seek responses to common threats. Switzerland's participation in PfP is complemented by membership of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), which was established in 1997. The EAPC is the Partnership for Peace's forum for political consultation and sets the guidelines for practical cooperation within the PfP. Switzerland is working on several long-term cooperation projects within the Partnership especially supporting South Eastern

⁶ Greminger, Thomas. "Promoting Human Security through Swiss Foreign Policy". 27 Jan 2006: Bern.

⁷ "Guiding Principles". SDC. Jan 1999. SDC. 14 Jun 2006. <<http://www.deza.ch>>. Search: Publications; Keyword: Guiding Principles.

⁸ "Strategy 2010". SDC. Jun 2001. SDC. 14 Jun 2006. <<http://www.deza.ch>>. Search: Publications; Keyword: Strategy 2010.

⁹ Swiss Foreign Policy Report 2000. Federal Council. 15 Nov 2000. Unofficial English Translation.

European countries in upgrading their security systems. Switzerland has also become involved in cooperation projects in South Caucasus and Central Asia.¹⁰

The Swiss Government also supports the OSCE's increasing role in the promotion of environmental security. Through increasing dialogue and information exchanges, the Swiss Government's participation in the OSCE is aimed at helping to strengthen cooperation between states, fostering better cooperation with specialized agencies, conducting regular evaluations of environmental threat situations, identifying and monitoring environmental threats, providing support for the international legal instruments, and advancing environmental education.

In addition, Switzerland participates in the Human Security Network, which was created in May of 1998 by Canada and Norway as a campaign effort to outlaw landmines. The HSN is expanding its efforts and now is focusing on children in armed conflict, protection of human rights, human rights education, intervention in conflict situations, anti-personnel mines, AIDS/HIV, poverty, and human-centred development.¹¹

6. Switzerland and Environment and Security Risk and Needs Assessment and Management

The Comprehensive Risk Analysis Management Network (CRN) Initiative links the scientific expertise of the Swiss Centre for Security Studies (CSS) with national and international emergency preparedness and planning authorities. In Switzerland, the CRN team supports the ongoing process of risk identification and evaluation under the project "Risiko- und Verwundbarkeitsanalyse" (Schweiz). The CRN is run by the Centre for Security Studies at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH Zurich).

On the international level, the CRN's goal is to provide and expand an international partner network to exchange knowledge on risks and risk analysis methodology, and to share and review national experiences. Under the CRN Initiative, an international workshop cycle on risks, vulnerabilities, Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP), and emergency preparedness has been initiated.¹² The network currently consists of partners from four countries: Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, and Austria. A complementary service to the International Relations and Security Network (ISN), the CRN is run by the Centre for Security Studies (CSS) at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH Zurich).

A number of important questions regarding threat assessment were addressed at the 1st Zurich Roundtable, which took place on 9 December 2005 at ETH Zurich. These questions address the broad parameters that must be increasingly addressed in improving risk assessment in the environmental security context. The questions that were raised at the Zurich Roundtable included the following:

- What are the characteristics of the so-called new risks?
- What risks will presumably gain more prominence in the future?
- What risks are particularly important for the national security environment?
- What are the driving factors changing the security / risk environment?
- Why is it crucial to identify risks at an early stage, and how can this be achieved?

¹⁰ "Regional Cooperation Projects". Partnership for Peace: Switzerland. 15 Nov 2005. Partnership for Peace: Switzerland. 14 Jun 2006.

<http://www.pfp.admin.ch/internet/partnership_for_peace/en/home/beitr/regionale.html>.

¹¹ Greminger, Thomas. "Promoting Human Security through Swiss Foreign Policy". 27 Jan 2006: Bern.

¹² "About CRN". CRN. 14 Jun 2006. <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/crn/about_crn/about_crn.cfm>.

7. Early Warning

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation has been a leading partner in the development of FAST International, an independent early warning program covering 20 countries/regions in Africa, Europe and Asia. The objective of FAST International is the early recognition of impending or potential crisis situations in order to prevent violent conflict and to support decision-makers in identifying critical developments in a timely manner so that coherent political strategies can be formulated to either prevent or limit destructive effects of violent conflicts or identify windows of opportunity for peace building.¹³

FAST's method has been adopted for the creation of an Early Warning System for the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). In the process of developing CEWARN - Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism - the basic principle of continuous collection of event data for the purpose of quantitative analysis was applied. CEWARN was the first early warning system of its kind in Africa.

8. Switzerland and Environmental Conflict Prevention and Resolution

The Swiss Centre for Peacebuilding (KOFF) was recently created by the Swiss Government and the Swiss Peace Foundation. Its primary objective is to support the constructive role of Switzerland in settling international conflicts, to assess how conflict prevention can be improved and to examine the institutional and policy changes that will be needed. The centre aims to promote synergies between the various actors involved in peace building. A number of activities are being planned. For example, the centre will provide a platform for the exchange of experiences and information and act as a facilitator with regard to the common resolution of problems by its partners in the area of peace building. It will link its partners to relevant international actors. It will also gather information and documentation related to peace building, hold events, and produce publications for specific target groups. And finally, it will offer its partners services such as conflict analysis and strategy advice for peace building interventions, and will collect information on lessons learned in civil peace building.¹⁴

9. Switzerland and Post Conflict Rehabilitation and Peace Building

Switzerland has focused its post-conflict rehabilitation efforts in supporting Russia in cleaning up contaminated military grounds in the former Soviet Union and in the elimination of landmines. Landmines are a huge threat to environmental and human security. For example, a field of landmines equates to a loss of fertile agriculture and access to water points, which mainly affects rural communities. This can lead to natural resource conflicts. The Geneva-based International Centre for Humanitarian De-mining (GICHD) is providing the UN with the necessary tools to continue their de-mining efforts.

There are still contaminated military grounds in the former Soviet Union, and Switzerland is stepping up its efforts to redress this environmental security threat. In accordance with the Chemical Weapons Committee's Agreement, Russia has been called upon to dispose 40,000 metric tons of highly toxic chemicals. However, Russia, and other countries dealing with these issues do not have the means to destroy all these weapons. Instead, they sit covert in a deteriorating state, which poses a major threat to the environment and the citizens. Switzerland is working with the PfP and the OSCE to assist these countries in taking the necessary steps.

¹³ "FAST International". 14 Jun 2006. <<http://www.swisspeace.org>>. Path: Programs, FAST.

¹⁴ "KOFF". 14 Jun 2006. <<http://www.swisspeace.org>>. Path: Programs, KOFF.

10. Natural Disaster and Conflict Mitigation and Adaptation

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation provides assistance to developing countries confronting the consequences of recent natural disasters. After the tsunami in South Asia, Switzerland donated CHF 35 million for reconstruction between 2004 and 2007. Hurricane Stan occurred in April of 2005 in Central America and the Swiss contributed CHF 300,000 to the food security project of the World Food Programme and CHF 850,000 to emergency aid. After the Pakistan Earthquake in August of 2005, Switzerland donated CHF 11 million to emergency and survival assistance, given more than 300 tonnes of aid materials and sent 50 prefabricated buildings to set up schools and hospitals.¹⁵

11. Conclusion

The Swiss Government recognises that the relationship between the environment and security is multi-dimensional and complex. The Swiss Foreign Policy Report of 2000 highlights Switzerland's most pressing environmental concerns as including: climate change, biological diversity, and hazardous chemicals and their impact on human health, as well as the need for stronger international regimes to protect forests and water.

Switzerland has also broadened the definition of security to include the concept human security. This includes areas such as the prevention of uncontrolled proliferation and misuse of small arms, the banning of antipersonnel landmines, the promotion of human rights implementation and international humanitarian law, the establishment of an open policy with regard to engaging armed non-state groups in order to help end conflict and build peace, and the engagement of a number of countries in conflict-transformation activities.

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¹⁵ Swiss Agency For Development and Cooperation. 14 Jun 2006.
<<http://www.sdc.admin.ch/>>.