

THE ROLE OF SWITZERLAND IN ENSURING WORLD PEACE AND SECURITY

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During the Cold War, the Swiss Government adhered to the traditional understanding of security, which was limited to the military and political sphere. The concept of the common defense, which was officially adopted in 1973, provided for a build-up of military capacities of the state in order to prevent attempts to put pressure on the Confederation through intimidation, protect its national interests and pull back possible armed attacks that threatened its security. In subsequent years the international situation has evolved considerably.

The priority of the modern Swiss peace policy is the new conflict prevention as well as the prevention of recurrence or deterioration of existing ones. Neutral Switzerland is in demand as a patron power: in particular, it represents the mutual interests of Georgia and Russia, which have not had direct diplomatic relations since 2008. Swiss diplomats also serve as intermediaries. Thus, M. Ambühl promoted the signing of the Zurich Protocols (2009), which marked the beginning of the normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey. Another area of good offices is promoting dialogue, in which a third party provides only logistical support, not taking part in the negotiation process itself. In 2004, Bürgenstock (canton of Nidwalden), and in 2016–2017 - Mont Pelerin (canton of Vaud), Geneva and Crans-Montana (canton of Valais) have become platforms for exploring ways to resolve the Cyprus conflict between Greece and Turkey [1].

One of the most important elements of building peace is work to prevent mass atrocities such as the Srebrenica massacre in July 1995, which claimed the lives of more than 8,000 Bosnian Muslims. Therefore, in 2013, the representatives from Switzerland, Australia, Argentina, Denmark, Costa Rica and Tanzania, as well as a number of organizations, agreed to strengthen and expand preventive measures at the national and international levels.

This meeting gave rise to the Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes (GAAMAC), which opened its office in October 2017 in Geneva [2].

With regard to disarmament, the Confederation has always been at the forefront: the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare was signed in Geneva (1925). They held the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments (1932–1937), as well as a number of international forums under UN auspices (since 1960), including the Conference on Disarmament (since 1979, but since the late 1990s there has been no significant progress in its work) [3]. Switzerland is a party to all international agreements on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons and participates in all international arms control regimes.

Today, the implementation of the Confederation's policy in this area is centered around three Geneva centers. The Center for Security Policy, founded in 1995, provides training courses for Swiss and foreign public officials, including the Partnership for Peace programme. The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), which opened in 1998, has hosted the secretariats of the Ottawa Convention of the Prohibition of Anti Personnel Mines (since 2001) and the Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions (since 2015). The Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, which began operations in 2000, works extensively with the UN, OSCE, EU, OECD and NATO. In 2011, the three Geneva Centers joined the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, and in 2014 they moved to the House of Peace (Maison de la paix), a new international complex built to facilitate the exchange of experience and the discussion of foreign policy, security policy and peace policy. It also hosted the Geneva Disarmament Platform (GDP) in 2016, a non-governmental association aimed at cooperation outside the formal political framework. In addition, the Spiez Laboratory (canton of Bern), which carries out research in the field of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and contributes to the safety of humans and the environment, has retained its significance since World War I [4].

Respect for human rights is the most important prerequisite for the safe and stable development of society and the state. It contributes to reducing international tensions and violent extremism, poverty and refugee context, as well as sustainable development. Human rights are codified in detail in declarations, conventions, covenants, constitutions and other documents, but they are constantly violated. Until recently, the lack of human rights monitoring caused such violations. Therefore, at the initiative of Switzerland, the UN Human Rights Council opened its Geneva headquarters in March 2006 [5]. Unlike its predecessor, the UN Commission on Human Rights, the Council excluded the membership of states that systematically violate human

rights, and also launched a mechanism for conducting universal periodic monitoring of compliance with human rights by member states.

Since the early 2000s, Switzerland has maintained the tradition of providing good offices. The state seeks to bring the warring parties at the negotiating table, helps to build peace, including reconciliation and justice, prevent radicalization, outbreaks of violence and the spread of terrorism; all these activities help prevent conflicts from being resumed. The Confederation supports the disarmament process, strengthens humanitarian dialogue and cooperation, as well as participates in initiatives to modernize international law in accordance with modern realities.

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