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Ressort: Politik

Switzerland priorities for the 73rd UN General Assembly

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At its meeting on 14 September, the Federal Council set its priorities for the 73rd UN General Assembly. These priorities fall under the two key strategic areas of Switzerland's commitment to the United Nations for the period from 2012 to 2022: 1) peace and security and 2) United Nations reform.

Alain Berset, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis, head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, will represent Switzerland at the high-level opening of the UN General Assembly. On 14 September, the Federal Council took note of the findings of the foreign affairs committees' consultations on Switzerland's priorities for the 73rd United Nations General Assembly. In terms of peace and security, Switzerland's priorities include bolstering conflict prevention. Switzerland will pursue its commitment to ensuring human rights are more firmly rooted in discussions on peace and security.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres has launched reform processes on peace and security, development and administrative efficiency. Switzerland actively supports this reform agenda, which aims to ensure the UN's ongoing relevance and efficiency in its efforts to address the challenges posed by today's world, and will work to ensure they are implemented. Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and bolstering humanitarian aid will also be highlights in Switzerland's commitment at the General Assembly.

Since no state alone can solve the challenges raised by our globalised world – humanitarian crises, epidemics and global warming – solutions can only be found through international collaboration. Migration is one of Switzerland's priorities, and it supports the work of the UN in this area. The federal government has always been supportive of the process to adopt a global compact for migration, for example by making its head of mission in New York available for this work. It considers it important to adopt an ambitious document with effective control and implementing mechanisms.

The Federal Council has instructed the relevant government offices to conduct an in-depth analysis of the global compact concluded at the UN last July. Based on the outcome of this analysis, it will adopt its final position before the Marrakesh conference in December. For Switzerland, promoting International Geneva as a centre for global governance is especially important: it hosts many organisations and institutions, and can serve as a hub for the new topics and challenges at the interface between politics, society, innovation,

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science and economics, especially in the area of internet governance.

These topics are developing and increasingly demand synergies and dialogue between stakeholders active in conventional areas of international action. The 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly will open in New York on 18 September and will last for one year. Many heads of state and government will attend the week of high-level General Assembly events starting on 24 September. The President of the Swiss Confederation, Alain Berset, and Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis will travel to New York for the event.

Mr Berset will speak on 25 September at the general debate of member states that traditionally opens the UN General Assembly. He will discuss current global challenges and will stress the importance of multilateralism in general, and the UN in particular. He will also attend multiple high-level events, including a discussion on the fight against non-communicable diseases.

Mr Berset will host an event on access to medical care in humanitarian emergencies and will attend an event on international drugs policy. Mr Cassis will also travel to New York for the opening of the UN General Assembly. He will represent Switzerland at multiple high-level events and will meet with his counterparts from other countries as well as with UN senior officials.

(SOURCE: The Federal Council, FDFA, EDI)

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