



Press Release

United Nations thanks Switzerland for its contribution to peacekeeping

New York, 26 April 2023 - Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, thanked Switzerland for its strong support to United Nations Peacekeeping and for the service and sacrifice of its military and police personnel deployed around the world under the UN flag.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of UN Peacekeeping. Since 1948, more than two million men and women have served in 71 peacekeeping missions, of which 12 are still active today, making a tangible difference to the lives of millions of people caught up in conflict.

Switzerland began participating in UN Peacekeeping in 1990, deploying a limited number of unarmed military personnel to the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), where it has maintained a steady contribution over the years ever since. In 2021, Major General Patrick Gauchat became the first Swiss Army senior military officer to head a UN peacekeeping operation when he was appointed the head of UNTSO.

Currently, Switzerland provides 33 uniformed personnel, including 2 women, to six UN peacekeeping operations making it the 78th largest contributor. Switzerland's largest contribution is to UNTSO where 13 of its peacekeepers now serve. Switzerland also contributes personnel to the UN peacekeeping missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, India-Pakistan, Mali, South Sudan, and Western Sahara.

Since 2004, the Swiss Armed Forces International Command (SWISSINT) has continued to build the capacity of UN peacekeepers to meet ever-evolving operational requirements and effectively contribute to the delivery of mission mandates. Since 2006, Switzerland has also been providing personnel and financial support to training centers in Africa, including the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Ghana and the École de maintien de la paix Alioune Blondin Beye (EMPABB) in Mali. Moreover, the Department of Peace Operations - and in particular the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI) - has developed a strategic partnership with the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF), which helped strengthen the UN approach to security sector reform and governance.

"Switzerland is a strong and reliable partner in our efforts to protect civilians, prevent and resolve conflict, promote human rights, and build peace. We will continue to work alongside Switzerland, including in its capacity as elected member of the Security Council, to further progress the global movement for sustainable peace," said Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix.

"Swiss peacekeepers have served with honor and distinction wherever they have been deployed, often in dangerous and difficult environments. I thank them for their contribution to international peace and security. The UN will never forget the sacrifice of the three Swiss peacekeepers who have lost their lives while serving under the UN flag," he added.

Switzerland also endorsed the Secretary-General's 'Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)' initiative, which aims to strengthen peacekeeping through more targeted mandates, stronger and safer operations, better equipped and trained forces, and by mobilizing support for political solutions.

Note to editors:

The UN's Department of Global Communications runs the international multi-year communications campaign titled 'UN Peacekeeping – Service and Sacrifice.' The campaign expresses the world body's gratitude to the countries that contribute their uniformed men and women to serve in the peacekeeping missions. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/service-and-sacrifice>

Action for Peacekeeping: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-for-peacekeeping-a4p>

Media enquiries in Switzerland:

UN Information Service in Geneva

Ms. Alessandra Vellucci

Alessandra.vellucci@un.org

Media enquiries at UNHQ

Department of Global Communications (New York):

Douglas Coffman

coffmand@un.org

+ 917 361 9923

Department of Peace Operations (New York)

Oana-Raluca Topala

topala@un.org