I. Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women

Protecting rights is one of Switzerland’s top international priorities. Through its embassies, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and NGOs based in Switzerland and abroad monitor women’s rights around the world. As an active member of and a major contributor to the governing boards of UN funds and programs, Switzerland supports efforts to combat violence and to end discrimination against women. Switzerland supports all measures to empower women and to expedite medication and educational opportunities for those women catalyzed by HIV/AIDS.

Switzerland makes an annual contribution of about 850,000 francs to UNIFEM and also contributes to UNICEF and to FNUAP. Additionally, Switzerland provides political and financial support to the Office of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women.

All 7 of the MDGs give a central place to the status of women. In the development field, Switzerland contributes in many ways and instances to the pursuit of these goals. Reducing poverty is the general objective of Switzerland’s consideration. Switzerland does so through attempting to systematically promote gender-balanced development and to foster women’s empowerment. As part of this goal, Switzerland seeks to promote girls’ access to education. In addition, Switzerland supports programs that promote a comprehensive approach to sexual and reproductive health in order to improve maternal health and to reduce infant mortality. Combating HIV/AIDS has also become an important theme of international cooperation in the last 10 years – a theme Switzerland supports entirely.

Women have a preeminent role in achieving sustainable development, which is being advanced through numerous projects, like micro-credit initiatives, aimed to make women participants. Switzerland attaches particular importance to multilateral efforts in all aspects relating to the status of women, in particular, their access to credit and to sexual and reproductive health.

Switzerland ratified the CEDAW in 1997 and now expresses its commitment to further develop policies in accordance with the Beijing Platform of Action to intervene when the rights of women are threatened. Switzerland calls upon those states that have not yet done so to ratify the CEDAW. Switzerland also urges governments to demonstrate strong commitment to realize the rights enshrined in the Convention. Such action requires precise skills and instruments that make it possible to measure whether actions taken have been successful, and it requires a clear political will to be able the turn words into actions. When considering such actions, UN programs and funds should focus on areas in which they have a comparative advantage.

Indifference to women’s rights must be transformed into sincere engagement for the protection and advancement of women. Switzerland calls upon the political leadership and civil society worldwide to join its efforts to eradicate obstacles impeding women’s full enjoyment of their human rights.

II. Elimination of Racism and Racial Discrimination

The elimination of racism and racial discrimination is central to the work of the United Nations. The first lines of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights declare that, "the inherent dignity and...the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world." Assigning apposite faith to these words, Switzerland affirms that the elimination of racism and racial discrimination in all its forms is an immeasurably important step to promoting peace and security in all States. Racial discrimination continues to evolve in parts of the world. The propagation of notions of racial superiority and racist mentalities through contemporary methods, such as the Internet, is an unequivocal threat to the peace and security of the world and a major setback to the work of the United Nations. The Special Rapporteur of the Commission of Human Rights suggested, and Switzerland agrees, that “effective action to combat racism and racial discrimination requires a combination of educational, penal, economic and social measures.” The most cost effective method to combat racism herein is education, and Switzerland wishes to see tolerance and anti-racist educational systems and programmes implemented in all regions suffering from racial intolerance.

Switzerland has ratified the principal international Human Rights treaties, including the CESC (18 Sept. 1992), the CCPR (18 Sept. 1992), CEDAW (26 April, 1997), the CRC (26 June, 1987), and the CERD (29 Dec. 1994). Article 7 of the CERD requires that States take certain steps to combat "the prejudices which
lead to racial discrimination." The treaty directs governments not only to abolish discriminatory laws and refrain from engaging in discriminatory acts, but also to encourage mass movements to eliminate racial barriers and "discourage anything which tends to strengthen racial division" (Article 2). In addition, States must take measures in the social, economic, cultural and other fields to ensure adequate development of racial groups in order to guarantee full and equal enjoyment of rights (Article 2(2)). In a provision recognizing the power of hate propaganda to foster prejudice, it directs States to take steps to prohibit hate speech and outlaw organizations that promote racial hatred including contemporary forms of racism such as the propagation of information from racist platforms disseminated by the Internet (Article 4). Paragraphs 144 through 147 of the Durban Programme of Action recommend that States should encourage the media to adopt self-regulatory measures to enable them to combat the use of the Internet for racist means and apply legal sanctions against any incitement to racial hatred. Switzerland mounted a campaign against racist propaganda on the Internet by holding Internet service providers criminally liable for such infractions and strongly urges more permissive States to restrict access to racist sites to their national territories, and in addition encourages the international community to recommend that such States strengthen legislation to prohibit such sites in a similar and effective manner. Furthermore, the Federal Court of Switzerland has invoked on several occasions the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and incorporated it into Article 261 of the Swiss Penal Code. Switzerland has created a fund to finance projects to combat racism, and established a Service to Combat Racism.

To combat prejudices that lead to racial discrimination, the international community must urge States to adopt measures in the fields of "teaching, education, culture and information" (Article 7, CERD). Switzerland believes prevention by means of education through teaching, information, education and acculturation is a vital step to combat prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and to promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and racial or ethnic groups. Switzerland encourages the international community to promote a multilateral approach through the cooperation of member States, NGOs, IGOs and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to assist with the development of youth-oriented anti-racist educational programmes including anti-racist literature and brochures for all States where racism is a concern, such as those which have been used in Switzerland and are widely available through the website www.projetscontreleracisme.ch, a website devoted to combating racism in Switzerland, developed in 2004 and supported by the Education and Development Foundation of Switzerland. Second, this body should encourage States to create and enforce legislation prohibiting racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, as well as acts of violence in all its forms, including contemporary forms such as the propagation of racism through the Internet and other mass media.
I. Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS

Although the HIV infection rate in Switzerland is low, Switzerland recognizes that HIV/AIDS is the world’s most threatening epidemic. The Swiss Government believes in ensuring proper coordination of countries in the United Nation on HIV/AIDS issue and promoting collaboration between international organizations, NGO’s, the economic and research sectors, and people living with HIV/AIDS and their families. Programs designed to effectively fight HIV/AIDS must address long-term financial considerations. Preventive strategies must be emphasized within vulnerable group such as youth, especially young girls, intravenous drug users, alternative sexual lifestyles, migrants, and people involved in prostitution. For the Swiss Government, it is imperative that programs designed to fight HIV/AIDS be clearly based upon the principles of non-discrimination and of respect for human rights.

One of HIV/AIDS’ most tragic consequences is certainly its orphaning of millions of children (age 0-14). Moreover, scores of these orphans are also infected. It is essential that additional financial resources be used to help them. The Swiss Government envisions, for these children, the full enjoyment of their fundamental rights and protection from stigmatization. Access to medication must be made possible for all people living with HIV/AIDS. The Swiss Government focuses its efforts on reducing the cost of medication. In many developing countries, assuming responsibility for a large number of people affected by HIV/AIDS requires strength the health-care system. Switzerland supports granting additional financial resources to long-term, multi-sectors, and cross-cutting programs, rather than short term projects. Priority should be given to preventing transmission of the virus from mother to children; since the treatment is relatively simple and could be implemented on a large scale. Last but not least, the Swiss Government will raise the efforts in the research and development of a vaccine against HIV/AIDS, of microbicides and of medications intended to fend off the myriad diseases associated with HIV/AIDS, most notably tuberculosis. Less fortunate countries will need considerably increased resources in the battle against the scourge of HIV/AIDS. The additional recourses will have to be drawn on national budgets, and from international and private funds.

The Swiss Government has unlimited itself to doubling its multilateral contributions, specifically for HIV/AIDS, bringing its total contribution to UNAIDS to four million Swiss francs. The Swiss Government also anticipates doubling the fund again in the year 2006. Switzerland hails the United Nations on the promotions of the concept of a “Global AIDS and Health Fund” with its long-term perspective. The Swiss Government expects this Fund to ensure the sustainability of the international community’s efforts and to help mobilize additional recourses. In order to increase global financial contributions towards the battle against HIV/AIDS in developing countries, new directions for financing should be examined, including in favor of the Global Funds. The Global Funds has already approved a total of three hundred and seventy-eight million over two years for treatment and prevention programs to combat the HIV/AIDS disease in thirty-one countries around the world. This includes 17 sub-Saharan African countries which will receive one hundred and forty-five million in the first year. The Global Fund's grants provide critical support to effective prevention and treatment programs based on non-discrimination and respect for human rights around the world.
II. UN Reforms and Equitable Representation

Switzerland places great importance in a strong and effective United Nations that is capable of taking up the challenges presented by the modern world, especially in the fields of security, human rights and of sustainable development in all its aspects. The continuing reform process of the UN is one of the keys to achieving this objective. Central to the reform process is the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, expected to be ready by the end of 2004, which the Secretary-General mandated to make new proposals for strengthening the role of the UN and its capacity for collective action. Switzerland has contributed actively to these deliberations, notably by organizing an expert workshop on the interpretation of Article 51 of the UN Charter and the right to legitimate self-defense, and in this context, the role of the Security Council. The Iraq crisis has shown Switzerland that the international community remains supportive of a multilateral system for maintaining international peace and security, but the structures in place are no longer appropriate. There is now a clear need for reform and for strengthening the means of joint action.

Switzerland believes the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly is a cornerstone of the UN reform process. An important step in this direction was taken when resolution A/58/316 on the improvement of the Assembly’s working methods was adopted. Switzerland is pleased that the majority of the measures proposed are now being implemented. Switzerland will continue deliberations on ways to revitalize the General Assembly, with the objective being to strengthen the role of this principal UN organ. Switzerland is committed to reforming the Commission on Human Rights and would support new ideas to that end, notably with regard to the creation of a “Council of Human Rights”, which would have a wider authority than the existing Commission. Switzerland will commit itself in the framework of the General Assembly to reforming and reinforcing the global environmental system and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), supporting the need to give international decisions that concern the environment due consideration in the General Assembly.

Switzerland is concerned about the legitimacy of action taken by the Security Council and, in particular, the question of its composition. In order to gain greater legitimacy, Switzerland believes it is necessary that countries that are not members of the Security Council have more opportunities to participate in the decision-making process, in particular to strengthen the mechanisms of consultation with countries directly involved in particular situations. Switzerland believes the composition of the Security Council must reflect the changes that have taken place in the international context since it was first established, and more say must be given to the developing countries. Switzerland believes that the Security Council does not geographically represent the world in a satisfactory way because three of the five permanent members represent the industrial western world, whereas most of the conflicts they deal with happen outside that area. Switzerland would support a small enlargement of the Security Council to better represent regions of the world who currently are under represented, namely Asia, Africa and Latin America. Switzerland is opposed to the creation of new seats with the right of veto, because the right of veto in its current form is undemocratic and hampers the capacity of the Security Council to act. Switzerland would support changes in the way the power of veto is exercised, namely by limiting it to certain issues and complicating the possibility of exercising it. Switzerland would also support the goal of abolition of veto powers, while also recognizing the long term nature of this goal.
Entering the United Nations and the first committee in 2002 Switzerland emerges from a long history neutrality in the global community. Switzerland believes the work of the first committee is imperative in securing peace throughout the world. Switzerland will continue to honor its' commitment to objectivity, while fully supporting multilateral cooperation and the introduction of international law. Aware that globalization brings the threat of proliferation and inappropriate use of technology to all states, Switzerland is prepared to address the important issues facing the first committee.

I. Promotion Of Multilateralism In The Area Of Disarmament And Non-Proliferation

As a relatively new Member State, Switzerland has had comparatively little opportunity for participation in United Nations' work with disarmament. However, Switzerland has a long standing interest in actively advancing disarmament activities as well as combating non-proliferation. Understanding the significant threat posed by weapons and instability in every region of the world, Switzerland accepts the goal of promoting regional, multilateral cooperation to advance peace and security.

Swiss delegate Christian Faessler notes Switzerland’s specific interest in disarmament is two fold by stating we are made for peace and security and “that multilateralism and law were the best ways to preserve peace and security around the world.” Switzerland commend the cause of non-proliferation taken on by the United Nations in the Missile Technology Control Regime, Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Yet former president Pascal Couchepin remains doubtful regarding the potential success of United Nations interference in such a large task. “Can the international community reach a consensus on the objectives to be attained and on the way to achieve them?” He also expresses concern regarding the importance placed on multilateral cooperation and the changing world which is still being monitored by a collective security established after the Second World War.

Switzerland, as a member of the Conference on Disarmament, a multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, wholly supports multilateral efforts throughout the world through regional organizations such as the EU, AU, ASEAN, APEC, OAS, and NATO. However, the members of the first committee must be sensible when addressing this serious issue on a multilateral level.

Recalling the affirmations in resolution A/58/462 Switzerland notes the former actions of the first committee with regard to Promotion of Multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. Switzerland urges all Member States to fulfill their commitments to multilateralism as an essential step in the pursuit of universal objectives concerning disarmament and non-proliferation. However, Switzerland cannot assert “that, as the most universal and most representative organization in the world, the United Nations must play the central role [in disarmament].”

Switzerland promotes the following actions should be taken to address this problem. Firstly, the first committee should use its resources to strongly encourage the utilization of multilateral resources in disarmament. Multilateralism must be recognized as the most effective coalition against proliferation. Secondly, Switzerland believes the first committee must carefully evaluate its collective role in disarmament. Increased incentives for multilateral work should support an understanding that there is a need for a reform of the collective security which has oversen the international community for several decades.

II. Developments In The Field Of Information And Telecommunications In The Context Of International Security

Switzerland believes the work of the first committee is essential for effectively addressing challenges regarding international security and telecommunications. Switzerland affirms the proactive work done by the first committee in adopting the concern of telecommunication technology as terrorism. As global activity increases around the world and decisive advances in science and technology are made, Member States must be alert to threats posed by misuse of information technology. Weapons of information technology may soon be the key tool of States or, more eminently, rogue groups; the first committee has the considerable opportunity to take preemptive action in order to prevent attacks and use of terror based tactics. Switzerland looks back to suggestions made in resolution A/58/457 as an appropriate beginning for the first committee’s work with approaching inherent threats of offensive information
technology. Switzerland believes the first committee is the appropriate forum for addressing the growing threat of telecommunicated terror.

Recognizing the destructive hazard misused information technology may pose to the function of businesses, economies, or governments, Switzerland is very interested in being involved with efforts to prevent cyber terrorism. Any country may be susceptible to attack due to the nature of this new breed of terrorism which respects no physical barriers. Switzerland is active in pursuing those proliferating cyber crimes; their goal, to protect society, includes combating the issues like fraud as well as more universal cyber terrorism. Domestically, Switzerland uses the Swiss Coordination Unit for Cybercrime Control. Multilaterally Switzerland is interested in being central to the efforts of prevention, intervention, and safety. Switzerland continues to be particularly interested in all issues relating to information technology.

Cyberterrorism, a relatively new and ever expanding field, requires a broad and encompassing working definition for appropriate recognition and prevention. Any act committed that attempts to disrupt computer or telecommunications service by altering operations through assaulting communication networks must be considered cyberterrorism.

With special banking interests, Switzerland endorses efforts made to protect e-commerce. Switzerland supports the research and training being provided by Interpol specifically regarding Criminal threats against e-commerce. Secure transactions and information protection are imperative for the safety of the economic system. The growing number of e-commerce transactions is an important issue in the combating of information technology crime.

The international cyber community may only be as strong as the weakest link; vulnerabilities of any systems pose eminent risks to dynamic economies and governments. It is because of susceptibility state-centered policing and information sharing must be deemed inadequate. Switzerland commends NATO’s commitment to “deterrence, prevention, detection, and reaction” regarding information technology crime.

Switzerland recommends similar actions be taken to address the threat of information warfare by the first committee so that developing states may have access to the tools which prevent attack such as advanced firewalls.
Switzerland has been an active member of the United Nations since September 10, 2002. In its’ short-lived membership in the international organization Switzerland has become one of the largest fifteen contributors among the UN system. Our efforts primarily focus on preventive action and peace building, disarmament, humanitarian assistance, sustainable development, environmental issues, as well as the promotion of human rights and international law. For Switzerland, the UN is a unique forum for international cooperation, norm development and political dialogue. It is an excellent opportunity for countries to engage in creative diplomacy in the areas of peace, development and human rights.


Switzerland is aware that prior to its’ membership to the United Nations that the General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel in 1994. However, it took until 1999 to secure the necessary 22 instruments of ratification. The essential purpose of the Convention is to criminalize acts against UN personnel as crimes against international law. Currently, the Safety Convention only applies in two situations: (1) “where the operation is for the purpose of maintaining or restoring international peace and security;” (2) “where the Security Council or the General Assembly has declared…that there exists an exceptional risk to the safety of the personnel participating in the operation. In December 2001, the General Assembly passed a resolution creating an Ad Hoc committee to expand the scope of the Convention. Switzerland is not currently a party to the Convention but would like to see it strengthened before agreeing to sign it. Particularly, Switzerland would like to see additional training of UN employees that operate outside of peacekeeping forces. Switzerland would like to see the professional staff at the headquarters from only eight managing the current security apparatus at over 150 duty stations to around 10 to 20 covering regional duty stations. Switzerland would also like to see the exceptional risk clause removed. We believe that there exists an implied exceptional risk wherever UN personnel operate and not everyone involved in the conflict, as was the case in Iraq in August of 2003, welcomes their presence.

II. Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its fifty-fourth session

The International Law Commission (ILC) was established by the General Assembly in 1947. Many nations had concerns about allowing the UN to enact binding rules of international law; they supported a committee with the powers of study and recommendation. The Commission was created to promote the progressive development of international law and its codification. The codification and development of international law remains among Switzerland’s top priorities as a member of the UN. The Swiss view of the law can be described as monistic, since it views the national and the international law as equal parts of a unified system. There is no need therefore to take any special steps to transform it into national legislation, such as by enacting special laws in each case. International norms thus become part of the Swiss legal system from the moment they emerge or come into effect. Switzerland believes that diplomatic protection is the act by which a State, espousing the cause of its citizen as the injured party, intervenes in its own name when it feels that a rule of conventional or customary international law has been violated. Switzerland recognizes the five major principles applicable for diplomatic protection. States intervene much more frequently on behalf of their nationals through the instrument of consular protection. Consular protection enables states to speak up on behalf of their citizen’s abroad and to defend their rights. The state attempts to protect the rights of its citizens in whatever country they are residing, and in particular with respect to the legal system of that country. Swiss with dual nationality may also be protected at the consular level with regard to their “second country of origin”, notably when it is a case of danger to life or to health. Companies under foreign control whose head office is in Switzerland and which have a certain economic importance there, may also benefit from consular protection. It should however be made clear to them at an early stage that the diplomatic protection of Switzerland cannot subsequently come into play.
COUNTRY: Swiss Confederation
COMMITTEE: Second
DELEGATE: Monica Vashaw, Wichita State University

The Swiss Confederation is highly interested in the issues before the Second Committee, especially in the area of development. Switzerland views development as a key element in realizing its foreign policy objectives: promote human rights and democracy; advance the peaceful coexistence of nations; alleviate poverty and need in the world; preserve natural resources; and protect the interests of the Swiss economy abroad. Civil strife, natural disasters, and resource mismanagement in developing countries, as well as a slow global economy, present Switzerland and the United Nations with possible reversals in development. Switzerland recognizes the complexity of development issues around the world and believes two important aspects are decreasing unmanageable debt and protecting freshwater resources.

I. External Debt Crisis and Development
In many impoverished developing nations external debt has reached the crisis point. First excessive debt leads to a growing debt burden: countries have difficulty paying off interest, much less capital. As the economies fail to develop, the state has to borrow more money to pay off the old debt. Furthermore, debt impedes social development. Money that could be used for social programs, such as education or health care, goes toward debt payment. External debt involves both debtor and creditor nations and enterprises. Addressing this crisis has the potential to favorably impacting the global economy in the long term.

The UN has addressed unsustainable debt on multiple occasions, including the Monterey Conference and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The UN has encouraged multilateral action with the HIPC Initiative in 1996 and the Millennium Development Goals in 2000. Switzerland was pleased with the results of the WSSD and promotes the MDGs. Although Switzerland immediately supported the HIPC Initiative, it notes that progress is slower than envisioned. Also, Switzerland, committed to the Monterrey Consensus, observes that its implementation is also lacking. Switzerland’s membership with various groups, such as the Bretton Woods Institutions and the Paris Club, allow it to further address external debt: in addition to rescheduling debt payments and pledging money to the HIPC trust fund, Switzerland has also canceled millions of dollars of bilateral debt.

Switzerland recommends the following steps to address external debt. First, the UN, the Bretton Woods Institutions and other multilateral bodies must increase inter-organizational coordination and cooperation. These organizations must increase dialogue so that they can collectively resolve this complex issue. By working together, these complementary organizations can fulfill their role. Second, creditors must take a more active role. This begins with fulfilling monetary pledges to debt relief. Also, creditors must work with HIPCs by restructuring debt or by partially or fully canceling the HIPCs’ debts. Third, developed nations and private institutions must help build industries that will enable HIPCs to pay off debt. It is only after HIPCs develop their economies that they can begin to address their debt.

II. International Year of Freshwater 2003
As the world’s population expands and fresh water resources dwindle, all nations—especially developing nations—face mounting water shortages. Water is one of the earth’s most essential resources: in addition to being a necessity for life, water is used for sanitation, agriculture and industry, three elements vital to furthering development. Freshwater shortages escalate the spread of disease, increase regional conflict, and inhibit economic development. Many developing nations lack the knowledge and resources necessary to protect their dwindling freshwater supplies.

The UN has intensely focused on freshwater resources since 1977, when it created the Mar del Plata Action Plan (MPAP), which called for national water assessments and prioritized safe drinking water. Other significant actions include the Millennium Development Goals and Agenda 21. Switzerland actively supports the MDGs and has adopted Agenda 21. Furthermore, the UN has held significant conferences, notably the International Conference on Freshwater in 2001 and the WSSD in 2002. Switzerland is pleased with the WSSD’s outcomes, especially Partnership Initiatives. Switzerland has also participated in various UN organizations. In addition to its 52 million Swiss franc contribution to the United Nations Development Program, Switzerland is actively involved with the UNDP’s Executive Board. Switzerland’s membership in the Committee on Sustainable Development enabled it to place water on the CSD’s agenda. Furthermore, Switzerland hosted various events and meetings during the International Year of Freshwater, notably the WASH partnership meeting.
Switzerland encourages the safeguarding of water resources. Switzerland believes that developing and developed countries must protect existing water supplies from industrial and agricultural pollutants. Switzerland also encourages partnership initiatives. Developing nations lack the experience and knowledge necessary to protect and maintain existing water supplies. Partnership initiatives enable developing and developed nations to plan out an agenda specific to the developing nation’s needs and capacities.