

Swiss Civilian Peace Promotion: Assessing Policy and Practice

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Foreword

The following article by Ambassador Thomas Greminger, former Head of the Political Affairs Division IV, provides a comprehensive assessment of the Swiss civilian peace promotion efforts of the past five years. Civilian peace promotion has gained in importance since the end of the Cold War – also as an instrument of Swiss foreign policy. Traditionally, Switzerland offers its good offices in conflicts. Today, civilian peace promotion encompasses numerous additional activities such as mediation, human rights dialogues and humanitarian policy. In the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) it is in particular the Political Affairs Division IV (Human Security) that deals with these questions.

The Center for Security Studies (CSS) at the ETH Zurich has dealt with Swiss civilian peace promotion both through its academic and its consulting work. In 2006 the CSS policy report entitled “Civilian Peace Promotion as a Foreign Policy Activity – A Comparative Study of Five Countries” was published in German. Numerous ideas and impulses from this report were taken up by both the Parliament and the FDFA itself. In 2009 a CSS analysis documented the opportunities and limitations of civilian peace promotion for Switzerland.

The following article continues the reflections and discussions on this topic. The contribution of Ambassador Thomas Greminger first appeared in German in the CSS series “Zurich Contributions to Security Policy”. As a former head of the Political Affairs Division IV, Ambassador Greminger illuminates the development of Swiss peace promotion in regard to the implementation of the recommendations made in the 2006 CSS study. The article thus provides an important overview of Switzerland’s policy and practice in recent years in the field of civilian peace promotion.

Three aspects stand out in this in-depth assessment: First, efforts have been made to focus Swiss contributions in the field of peace promotion both thematically and geographically, enabling a stronger concentration of resources, which is a prerequisite to greater impact. Second, in some cases such as in Nepal and Sudan, a more comprehensive approach was adopted, including mediation, development and security actors, which has led to initial positive results. While there are institutional limitations at the level of the Swiss Federal State to implementing a more comprehensive approach, the examples show that working towards a “whole of government” approach is useful and feasible. Third, the overview indicates that collaboration between governmental, academic and non-governmental organizations produces useful synergies and networks, which should be strengthened in the future, as they enable a more flexible and tailor-made approach to working for peace. An example of such collaboration is the Mediation Support Project, a joint project between the CSS ETH Zurich and Swisspeace, which is funded by the Swiss FDFA and seeks to support and strengthen Swiss and international mediation efforts.

While the focus of the following article is on Swiss experiences, I believe that many of the insights and lessons also provide valuable food for thought for other like-minded states and actors working in the field of peace policy and mediation.

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Summary

Switzerland is a key actor in the field of peace promotion and human rights. This is based on a solid foundation of humanitarian values in Switzerland, at the same time, it is also a clear expression of interest-driven politics. The international community expects a wealthy country that benefits greatly from globalization to make an adequate contribution to resolving global issues.

The Swiss Federal Constitution outlines the vision of Switzerland as a country which makes significant contributions to improving peace and security by protecting human rights and strengthening international humanitarian law through conflict resolution and peace promotion. This vision was put into practice through the efforts of the Swiss Federal Council and the Parliament. Conflict resolution and protection of human rights are areas in which Switzerland is ideally placed to create added value and provide internationally recognized services. This article examines Switzerland's role in peace promotion and highlights developments that have led it to become an active, competent and professional actor in peace and human rights policy.

Major contributions have been made in peace processes and for the benefit of multilateral policy development. Examples include Nepal, Burundi, Armenia/Turkey, Colombia, Uganda, Sudan and the Middle East. However, most of these efforts by Switzerland have never been unilateral. Peace processes are currently processes of such complexity that in most instances they have to be planned as joint ventures involving a large number of third parties. In recent years civilian peace promotion on the whole has asserted itself as an effective conflict resolution strategy, even in a challenging environment.

In addition to its humanitarian basis, the Swiss Federal Council consistently presents civilian peace promotion as a component of safeguarding its national interests. These interests include preventing forced migration, protecting economic interests and access to important decision makers for other relevant foreign policy issues. Peace promotion efforts often lead to improved access to decision makers in Washington, Moscow and the EU, and thus positively impact other policy areas. This only works, however, if the main goal of Swiss peace promotion is to make a relevant contribution to resolving global issues in terms of international burden sharing.

There is still no overall Swiss peace promotion strategy. Although such an overall strategy would be desirable, it could not be a substitute for the lacking political will

to better use and expand certain peace promotion instruments. As long as expanding military peace support is not a political option, an overall peace promotion strategy runs the risk of being nothing more than simply a fig leaf. Political will in this context could also be shaped by political leadership.

Priority-setting and a clear focus are vital for civilian peace promotion efforts. In the last five years, prioritizing has included reducing the portfolio to seven countries or regions and focusing on main thematic areas in which Switzerland has special knowledge. Peace capacities were expanded, also by entering into strategic partnerships with research institutes and civil society. The Center of Competence for Civilian Peace Promotion of the FDFA, Political Affairs Division IV, consist of one third diplomats and two thirds scientific employees. The resulting permeability between diplomacy, administration, practice and research has made it possible to establish solid and lasting knowledge. The FDFA also works very closely with multilateral partner institutions, including the UN, the EU, the Council of Europe and other international and regional organizations such as the ECOWAS. Especially the collaboration with the EU is significantly more intensive than one would generally assume.

Nevertheless, various deficiencies can be identified, for example the still limited permeability between diplomacy, policy, practice and research, as it is developed in Norway. Furthermore, to date there has been an inability to mobilize traditional research funds (national research programs, national focal points on research) for research related to peace promotion. The consistent use of different channels of communication has led to an increased presence of peace promotion in the national and international media. However, it would be a misconception to assume that the Swiss public has accumulated extensive knowledge about peace policy and peace promotion. A proactive communication policy is, therefore, essential to generating the necessary support for sustained peace promotion efforts.

1. Introduction

The starting point for the following article is the study “Zivile Friedensförderung als Tätigkeitsfeld der Aussenpolitik” (Civilian Peace Promotion as a Foreign Policy Activity).¹ The policy oriented research was commissioned by the FDFA. It presents a 160 page comparison of a cross section of civilian peace promotion efforts in relation to four other countries (Germany, Canada, Norway and Sweden). All of these countries have claimed that this new foreign policy domain is a high priority to them. The study synthesized its findings in the form of eight recommendations for the continued development of civilian peace promotion by Switzerland.

There are two important reasons for using the eight stated propositions as starting point and examining and analyzing their implementation by the Political Affairs Division IV, Human Security, i.e. the FDFA and the Federal Council since 2006. On the one hand, the analysis and recommendations of the study by the CSS ETH Zurich represent a competent and constructive approach to civilian peace promotion, which is unparalleled in our country. On the other hand, the study subsequently became a point of reference for the Swiss Parliament and Federal Council in the continuing development of this policy area.

The Control Committee of the National Council (GPK-S) decided in 2007 “to examine the conclusions of the report, to assess the measures implemented by the FDFA, and to clarify whether there was a requirement for further action.”² It advised the Federal Council that it supports the recommendations of the report by the CSS ETH Zurich and would closely monitor their implementation.³ The commission asked the Federal Council on December 3, 2008 for a report. Just over three months later, on March 25, 2009 the Federal Council published its response.⁴ Upon examination, the

Control Committee of the Council of States (GPK-S) said that the measures that had been implemented were heading in the right direction. This was good news for the Federal Council as well as for the concerned Political Affairs Division IV.⁵

The guiding question of the following study is: what is the current status of civilian peace promotion, with respect to the propositions and recommendations formulated by the CSS ETH Zurich Study in 2006? Each of the eight chapters begins with the proposition formulated by the ETH Zurich authors. The focus is purposefully on Switzerland. Comparisons to other countries are secondary. Even if the author used to work in this area himself, the main focus will be on self-critical reflection. Only in this manner can the performance and profile of Swiss peace promotion efforts continue to improve in the future.

In the following study, civilian peace promotion is based on a broad understanding. It is congruent with the concept of human security which aims to provide human beings with freedom from fear. This involves protecting the individual from armed violence, human rights violations and arbitrary political action and thus keeping violence and the threat of violence away from everyday life.⁶ The broad-based understanding of civilian peace promotion, however, on which the two bills to the parliament are based, is not all encompassing. There are foreign policy initiatives attributed to “good offices” that fall outside the conceptual reach of civilian peace promotion. These include e.g. traditional mandates to safeguard interests, which Switzerland observes in relation to the United States of America (USA) in Iran or in relation to the Russian Federation in Georgia, or vice versa. Activities in the area of nuclear and conventional disarmament also fell outside of the defined scope, at least at the time of the editorial work on the second bill to the parliament. In practice, however, the FDFA decision makers had a certain flexibility, e.g. in the Geneva talks on the nuclear issue between the P5+1 (all of the permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany) and Iran or with financing individual nuclear disarmament initiatives. In the following study, however, we will focus primarily on the thematic areas noted in the bills to the parliament, which fall into the area of competency of the Political Affairs Division IV.

1 Wenger, Andreas / Mauer, Victor / Bruno, Stefano / Callsen, Christiane / Trachsler, Daniel. *Zivile Friedensförderung als Tätigkeitsfeld der Aussenpolitik: Eine vergleichende Studie anhand von fünf Ländern (Civilian Peace Promotion as Foreign Policy Activity: A Comparative Study of Five Countries)*. Zurich: Center for Security Studies, 2006.

2 Annual Report 2007 by the Control Committee and the Control Delegation of the Swiss Council dated January 25, 2008. Federal Gazette 2008, p. 45.

3 The Commission said it would pay special attention to the following areas: improving the coordination and collaboration of the Federal Agencies involved, the preparation of an overall peacebuilding strategy, further specialization on individual topics within civilian peace building, as well as preparing a distinct communications strategy on a national and international level. Ibid, p. 45 et seq.

4 “Bericht zur Umsetzung der Empfehlungen der Studie der ETHZ über die zivile Friedensförderung vom November 2006” (Report on the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Study on Civilian Peace Promotion by the ETH Zurich) Annual

Report 2009 by the Control Committee and the Control Delegation of the Swiss Council dated January 22, 2010. Federal Gazette 2010, p. 2706, et seq.

5 Ibid.

6 The first time the concept of human security was used was in 1994 in the Human Development Report by the UNDP. It is based on two central pillars: the freedom from fear and the freedom from want. The latter also includes additional protection from poverty, hunger, sickness and the consequences of natural disasters. In this article we, like the Political Affairs Division IV, are only using the term ‘human security’ in reference to freedom from fear.

2. Discussion of the Eight Propositions

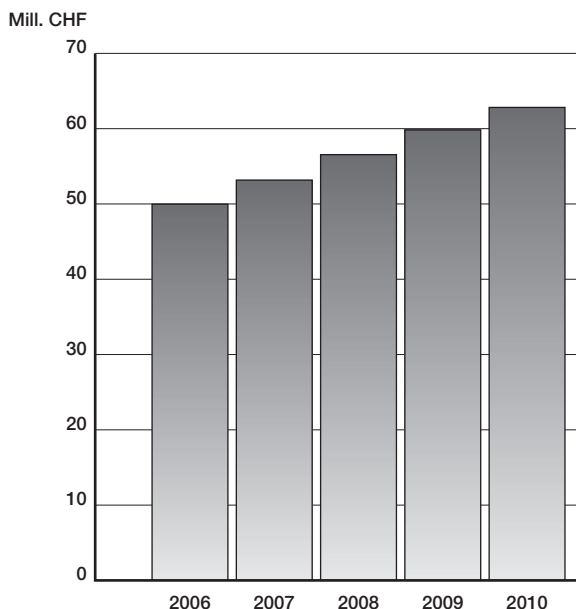
2.1 Strengthening of the Swiss commitment and formulating an overall strategy

Proposition 1

1a) In its foreign policy directive, Switzerland emphasizes that it would like to make a major and clearly visible contribution to the prevention of violent conflicts and to securing stability and peace. Since peace promotion is an important instrument in fulfilling this objective and will continue to increase in significance, Switzerland should increase its commitment in this area.

There is evidence supporting the assertion that Switzerland's contribution in the sphere of civilian peace promotion has significantly increased over the past 5 years: at the input level, the budgetary funds have increased significantly. Thus the budget of the Political Affairs Division IV for conflict resolution and strengthening of human rights for 2010 of CHF 62.8 million is 25% higher than in 2006.

Civilian Peace Promotion Spending 2006–2010



Source: Political Affairs Division IV, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA).

In addition, there were the expenses for the three Geneva centers, which were paid by the FDFA and DDPS (Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport) up to and including the year 2010. They remained stable during the period in question and amounted to nearly CHF 30 million per year. Harder to quantify, however, are the activities of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in the sphere of conflict prevention and peace consolidation, which may also be attributed to civilian peace promotion. In light of the fact that the number of countries with a high degree of fragility in which Switzerland simultaneously utilizes various foreign policy instruments has increased (see below), we can assume that the SDC also spent more funds in this area.

It is interesting to note that the human resources of the Political Affairs Division IV as another input category did not demonstrate the same trend and remained generally stable during the period in question. Despite the budget, the permanent staff at headquarters has remained between 66 and 68 positions. Unquestionably, this is a reflection of the stiff competition for human resources in light of various simultaneously running reform efforts in the department. In the Political Affairs Division IV only the number of bilateral peace and human rights experts deployed in the field, in embassies and coordination offices has increased (2006: 11; 2009: 13), as has the hiring of Peacebuilding and Human Rights Advisers, and the generally highly qualified and therefore also more expensive staff. This trend reflects the demand for highly qualified expertise in the extremely competitive market for peace and human rights policy services. It shows, for example, in the doubling of the number of Special Envoys at the ambassadorial level (2010: 4) and the Senior Mediators deployed by Bern (2010: 2) from the Political Affairs Division IV.⁷

Concrete results are, however, even more important than increased input when it comes to evidencing the strengthened commitment in the area of civilian peace promotion. The annual reports 2006⁸ and 2007⁹ published under the title *Frieden und Menschenrechte in der schweizerischen Aussenpolitik* (Peace and Human Rights in Swiss Foreign Policy) as well as the Foreign Policy

⁷ This includes the Special Envoy for the Middle East, the Special Envoy for Sudan and the Horn of Africa, and the Special Envoy for human rights policy issues as well as the Special Envoy for the Geneva conventions.

⁸ FDFA, PA IV (Eds.). *Frieden und Menschenrechte in der schweizerischen Aussenpolitik. Bericht 2006 über Massnahmen zur zivilen Konfliktbearbeitung und Menschenrechtsförderung*, approved by Federal Council on June 15, 2007. Bern, 2007.

⁹ FDFA, PA IV (Eds.). *Frieden und Menschenrechte in der schweizerischen Aussenpolitik. Bericht 2007 über Massnahmen zur zivilen Friedensförderung und Stärkung der Menschenrechte*. Bern, 2007.

Report 2009¹⁰ and 2010¹¹ contain the most important results. Of the concrete contributions that Switzerland has made in peace processes as well as at the multilateral level in terms of policy development processes, only a few are briefly noted here:

1. **Nepal:** Discrete Swiss facilitation played a major role in a comprehensive peace agreement signed on November 21, 2006 in Kathmandu, which ended the ten-year civil war that claimed more than 16,000 lives. To this date, Swiss expertise plays an important role in the drafting of a new democratic constitution, reforming the security sector, and dealing with the past. Furthermore there is also an ongoing discrete mediation between the parties to strengthen the peace agreement.
2. **Burundi:** Through skilful collaboration between the Swiss Peacebuilding Adviser on site and the non-governmental organization *Initiatives et Changement*, Switzerland was able to make an important contribution so that the last rebel organization, the Palipehutu-FNL, joined the peace process and converted into a political party in March 2009. It was also thanks to this fact that Switzerland was able to take over the chair of the specific configuration on Burundi of the Peace Building Commission in New York.¹²
3. **Armenia – Turkey:** After Switzerland had offered its expertise on the Armenian issue to Turkey for a number of years, both parties invited Switzerland to mediate, based on its rich experience in “dealing with the past”. After intensive rounds of negotiations in 2008 and 2009, some taking place in Switzerland, the parties signed two protocols in October 2009 that are yet to be ratified by the national parliaments. With this, Switzerland was able to make an internationally recognized contribution to the normalization of the relations between the two countries.
4. **Colombia:** Since 2000, Switzerland’s repeated involvement as facilitator in conflicts between the government of Colombia and the FARC, and between the government and the ELN, did not lead to a breakthrough in the peace process, and in 2008 even imposed a significant burden on bilateral relations. Swiss efforts did, however, contribute to the release of numerous hostages and at the same time paved the way for successes in other areas. Thus, Switzerland is active as an advisor to the government and the civil society for dealing with the past

in the peace process with the Colombian paramilitaries, where it provides its expertise and offers its mediation services for the benefit of the Commission on Reconciliation and Reparations as well as the Historical Commission.

5. **Uganda:** A Swiss mediator provided significant support to the official South Sudanese facilitation during the negotiations between the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and the Ugandan government. He sketched out the stages of the negotiation process and edited the ceasefire agreement, which was completed in the end. This restored order in northern Uganda, enabling hundreds of thousands of refugees to return to their homes. The peace process did, however, not come to a close and conclude with a peace agreement, and so remnants of the LRA still wreak havoc in the border areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic and the Sudan.
6. **Middle East:** Even in the conflict region with probably the greatest density of special envoys and mediators, Switzerland is consistently able to successfully identify meaningful niches. This includes the consistent continuation of the Geneva Accords,¹³ which emerged from the so-called Geneva Initiative. Important civic leaders on the Israeli and the Palestinian sides have negotiated additional key aspects of a peace agreement (security issues, Jerusalem, refugees, dealing with the past) in the form of additional protocols, and have thereby made clear to the Track 1 actors¹⁴, that even the “mother of all conflicts” can be resolved in principle. Additionally, the willingness to look for and maintain dialogue, also with challenging partners, has resulted in Switzerland having solid channels of communication to groups like Hamas or Hezbollah, without which sustainable peace solutions in that region are unthinkable. Even if these channels are at times overtly and loudly criticized, central players, for example in Brussels and in Washington, do indeed value them.

Switzerland can justifiably be proud of these contributions. As relevant as these achievements are, however, it should always be remembered that Switzerland can only play a catalytic or supportive role in any peace process. It is not the external third party which “makes the peace,” rather it is the parties on site, i.e. the Nepalese, the Burundians or the Sudanese; it is the Armenians and Turks that have approached each other and who have to muster the political will to continue to support this process. Switzerland can support them in this pro-

10 Foreign Policy Report 2009. *Federal Gazette* 2009, p. 6291–6530, here p. 6418–6434.

11 Foreign Policy Report 2010. *Federal Gazette* 2011, p. 1013–1316, here p. 1144–1153.

12 Switzerland was already involved in peace policy for Burundi between 1997 and 2000 in the context of the Arusha process.

13 See: <http://www.geneva-accord.org> see also: Ferrari, Luciano. Die Schweizer Engagements sind nicht ohne Risiko. In: *Tages-Anzeiger*, 5. August 2010.

14 Track 1 designates the top leadership level, which is authorized to represent the party in formal peace negotiations.

cess. In doing so, it is always also dependent on assistance. These days, peace processes are so complex that in most instances they must be conceived as joint ventures involving a number of actors and for which implementation requires strong alliances. Alliances in which a skilful combination of soft and hard power is vital.

Of course, this basically applies also to multilateral policy development processes, which are also part of the core business of civilian peace promotion of Switzerland. Here also, just a few key notes on the important results since 2006:

1. **UN Tracking and Tracing Instruments for Small Arms and Light Weapons:** In the battle against the abuse and proliferation of small weapons, Switzerland initiated the creation of a tracking and tracing instrument, which it negotiated in the context of the UN (International Tracing Instrument).
2. **Geneva Declaration on Armed Conflict and Development:** With the Geneva Declaration on Armed Conflict and Development launched in June 2006, Switzerland successfully placed the phenomenon of armed violence as a fundamental hindrance to development on the international agenda. This specifically involves the realization and the ensuing practical consequences that currently of the yearly about 740,000 victims of armed conflict roughly one third are direct and indirect victims of conflict, while two thirds are victims of a non-conflict environment (youth and gang crime, organized crime, etc.).¹⁵
3. **UN Human Rights Council:** The creation of the UN Human Rights Council in 2006, the two-time election of Switzerland into this council, as well as a range of initiatives launched by the council are some of the major successes of Swiss UN policies. Self-reflectively, however, it should also be noted that the UN Human Rights Council is still a long way from working in the manner we would like to see. Although it represents a marked improvement compared to the previous commission, a lot of work is still required to correct existing deficiencies.
4. **Commitment against the death penalty:** In recent years Switzerland has significantly intensified its commitment to abolish the death penalty. These efforts culminated in the 4th World Congress Against the Death Penalty, which took place in February 2010 in Geneva and gave clear signals to accelerate the efforts to completely abolish the death penalty, among other things, with the Spanish initiative for a worldwide moratorium on capital punishment by 2015.

¹⁵ See Geneva Declaration Secretariat. *Global Burden of Armed Violence*. Geneva, 2008, p. 2f. More information at www.genevadeclaration.org.

5. **Code of conduct for private military and security firms:** Under the leadership of the FDFA's Directorate for International Law, Switzerland has supported the clarification of the obligations of states in the use of private military and security firms under international law since 2005. In September 2008 this resulted in the approval of the so-called Montreux Document by a number of states.¹⁶ In order to have a direct impact on the conduct of private industry players the starting signal was given in June 2009 in Nyon to prepare a Code of Conduct for this respective branch of industry. This process was supported by the most important security firms and was facilitated by Switzerland. Based on the expertise of the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights and the Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), the Code of Conduct was signed on November 9, 2010 by approximately 60 security firms.¹⁷ A secretariat and an international accountability mechanism are scheduled to implement and control this global industry standard.

1b) Due to the increasing necessity for cooperation between civilian peace promotion, military peace promotion and development cooperation, the strategic unification of these three areas into an overall Swiss peace promotion strategy seems to make sense and would be profitable.

Since 2006 the Federal Government has done a lot of strategic and practical work to improve the interplay between civilian and military peace promotion, as well as development cooperation.¹⁸ According to current knowledge, however, the required overall strategy will not be available in the near future.

¹⁶ The issue of the legal frameworks for private security firms became more relevant in our country a short while ago in connection with the private security service provider, Aegis Defence Systems' move of its headquarters. The motion, submitted by Josef Lang (GP), national councillor, on October 1, 2010, titled "Ban on Private Armies in Switzerland" requires that the mandatory registration and approval of private military and security firms (PMSC) be regulated. PMSC, which are active in conflict and crisis regions, should be banned from setting up branches in Switzerland, since they have already violated the international law of armed conflict on several occasions. On November 17, 2010 the Federal Council recommended its adoption. See http://www.parlament.ch/D/Suche/Seiten/geschaefte.aspx?gesch_id=20103808.

¹⁷ International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers. See <http://www.news.admin.ch/NSBSubscriber/message/attachments/21140.pdf>.

¹⁸ Postulate of the Security Policy Commission of the Council of States dated 19/01/2009. Overall Strategy for Peace Building and Disarmament (09.3003). See <http://www.parlament.ch/d/suche/> It deals with a holistic presentation of Swiss relations with developing countries.

The Foreign Policy Report 2010 contains statements about the utilization and coordination of the three instruments, but hardly makes a significant contribution toward the creation of a “peace mission statement” (Leitbild Frieden)¹⁹. While such an overall strategy could offer positive signs for continued development in terms of a coherent and effective implementation of all peace policy instruments of the Confederation, it cannot, ultimately, be a substitute for the lack of political will to better utilize and expand these various instruments. In other words, as long as further developing military peacekeeping²⁰ does not enjoy more political support, a peace promotion strategy is at risk of becoming simply a fig leaf. Political will here, however, is not just an inevitable function of public opinion in Switzerland, but is strongly dependent on political leadership. With one contingent and one detachment each in the Western Balkans and a number of military observers, demining and other experts in approximately a dozen additional operations, Switzerland’s current military engagement is certainly impressive in terms of its quality, but far below average in terms of quantity.²¹

This does not mean that the peace policy actors of our country have not seriously dealt with the three major d’s – diplomacy, defense and development – both on a national and international level. This is evidenced by a diplomatic initiative on the part of the SDC, which led to a much-noted international conference held in March 2009, extensive follow-up activities, as well as a reference in the G-8 summit document. These activities, which were summarized under the heading 3C Conference (coherent – coordinated – complementary), seek improved results in dealing with conflict situations through coherent, coordinated and complementary collaboration among stakeholders in security, diplomacy, development collaboration and finance.²² The conference did not just lead to international recognition for Switzerland, but also enabled Switzerland, in the context of preparations, to gather and critically review its own experiences in the area of coordinating and co-

operating with relevant parties. Thus, a case study was used, for example, to research the extent to which the Swiss engagement in Sudan meets the requirement of the Whole of Government approach.²³ One recommendation of this study was that a binding medium-term strategy should be developed for all of the Swiss Federal stakeholders active in Sudan – a postulate, which has since been realized. Another working paper drafted for the conference examined the collaboration among the relevant units of the Federal Administration in designing and implementing the small arms policy.²⁴ Here as well, useful recommendations resulted, especially for the interdepartmental small arms working group (IDAG SALW). With respect to the interplay between the various stakeholders in the context of multilateral peace operations, the FDFA approved an internal concept paper in 2009 on the relevant approaches of the UN (Integrated Missions), the EU and NATO (Comprehensive Approach), respectively.²⁵

Although a general strategy is not yet visible on the horizon, the coordinating mechanisms among the relevant Swiss Federal stakeholders have nevertheless been consistently developed since 2006. These include joint medium-term strategies for geographic contexts in which several peace policy instruments are utilized. Currently such strategies are in place for Nepal, Sri Lanka, the Great Lakes region, and Sudan. For additional relevant regions, such as the Middle East, Western Balkans or Colombia, strategies of the different Swiss Federal offices have at least been developed that are based on broad consultations and designed to be complementary. The operational work is coordinated by country-specific working groups or task forces, which have been formalized to varying degrees. In addition to the geographically focused coordination committees, there are also a series of thematically oriented mechanisms. These include the previously mentioned Interdepartmental Working Group on Small Weapons, the Interdepartmental Working Group on Security Sector Reform and Regional Military Cooperation (IDAG SSR), as well as the Interdepartmental Working Group on Mines, each of which have a more operational and a more policy-focused arm. The overall coordination of all of the peace promotion

19 See discussion SiK-S on the above postulate in which the FDFA Chair used this term for a comprehensive peace promotion strategy following the “North South mission statement” (Leitbild Nord-Süd) of the Federal Council in 1994.

20 Wenger, Andreas / Mauer, Victor / Möckli, Daniel. Sicherheitspolitischer Bericht 2010: Viel Politik, wenig Strategie. In: Wenger, Andreas / Mauer, Victor / Trachsler, Daniel (Eds.). *Bulletin 2010 zur schweizerischen Sicherheitspolitik*. Zurich: Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich 2010, pp. 9–26.

21 Currently 278 members of the army are deployed abroad in the context of peace promotion. Regarding military peace building, see also Greminger, Thomas. Ein Ausbau der militärischen Friedensförderung ist überfällig. In: ASMZ 11/2009, pp. 8–10.

22 Roadmap 3C. See also <http://www.3c-conference2009.ch/en/Home/media/3C%20Roadmap.pdf>. Additional information can be found on the website of the above-mentioned conference, which was held from March 19–20, 2009 in Geneva, see <http://www.3c-conference2009.ch>.

23 Mason, Simon / Lanz, David. Mehrwert oder Leerlauf? Der “Whole of Government”-Ansatz der Schweiz in Sudan. In: Wenger, Andreas / Mauer, Victor / Trachsler, Daniel (Eds.) *Bulletin 2009 zur schweizerischen Sicherheitspolitik*. Zurich: Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich 2009, pp. 57–82.

24 Swiss experiences in the field of small arms and light weapons (SALW) as well as armed violence and development. Swiss background paper. Geneva, March 2009. See http://www.3c-conference2009.ch/en/Home/Conference_Papers/media/3C-Konferenz-PUBLIC_VERSION_3C_note_SALW_9March20092-rev-clean.doc.

25 FDFA. Missions intégrées: état de la discussion au niveau international et opportunités pour la Suisse. Internal Concept Paper. Bern, 2009. See also Greminger, Thomas. Streitkräfte und zivile Akteure in komplexen militärischen Friedensoperationen. In: *Military Power Review* 1/2007, pp. 6–17.

stakeholders at the policy level is the responsibility of the Core Group Peace. It is managed by the Head of the Political Affairs Division IV and encompasses the regional political affairs divisions as well as the Political Secretariat (today: Division for International Security Policy) of the FDFA, the relevant areas of SDC and DDPS, as well as Federal Police. It is interesting that to date the intelligence agencies are not systematically represented in any of these peace promotion coordination authorities. Also noteworthy is the circumstance that the governing bodies for security policy, the Security Committee of the Federal Council as well as the Steering Group Security, have not yet engaged in peace efforts abroad.

2.2 Increasing the peace promotion profile is an expression of interest-based politics

Proposition 2

2a) The increased threat resulting from transnational risks in the international environment and the heightened expectations on the part of the community of states that its members make an active contribution to dealing with the new security policy risks and threats is also forcing Switzerland to increase its peace promotion commitment.

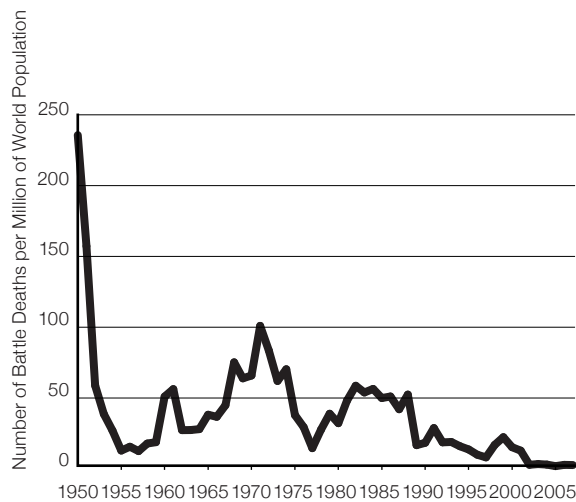
2b) The increased foreign policy flexibility for medium-sized and small states since the end of the Cold War should also be used by Switzerland as an opportunity in light of the increased range of risks. Peace promotion, therefore, means primarily interest-driven politics. Increasing its profile may also result in more foreign policy visibility, which can also be utilized in other policy areas (such as economic and trade policy).

It has already been shown in the discussion of proposition 1a) that Switzerland wants to fulfil the international community's increased expectations by raising the profile of its peace policy. In a world in which security risks have become globalized, a wealthy country that profits from globalization is expected to adequately contribute to the resolution of global issues. The Federal Council has expressed this insight in various policy documents, such as recently in the latest Security Policy Report.²⁶ In this context, conflict resolution and the protection of human rights are areas in which Switzerland is well placed to make contributions that are valued and recognized by the international community. This is all the

²⁶ Federal Council Report to the Federal Assembly on Switzerland's Security Policy dated June 23, 2010, see also http://www.vbs.admin.ch/internet/vbs/de/home/documentation/bases/sicherheit_parsys.9457.downloadList.86387.DownloadFile.tmp/sipolbd.pdf. See also Ferrari, Luciano. Die Guten Dienste der Schweiz. In: Tages-Anzeiger, August 5, 2010; Ferrari, Luciano. Im Einsatz für eine bessere Welt. In: Tages-Anzeiger, August 5, 2010.

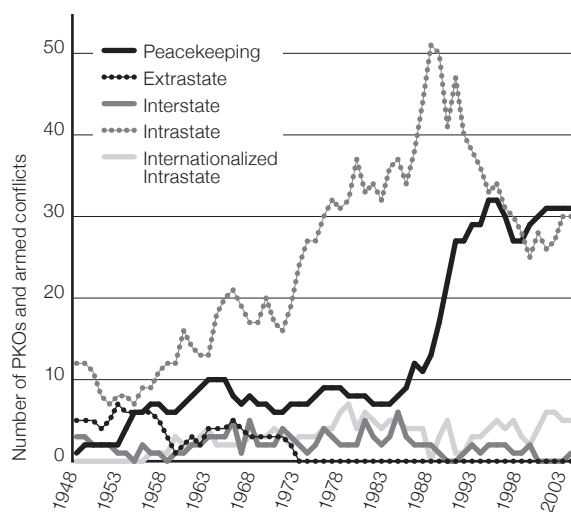
more relevant as scientific studies such as the Human Security Report 2005 and its follow-up reports impressively show that civilian peace promotion is a relevant and effective conflict management strategy. The number of armed conflicts has practically been reduced by half since the end of the Cold War, and the number of victims has significantly declined. This is, to a large degree, attributed to the increased engagement of international stakeholders in the area of peace promotion.

Battle Deaths per Year, per Million of World Population, 1950-2007



Source: Human Security Report Project: "Shrinking Costs of War", Part II in the Human Security Report 2009, Vancouver 2010.

United Nations (UN) and Non-UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs) 1948-2007 and State-based Armed Conflict 1948-2008



Source: Human Security Report Project: Miniatlant of Human Security, Vancouver 2008, p. 44.

These figures should, however, not mislead one into thinking that the framework conditions for peace promotion have become easier; indeed, they have become more challenging. Such promising statistics show that currently the great majority of conflicts are resolved through negotiation and no longer only through violence. Thus from 2000 to 2005, 17 conflicts were resolved through negotiation and only four through solely military solutions. At the same time, however, military solutions have clearly become politically acceptable again in recent years. The most frequently cited example here is the end of the civil war in Sri Lanka, which, although it did not resolve any of the causes of the conflict, did militarily end decades of violence for a time. Also in Colombia, the military path became the exclusive conflict resolution strategy in the end, without resounding success, however. In the current conflict in Afghanistan, which is dominating the media and foreign policy agendas, military logic continues to reign. The search for a political solution is gradual, hesitant even, and is not made a priority, at least not by the leading stakeholders.

Other components of the increasingly more challenging conflict resolution landscape, are assertive local stakeholders as well as the increasing number of (sub) regional organizations with mediation ambitions. Neither of these should necessarily be viewed as negative, at least from a mid- to long-term perspective, but their presence does require much greater up-front investments on the part of the smaller Western mediators. Sudan accurately illustrates these dynamics. In the Darfur conflict Qatar is the facilitator, not sparing any expense to maintain this process, even if the available knowledge in regard to the process cannot always keep pace with the high political ambitions. Thus, Doha represents the platform according to which everyone, including the UN Special Envoy Djibril Bassolé, must orient themselves. With regard to the implementation of the North-South Peace Agreement, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), the governments in Khartoum and Juba made it clear that they are managing the process and that in spite of all the difficulties they do not want to accept a strong third party. If any third parties at all, then it would have to be an African one. This means that the African Union under Thabo Mbeki and the UN, due to an African Special Envoy (Haile Menkerios), are in the driving seat. They are being challenged by the USA, which is doing its utmost to play a key role, even though in the end a US “home front” very critical towards Khartoum provides very little flexibility in terms of content. Only then do other actors such as Norway or Switzerland, which can offer a lot of process-related or content type knowledge, follow. This means first of all that a lot of time and energy has to be invested just to position oneself in order to insert existing expertise into the process in the right place and at the right time.

The far-reaching anti-terrorism legislation following September 11, 2001 has had a major impact, generally making everything more difficult. It has given rise to significant obstacles in the dialogue with armed non-state actors (ANSA). At the same time, however, it has created a peace policy niche for Switzerland, not to be underestimated in terms of its implications: as a state, which on principle is willing to have a dialogue with any ANSA with a political agenda, and which is not obliged to comply with listing decisions of the EU, Switzerland has successfully and efficiently utilized this comparative advantage. Currently it is, however, not yet really foreseeable what the impact of another negative legal highpoint – the US Supreme Court decision in the case *Holder vs. Humanitarian Law Project*²⁷ – will have on the dialogue possibilities with the ANSA.

Despite all of the challenges in today’s conflict resolution environment, it would, however, be wrong to question civilian peace promotion as an effective conflict management strategy. The Federal Council presented peace promotion quite specifically as interest-driven,²⁸ both in the Foreign Policy Report 2007, as well as in its second bill to the parliament for civilian peace promotion. It strove to raise the profile of its efforts, even though many civilian peace promotion activities have to be conducted discretely and can often only be publicly designated as successes many years later.

The interest-driven character of the peace policy engagement can be clearly and more easily communicated if it involves conflict transformation and stabilization in the geographical region surrounding Switzerland. It is obvious that contributions to conflict resolution and peace consolidation in the Western Balkans have a direct impact on the security of our country in that they prevent forced migration from this region. In countries with substantial Swiss investments or clear trade interests there is also an economic interest in peace and stability. Colombia serves as an example here, where Swiss engagement in conflict resolution has additionally contributed to reducing the risk of employees in Swiss companies being kidnapped and improving the likelihood of hostages being released. Especially in very

27 A US Supreme Court decision in October 2009 against the NGO Humanitarian Law Project (HLP), which included giving the Tamil LTTE and the Kurdish PKK instructions on formulating petitions to the UN as well as in utilizing international law to resolve conflict. The court ruled that the HLP’s activity was supporting terrorist organizations according to the definition of the US Department of Foreign Affairs. Many NGOs are criticizing the decision as being an obstacle to their humanitarian activities. See also <http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/09pdf/08-1498.pdf>.

28 See also Foreign Policy Report 2007 *Federal Gazette* 2007, pp. 5531–5591, here pp. 5543–5546; Botschaft über die Weiterführung von Massnahmen zur zivilen Friedensförderung und Stärkung der Menschenrechte vom 15. Juni 2007. *Federal Gazette* 2007, pp. 4733–4816, here pp. 4750.

fragile countries, however, solid economic interests are often at best of medium-term nature.

It is more challenging to communicate to a wider audience that Swiss contributions are appreciated by the international community, even if they do not occur in the narrower geographic or economic spheres of interest. This is directly apparent when peace policy efforts lead to improved access to decision makers in Washington, Moscow or the EU and thus have a positive impact on other policy areas. One example in this regard were the friendly relations between the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Miguel Angel Moratinos, and the Head of Department of the FDFA that began during the joint mediation efforts related to Colombia, and which later benefited Switzerland in resolving the hostage crisis in Libya. This applies similarly to the impact of the mediation process between Armenia and Turkey or the mandate to protect interests in Georgia and Russia: they enabled privileged access to the leading heads of the US administration, the Russian government, and to top government officials in Brussels. This is doubtlessly helpful when effective solutions to problems in other policy areas have to be found, be it in the financial sector or in regard to human rights policies. Access to an entirely different category of stakeholders also contributed to preventing potentially negative dynamics after the Minaret Referendum: due to established channels of communication and a reputation of being a partner willing to enter into dialogue, a number of Islamic groups were successfully prevented from inciting aggression against Switzerland.

Expectations with respect to such positive peace policy related side effects have to remain realistic, however. A high profile commitment is not a magic formula making it possible to resolve all of the foreign policy challenges of our country.²⁹ It will not radically change the observation of national interests on the part of a superpower, nor will it compensate for lacking steps in Switzerland's European integration. This was, however, also not the intention of the FDFA and the Federal Council.

2.3 Longevity of the civilian peacebuilding commitment

Proposition 3

A successful, sustainable civil peace promotion commitment is based on long-term planning, the components of which include a solid human resources and financial foundation. Switzerland must, therefore, guarantee the human and financial resources for civilian peace promotion in the long term, which should take place based on the available budget.

In the report by the Federal Council dated March 25, 2009 on the sustainability of Switzerland's engagement in peace promotion, reference is justifiably made to the two budgets for civilian peace promotion and the strengthening of human rights, as well as to the support of the three centers in Geneva. The argument stated is that the budget makes it possible to plan activities over the span of several years and to flexibly and efficiently utilize a variety of instruments that are of vital importance to enable credible and efficient peace promotion. According to the report, it is currently impossible to deal with armed conflicts in a sustainable manner, if one limits oneself only to sporadic, isolated measures that elicit fast and visible results. In most instances a commitment over several years is required, since it is the only way to create a foundation of trust and to develop a constructive peace dynamic. This is correct: the budget, supported by the Federal Act on Measures for Civilian Peacebuilding and Strengthening of Human Rights of 2003 has proven itself and provides a solid foundation for civilian peace promotion by Switzerland. Furthermore, both budgets are currently in the second half of each of their credit periods – the work for the third bill to the parliament is fully underway.

A budget, however, goes beyond merely being a foundation for the required funds for financial and human resources. The corresponding bill also provides a clear conceptual framework. It delineates objectives, defines instruments, specifies implementation principles and establishes a clear thematic emphasis. Internationally, many states recognize the benefits of Switzerland's clear conceptual foundation, at the heart of which lie a set of six now proven instruments. The toolbox established by the second bill to the parliament consists of the following elements:

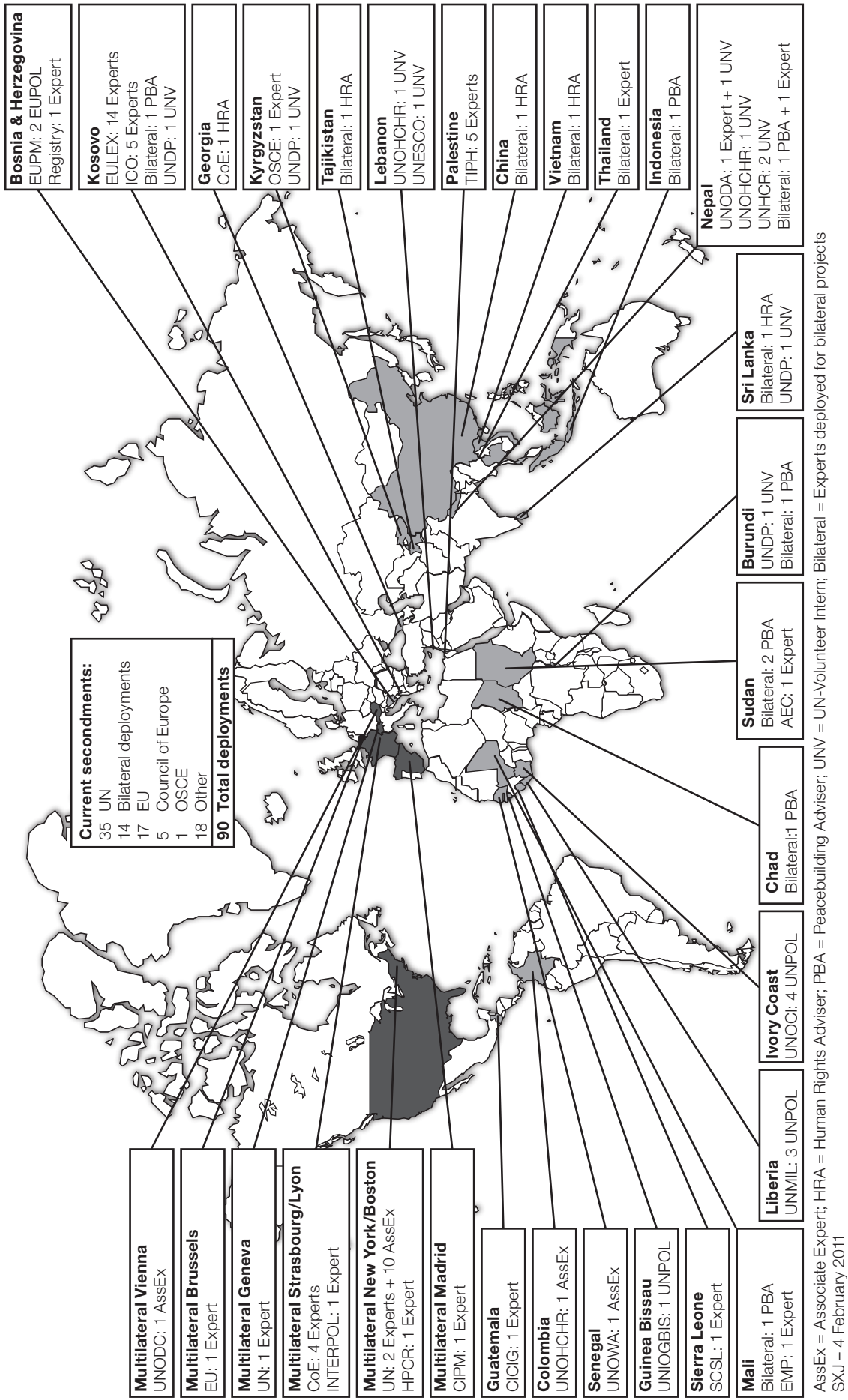
1. **Civil conflict management programs:** These include a series of peacebuilding measures, which are conducted in a specific geographic context. Currently, such programs are implemented in seven key countries or regions. (See also chapter 2.5).

²⁹ Zivile Friedensförderung: Potenzial und Grenzen. *CSS Analysen zur Sicherheitspolitik*, No. 63. Zurich: Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich, November 2009. See also: Ferrari, Luciano. Die Guten Dienste der Schweiz. In: *Tages-Anzeiger*, August 5, 2010.

2. **Good offices and mediation:** These include mediation and facilitation services of various types, such as Switzerland has provided over the last six years in more than twenty peace processes. These range from training parties in a conflict, the secondment of key experts to multilateral mediation teams, and to managing peace negotiations on a Track 1 level, i.e. at the highest level of political leadership.
3. **Human rights dialogues and consultations:** This instrument consists of regular talks at the diplomatic level on human rights topics, delving more deeply into certain themes through the exchange of experts and technical cooperation, as well as the communication of human rights policy messages at the ministerial level. Currently, this type of dialogue is underway with six partner countries (China, Vietnam, Russia, Iran, Cuba, Tajikistan).
4. **Diplomatic initiatives:** These should be understood as policy development projects, which are carried out on a multilateral level in various areas of human security. Chapter 2.1 contains some striking examples.
5. **Swiss Expert Pool (SEP) for Civilian Peacebuilding:** The Swiss Expert Pool for Civilian Peacebuilding enables Switzerland to primarily deploy civilian experts in multilateral peace operations. Nearly one fifth of such deployments are for the benefit of bilateral programs and initiatives. These also include the Peacebuilding and Human Rights Advisers previously mentioned. The Swiss Expert Pool for Civilian Peacebuilding encompasses a file of experts with approximately 630 specialists in the areas of election observation and support, the rule of law (police and justice reform), constitutional issues, mediation, human rights, and humanitarian justice. It conducts approximately 200 missions per year. Not including the election observation missions, around 85 Swiss experts from this pool are deployed at any given time (see also diagram on p. 38).
6. **Strategic partnerships:** The Political Affairs Division IV has strategic partnerships with at least a dozen institutions in the areas of research, think tanks, NGOs and international organizations. It is only due to these partners that a comparatively small ministry of foreign affairs, like the one in Switzerland, is able to swiftly mobilize the required expertise to perform as a highly-competent and professional player, for example, in the field of small arms (Small Arms Survey – SAS), the reform of the security sector (Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, DCAF) or in the field of human rights (Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights). Swit-

zerland's reputation as a leading conflict mediator also includes collaboration with independent mediators, such as the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD).

Swiss Expert Pool for Civilian Peacebuilding: Secondments in February 2011



Source: Political Affairs Division IV, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA).

**Primary Partners of the Political Affairs
Division IV, 2009–2012:**

| Organization name | Thematic allocation |
|--|---|
| Académie de droit international humanitaire et de droits humains, Geneva | Center of competence for human rights and international humanitarian law |
| Berghof Foundation for Peace Support, Berlin | NGO in the field of mediation, facilitation, conducting dialogues |
| Brookings Bern Project on International Displacement, Bern/Washington | Project by Brookings International focusing on the issue of internally displaced persons |
| Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Geneva | Center of competence co-financed by the Federal Government for Security Sector Reform (SSR) |
| Geneva Center for Security Policy (GCSP), Geneva | Center of competence co-financed by the Federal Government for security and peace policy related issues |
| Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), Geneva | Center of competence co-financed by the Federal Government for humanitarian demining |
| Conciliation Resources (CR), London | Internationally active NGO; support of local peace efforts, facilitation, documentation and analysis of peace processes |
| Geneva Call (GC), Geneva | Humanitarian non-governmental organization focusing on humanitarian dialogue with non-state groups (ANSA – Armed Non-State Actors) |
| Harvard Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research (HPCR), Boston | Research and policy project located at the Harvard School of Public Health with a focus on human security, conflict management and international humanitarian law |
| UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), Geneva | Leading international human rights organization |
| HD Center for Humanitarian Dialogue, Geneva | NGO active in mediation and facilitation |
| Institut des Hautes Études Internationales et de Développement (IHEID), Geneva | Scientific institution and platform for proactive research projects |
| International Commission for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), New York | NGO in the field of transitional justice |
| International Crisis Group (ICG), Brussels | NGO; analysis and proposals for solution to international conflicts |
| Interpeace, Geneva | NGO with a focus on establishing local capacities to overcome conflict situations and social tension |
| Small Arms Survey (SAS), Geneva | Research program on the issue of small arms located in the IHEID |
| Swisspeace, Bern | Peace research institute with a practical orientation in the field of conflict analysis and peace promotion |
| University of Bern, Institute for Public Law, Bern | Scientific institution with a focus on human rights |

Source: Political Affairs Division IV, Swiss Federal Department for Foreign Affairs (FDFA).

Another central component of sustainable peace policy engagement, aside from financial resources secured over the long term, is a well-stocked “tool box.” However, peace policy related capacities, which have been systematically increased in the last few years, and can now readily be utilized, are just as significant for sustainability. This includes the strategic partners noted above, to which we will return in the following sections.

Other important pillars of these capacities are:

1. **The Political Affairs Division IV, Human Security**, is the main administrative unit at the Federal Government level responsible for civilian peace promotion. Currently, it employs nearly eighty employees at its head office. These consist of an interesting mix of diplomats and leading experts in the relevant fields for the division. The variety of ages and range of experience also adds to a productive environment. Solid controlling and knowledge management structures are other key elements of a professional peace promotion agency. Recently, a lot of investments have been made especially in the latter area, also to counteract the negative impact of a career-driven, relatively high turnover in personnel. This, however, also points to an obvious weakness. Although it is positive that the Political Affairs Division IV appears to be developing into a career springboard, the short employment duration, especially of special envoys and cadres, has a negative impact on their function of completing peace policy missions. In this context a more sustainable human resources policy is required.
2. **The Pool of Experts on Peacebuilding**, previously mentioned, is another important locus of expertise. Here too, investments to increase capacities are happening systematically. Since the pool was set up, more than 600 Swiss experts have been trained and educated. Currently, and in close collaboration with another strategic partner, the Geneva Center for Security Policy (GCSP), the Pool of Experts on Peacebuilding offers two education and training modules for civilian generalists. These trainings are also in high demand amongst international organizations and ministries of foreign affairs abroad. One is a two-week basic training course (Swiss Peacebuilding Training), which relies on the infrastructure of SWISSINT in Stans; the other is a three-day program for higher cadres (Senior Leader Training in Peacebuilding), organized by GCSP and Interpeace in Geneva.
3. **Specialized institutional capacities** in thematic focal areas are a third area of expertise. In the context of a project, specific know-how is acquired from suitable strategic partners, which can be utilized at any time for bilateral or multilateral requirements.

The most developed example here is the Mediation Support Project (MSP), conducted as a joint venture by the Center for Security Studies at the ETH Zurich and Swisspeace.³⁰ The MSP permits Switzerland to systematically assess all of its own mediation activities and, as needed, to accompany them with process expertise. It also provides training seminars within and outside of the Division for conflict mediators (see below). Furthermore, the MSP has the ability to hold training seminars for conflict parties in the methods and techniques of peace negotiation, and this with relatively short notice, for the benefit of the UN, various regional organizations or also for bilateral purposes. Thus, parties were recently prepared for negotiations or national reconciliation processes in the Central African Republic, in Darfur (Doha), Papua-Indonesia and Gaza. Similar institutional structures also exist in other thematic focal areas: in the field of religion and conflict the project *Religion & Politique: action et recherche* located at the Graduate Institute enables us to implement appropriate knowledge for project and policy work. The Center of Competence for Civilian Peacebuilding, a project under the umbrella of Swisspeace, serves in similar fashion as a provider of know-how in dealing with the past, as well as with gender and conflict.

4. **Thematic education and training** is a major area of Swiss peace promotion. A renowned example for this is the Peace Mediation Course (PMC) for experts supporting peace processes. As with the Pool of Experts module previously mentioned, the course is in high demand internationally. It is organized by the Mediation Support Project and held jointly with the FDFA. Instructors include the best Swiss mediators and leading peers from abroad.³¹ In August 2010 a training course based on a similar model was offered for the first time for experts on dealing with the past and on transitional justice. Moderators and resource persons included figures such as Richard Goldstone, Yasmin Sooka, Theo van Boven and Carlos Castresana.³²

With the budgets, the instruments and developed capacities, Swiss peace policy appears institutionally sufficiently consolidated to live up to the requirement of sustainability. The question of political support and sustainability still arises, however. Realistically it must be acknowledged that while Switzerland now possesses

³⁰ See also Mason, Simon J.A. / Siegfried, Matthias. Mediation Support Project (MSP): Massgeschneiderte Verstärkung der schweizerischen Mediationskapazitäten. In: Wenger, Andreas / Mauer, Victor / Trachsler, Daniel (Eds.) *Bulletin 2008 zur schweizerischen Sicherheitspolitik*. Zürich: Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich 2008, pp. 137–145.

³¹ www.peacemediation.ch

³² www.dealingwiththepast.ch

solid institutions and, due to the foreign policy objective of the revised constitution (Article 54), also an excellent legal basis for the promotion of peace and human rights, they do not yet enjoy the same significance and implicit support in Switzerland as is the case in Norway, for example. This is not to say that there is not considerable political support for civilian peace promotion today. Solid parliamentary support for the promotion of peace was already evident in the failed attempt by civilian fiscal policy makers in 2005 to reduce the budget for civilian peace promotion and the promotion of human rights.³³

The parliament's discussion with regards to the second bill to the parliament confirmed this impression. The Council of States endorsed the credit without a single dissenting vote, and while there were 50 dissenting votes in the National Council, they should be understood not as the rejection of civilian peace promotion itself, but rather as a failed attempt to combine the approval of the budget with the absolute renunciation of military promotion of peace (deployments abroad).³⁴ Since then there have been no cutback attempts by the parliament, nor have there been any substantial discussions with regards to civilian peacebuilding. We can, therefore, assume limited interest and a general sense of goodwill on the part of the Parliamentary Plenary Assembly.

The situation is somewhat different in the case of the expert commissions – the Foreign Affairs Committees of both councils – in which civilian peace promotion enjoys solid and strong support. Here, the annual reports of the Political Affairs Division IV and most recently the foreign policy report as well as current issues have repeatedly provided the opportunity to delve deeper into the topic of civilian peace promotion. Additionally, there were short seminars on mediation (APK-N/2008) and dialogues on human rights (APK-N/2010). Especially critical discussions, such as the hearings that took place in the late summer and fall of 2008 on the Colombia-facilitation, have contributed to the view of civilian peace promotion as a competent and professionally led Swiss foreign policy domain, which by definition involves certain risks, but only well-calculated ones.

Thus, it is safe to conclude that today civilian peace promotion enjoys the necessary political support. However it has not yet achieved the status of being automatically accepted on a political level. In order to reach that status, increased public relations efforts are still necessary,

³³ See also the excerpt of the council minutes in the Official Bulletin (OB) under AB. 2005 N 1685ff., See also http://www.parlament.ch/ab/frameset/d/n/4710/210906/d_n_4710_210906_211031.htm.

³⁴ See also with the 2007 deliberations in the Council of States, OB 2007 S 696, See also http://www.parlament.ch/ab/frameset/d/s/4718/252007/d_s_4718_252007_252016.htm, and 2008 in the National Assembly, OB 2008 N 32, See also http://www.parlament.ch/ab/frameset/d/n/4802/263473/d_n_4802_263473_263474.htm.

and leadership will continue to be required within the FDFA and its management, as well as in the Swiss Federal Council and the Parliament.

2.4 Specialization on thematic priorities

Proposition 4

Switzerland should set long-term thematic priorities for civilian peace promotion. The priorities should be geared towards the specific strengths of Switzerland and the international requirements, as well as be supported domestically and by the internal administration. The specialization on thematic priorities increases the chance of gaining more visibility internationally, for example, by assuming leadership roles in international missions.

In recent years Swiss civilian peace promotion has consistently worked towards the strengthening of certain thematic competencies to advance human security. These are areas, which can ensure the sustainability of peace processes, and for which Switzerland, in comparison to the efforts of other countries or international organizations, can deliver special added value. This is possible because Switzerland possesses special credibility based on its own historic experiences and – equally important – because it can mobilize knowledge courtesy of the respective competency centers in response to demand. In recent years a limited number of themes to which these criteria correspond have emerged. In the thematic cluster related to peace, these include:

1. **Direct mediation and support for mediation:** The consistently promoted focus on mediation and mediation support in recent years has come to fruition. In the last six years Switzerland has played a role as a mediator in more than 20 peace processes or has sent experts to international mediation teams. Several examples of direct mediation have already been introduced in chapter 2.1. As a general rule the accomplishments in mediation support are a little less visible. These include the secondment of experts for multilateral negotiation teams from the UN or from regional organizations. In this context the Swiss have taken on a key role in the negotiations for Burundi (Arusha peace process), in the Sudan North-South (CPA peace process) and in Darfur (Doha). Since there is often a marked asymmetry between the parties with regards to knowledge of content and the proceedings themselves, training and coaching of the weaker party is often an important necessity to ensure a sustainable outcome of the negotiations. Here too Switzerland has repeatedly made valuable contributions, for example, in favour of the GAM at the Aceh negotiations led by Mar-

tii Ahtisaari in Helsinki. Frequently there is also a need for preparing both parties with regards to a negotiation or reconciliation process. The Mediation Support Project has provided important capacities in this regard (see previous chapter). Negotiations can also be supported with Switzerland offering itself as an “intelligent hotelier” by providing an appropriate negotiation environment. This is not only a demanding task logistically, but also in terms of content. Examples here are the ceasefire negotiations on Sri Lanka in Geneva (2006) or the UN Cyprus negotiations on the Bürgenstock (2004).

A core aspect of mediation support is collaboration – both financial and in terms of content – with multilateral mediators on the one side and non-governmental players on the other. The Mediation Support Unit (MSU) of the UN Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA) is an example of a multilateral actor, which is supported financially and also with experts, and with which we have collaborated particularly in developing thematic guidelines for mediators. Non-governmental mediators are in demand in the ever-increasing conflicts where the parties – as a general rule the government – want to avoid the “internationalization” of a conflict and, therefore, do not involve governmental third parties (UN, States). Private mediators are often also important in the early phases of a peace process since they can introduce the parties to the actual negotiations. For this reason Switzerland works closely with several leading non-governmental mediators, such as the Geneva Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD), the German Berghof Foundation or the NGO Conciliation Resources, which is based in London.

2. **Constitutional expertise in conjunction with questions of power sharing and decentralization:** Since questions of governmental power distribution and the division of competencies form the basis of many violent conflicts, models of horizontal and vertical power distribution, decentralization, federal structures and minority rights are often promising approaches to conflict resolution in peace processes. Based on its federal structure, direct democratic tradition, extensive minority rights and the four co-existing cultures, Switzerland is an example for many conflicting parties. Even though the Swiss model is not easily transferable, Swiss constitutional experts, based on their experience and expertise in constitutional processes, have been able to successfully provide useful contributions to other countries such as Burundi, Sudan, Macedonia and Nepal.
3. **Dealing with the past and the prevention of genocide:** Engagement in the areas of dealing with the past and genocide prevention rests on the Joi-

net Principles against Impunity.³⁵ They speak of the development of norms and exemplary practices on a multilateral level, namely in the sectors of justice and peace, as well as mediation and dealing with the past. In the dilemma between justice and peace, Switzerland is consciously bridging the positions between the human rights community, which argues on the basis of law, and the conflict mediators who are bound to the transformative approach. The guidelines for UN mediators with regards to dealing with the past, to the development of which Switzerland contributed significantly, are hopefully a successful example.³⁶ From an operational point of view this area of expertise includes activities such as engaging panels of historical experts, restitution programs, or appointing special courts of law and institutional vetting. In the area of genocide prevention, regional processes are initiated and supported in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

4. **Religion and conflict resolution:** This thematic focus has continued to gain importance over time. It attempts to draw religiously inspired political actors into conflict management with the goal of reducing tensions between cultures and to divest extremist positions of their legitimacy. An important aspect of this engagement is the implementation of concrete projects with the Alliance of Civilizations.³⁷ The aim of this work is to go beyond well-intentioned rounds of dialogue. According to the principle of “Dialogue through Action,” projects are sought out that can be used to deal with concrete problems of religious-political actors. Examples here are overcoming obstacles with which legitimate Islamic welfare organizations are confronted in a post 9/11 context, or the creation of greater compatibility between religious and secular educational systems.³⁸ This facilitates a veritable dialogue with the so-called difficult actors.
5. **Electoral support:** The intention of the newly defined thematic focus in the current medium-term planning of the Political Affairs Division PA IV for

35 Message in regard to the continuation of measures for civilian peace building and strengthening of human rights dated June 15, 2007. *Federal Gazette* 2007, pp. 4733–4816, here p. 4777.

36 Swisspeace/FDFA. *Dealing with the Past in Peace Mediation*. Berne, 2009. See <http://www.dealingwiththepast.ch>

37 The Alliance of Civilizations is a UN initiative, which was initiated by Spain and Turkey after the bombings in Madrid in 2004. Its goal is to find solutions to deal with the tensions between Islamic countries and communities and the remaining non-Islamic world.

38 Further information on the diverse activities in this sector can be found on the FDFA website, see <http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/de/home/topics/peasec/peac/confre/conrel.html>. Also see: *Transforming Conflicts with Religious Dimensions: Methodologies and Practical Experiences. Conference Report*, Geneva: IHEID, Swiss FDFA, Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich, April 2009.

the years 2009–2012 is to increasingly accompany elections that have a high conflict potential. The goal is to analyse the factors that promote conflict at elections and to counter them proactively with preventive measures during the preparations for an election. This also includes continued participation in multilateral observation of elections.

Since a corresponding pilot project in Colombia has led to very interesting insights, the problem of internal displacement and peace promotion has been included in the current medium-term planning as an additional new subject field. Based on the experiences gathered, however, it remains to be seen whether the subject really has the required potential to become a focal point.

In the second topical cluster security the focal points are defined as follows:

1. **Reduction of armed violence:** There has been a continued focus on implementing the Swiss strategy 2008–2011 for the international fight against the illegal proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Special attention will be directed towards the follow-up to the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. The greatest possible number of states shall be made aware of the existence of this problem, and concrete programs launched in those countries, which are most affected. Especially in view of the reduction of armed violence, the Geneva Declaration process intends to define goals and indicators on a global level.
2. **Anti-landmine activities:** Switzerland will continue its commitment to a world without new victims of land mines and explosive remnants of war, including cluster ammunition. Primarily this involves the implementation of the existing Swiss Anti-landmine Strategy 2008–2011. The focal points here are the support of the Geneva Center for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), the support of operational demining activities and the implementation of the Ottawa Convention.
3. **Reform of national security systems:** Switzerland has become a serious player here thanks to her strategic partner, the Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF). Components of security sector reform (SSR) are meanwhile also being used in a number of operational programs: in Nepal, the Middle East (Lebanon, occupied Palestinian territories) and, thanks to a DDPS project, also in the Sudan.

In all these sectors a combination of in-house know-how and external, swiftly mobilized expertise of strategic partners has been established. Corresponding successes with operational projects such as in mediation engagements or diplomatic initiatives are comparatively easy to substantiate (see chapter 2.1).

2.5 Setting long-term geographic priorities

Proposition 5

- a) Switzerland should set long-term geographic priorities for civilian peace promotion. These priorities should be oriented according to the historic relationships to potential target countries, the current/earlier initiatives (for example, also in the sector of developmental collaboration), internal administrative knowledge and skill, and, as much as possible, international demand.
- b) Geographic priorities should be set according to Swiss political interests.
- c) The establishment of geographic priorities in civilian peace promotion is to be coordinated as much as possible and as much as is reasonable with the priorities of military peace promotion and development collaboration.

It is obvious that Switzerland cannot play a role in every new crisis because a serious engagement requires considerable investment of time and money. In the face of the complexity of conflicts and the increasing demand for intervention, concentration is, therefore, also indispensable in civilian peace promotion efforts. Thus, such efforts have to focus on specific countries and regions. Based on an in-depth portfolio analysis in 2005, the geographic priorities between 2006 and 2007 were re-defined and the quantity of focused interventions reduced from thirteen (2004) to seven (2007).

The list of priority countries and regions is reviewed annually and adjusted according to the political developments and opportunities for action. Accordingly, Sri Lanka was removed from the list and the corresponding program was predominantly reduced to monitoring human rights. In the region of the Great Lakes it was decided to concentrate exclusively on Burundi. On the other hand, a new program in West and Central Africa, which is developing interventions in Chad, Mali/Niger and favours sub-regional organizations, was added to the list of priorities. Presently discussions are underway to shift the priority focus in Colombia to a topically focused intervention and, instead, to develop a pilot program in the central Asian region.

Pulling out or entering is a decision that is taken based on criteria, which the Federal Council has determined in the second bill to the parliament:

1. **Points of entry and comparative advantages:** Do special historic, political or economic ties exist? Does Switzerland offer specific competencies, which especially qualify it to resolve the conflict or strengthen human rights in the region that is in conflict?
2. **Foreign policy interests:** Are there direct security, economic, migratory or development policy effects due to the conflict? Are there humanitarian or ecological consequences that a conflict may have for Switzerland that must be considered?
3. **Effectiveness:** Is there a realistic chance that Swiss engagement will make a significant contribution to the promotion of peace or the protection of human rights?
4. **Demand:** Do the conflicting parties desire such an engagement or will the state party at least tolerate it?
5. **Synergies:** Are there synergies with multilateral missions or other Swiss activities, such as development cooperation and the military promotion of peace that can be realized?
6. **Risk:** Is the political risk reasonable compared to the expected return? Are the dangers for the staff in the field acceptable?

Geographic Priorities 2009–2012



Civilian Peace Promotion:
Programs

1. Region of the Great Lakes
2. Sudan and Horn of Africa
3. West and Central Africa
4. Middle East
5. Nepal
6. South-eastern Europe
7. Colombia

Civilian Peace Promotion:
Select Interventions

8. Sri Lanka
9. Indonesia
10. North Caucasus

Human Rights:
Dialogue (D) und Consultation (C)

11. China (D)
12. Vietnam (D)
13. Iran (D)
14. Tajikistan (D)
15. Russia (C)
16. Cuba (C)

Source: Political Affairs Division IV, Swiss Federal Department for Foreign Affairs (FDFA).

The choices have to be weighed based on this catalogue of criteria. In the process it is obvious that players such as Switzerland or Norway will pay closer attention to the criteria of demand from the parties involved or special entry points such as a relationship of trust with one of the parties to the conflict, as compared with medium or great powers, which pursue tangible national interests in certain countries and regions. The engagement is, therefore, first sought where an added value to the resolution of the conflict can be achieved. As explained in chapter 2.2 this does in no way present a contradiction to an interest-based policy of peace. The dominant interest of the Swiss peace policy remains the achievement of a substantial contribution to the resolution of global problems in terms of reasonable burden sharing within the international community. This is an advantageous position for mediation tasks since it does not contradict the requirement of impartiality. It also means that the criterion of geographic proximity does not have the same relevance as it did in traditional security policy during the Cold War.

Today Switzerland concentrates its efforts on South-eastern Europe, the Middle East, Nepal, West and Central Africa, Colombia, Burundi and the Sudan. These are countries and regions where Switzerland can generate a verifiable added value and in which synergies already exist or where synergies with other activities of the Swiss Federation have been developed. This is true for humanitarian assistance in the Sudan, in Burundi, as well as the Middle East. Due to development cooperation, the promotion of peace in Nepal, Chad and Mali can rely on established relationships of trust in order to engage as a relevant player. Part of this includes the necessary infrastructure (coordination offices) to be able to act on site.

This does, however, not mean that the synergistic potential between these Federal instruments has already been fully exhausted. Especially Norway has convincingly demonstrated how actions that promote peace can be effectively and visibly supported by means of humanitarian aid without infringing on the humanitarian principles in any way. Further possibilities for synergies between peace promotion and development cooperation are particularly present in the area of developing and engaging measures to deal with fragile states. Weak government structures are a mark of many post-conflict situations. While development cooperation and its classic instruments are only suitable to a very limited degree in such situations, more flexible forms of intervention have been developed in recent years that can offer an important contribution to the stabilization and rebuilding of sustainable government structures. Such instruments could increasingly be used and combined with peacebuilding engagements.

The geographic prioritization of military peace promotion aligns with that of civilian peacebuilding: the bulk of means is applied in the Western Balkans, while the deployment of military observers, demining experts or experts for technical cooperation in the area of security sector reform and secure storage of weapons and ammunition, are aligned with the priorities set by the FDFA wherever possible. Examples here are the DDPS's SSR plan in South Sudan, which is equally as important as it is sensitive, or the support provided to Mali for the stockpile management of weapons and ammunition.

Concentration of means does not, however, mean abandoning all flexibility. A political actor engaging in peace promotion has to be able to react quickly to promising activities that appear suddenly and unexpectedly outside of the defined priorities. In order to fulfil both goals (focus and adequate flexibility) the Federal Council has defined a benchmark in the second bill to the parliament, whereby 80% of the means from the budget distributed according to geographic criteria must be spent in favour of the focal countries and regions specified in the list, and the remaining 20% go to pilot programs or remain as a strategic reserve to enable short-term reactions to political opportunities as they appear. This division has proven itself in principle. The controlling report for 2009, however, shows that the set benchmark in the previous year was slightly surpassed. Instead of the targeted 20%, 24% of the bilaterally allocated expenses took place outside the prioritized countries.

For the next budget the question thus poses itself as to whether the benchmark should be adjusted in favour of slightly greater flexibility or not.

2.6 Intensified collaboration with research institutions and NGOs

Proposition 6

- a) Administration units active in civilian peace promotion have to further expand collaboration with NGOs and scientific institutions on an international level.
- b) The development of expertise has to continue to be supported and the personnel exchange of experts between administration, practice and research has to be encouraged. In the long term this will establish an extensive pool of knowledge for the continued development of civilian peace promotion.

The corresponding concept of the Political Affairs Division IV defines strategic partnership as a "structured collaboration with chosen partner institutions, which have special competencies in the area of peace policies, civilian peacebuilding and conflict management, as well

as the promotion of human rights, and which contribute substantially to the fulfilment of the strategic goals stated in the bill to the parliament.”³⁹ According to this concept, a strategic partnership especially intends to:

- provide Switzerland with access to key players
- promote the formation of alliances and collaboration with other players
- make key knowledge available for the formulation and development of Swiss policies
- advance policy priorities, test and disseminate them
- identify entry points for bilateral or multilateral actions
- raise and hone the profile of civilian conflict management and the promotion of human rights on a national and international level
- contribute to the strengthening of the multilateral system.

This concept has indeed made it possible to establish long-term and productive collaboration with select partners in science and non-government circles. As shown in chapters 2.2 and 2.4, strategic partnerships also form the basis for most of the successes at the operational and policy levels. With these partners, projects are carried out that make quick and flexible expertise available. It also allows for more comprehensive and durable training activities. This collaboration does not just consist in delegating tasks, but should rather be seen as a close collaboration in terms of content.

Even if not every partnership is productive and effective at all times, the concept has proven itself in the mid- and long-term. It is, therefore, certainly worthwhile to use approximately 16% of the budget for civilian peace promotion as well as for the three centers in Geneva in favour of these partnerships. Sceptics occasionally criticise that NGOs are thus receiving quite large amounts of resources, or even perceive a contradiction to the imperative of the FDFA being the main actor. A closer look, however, at the concrete actions makes it immediately apparent that the FDFA would often not even be able to act without the support of its partners or at least would not be able to do so with the appropriate authority.

In addition, the Federal Council’s report dated March 25, 2009 emphasizes the permeability between diplomacy, research and practice under the title “Knowledge

³⁹ FDFA, PAD IV. *Concept for Strategic Partnerships*. Internal draft. Berne, 2003.

Building.” It explains that the Political Affairs Division IV of the FDFA, which is assigned with civilian peace promotion, consist of one third diplomats and two thirds research employees, who, among others, come from universities, NGOs, the ICRC, development organizations, the media, peace operations or international organizations.

The diverse qualifications and experiences of the staff as well as the permeability between diplomacy, administration, practice and research have, therefore, made the establishment of solid and sustainable knowledge possible. It must be noted, however, that the permeability between diplomacy, research, civil society and especially politics is considerably further developed in a country like Norway. This is especially true for the top levels in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in research institutions and in non-governmental organizations. In contrast, Switzerland seems unique in the way it seeks to combine topical inputs with process know-how.

It must also be critically noted that it has not yet been possible to win usual Swiss research funding means for peace and human rights policies beyond the investments in strategic partnerships as described above. For instance, since 2002 Swisspeace and Political Affairs Division IV have made four futile attempts to launch a national research program (NRP) “Promotion of Peace.” The attempt to create a national research priority “Humanitarian International Law/Human Rights” under Geneva auspices also failed. Even the support of prominent parliamentarians has not helped, as shown by the parliamentary question on the subject of “Evaluation and Research on Peace” submitted in 2007 by Didier Burkhalter, at the time a Councillor of State. Although the Federal Council did confirm that “an expansion of peace research would strengthen Swiss peace policy and would also contribute to better coordination and communication”, and explicitly mentioned the possibility of a corresponding NRP,⁴⁰ this support in principle has to date remained without actual effect.

⁴⁰ Parliamentary question by Didier Burkhalter dated June 14, 2007. Evaluation and Research on Peace (07.3333). See http://www.parlament.ch/D/Suche/Seiten/geschaefte.aspx?gesch_id=20073333.

2.7 Using multilateral platforms and intensified collaboration with the EU

Proposition 7

a) Switzerland should continue to use the multilateral platforms it has available, in order to pursue its peace promotion concerns (especially the UN).

b) Collaboration with the EU must be intensified since the EU will in all likelihood continue to gain strength as a player in the promotion of peace and the Union is, for the most part, active in environments that are also strategically important for Switzerland.

c) Strategic partnerships and ad-hoc associations should furthermore also be evaluated according to aspects of expert knowledge as well as the resources of potential partner countries. This will broaden the circle of potential partner countries and offers more flexibility when deciding on an engagement.

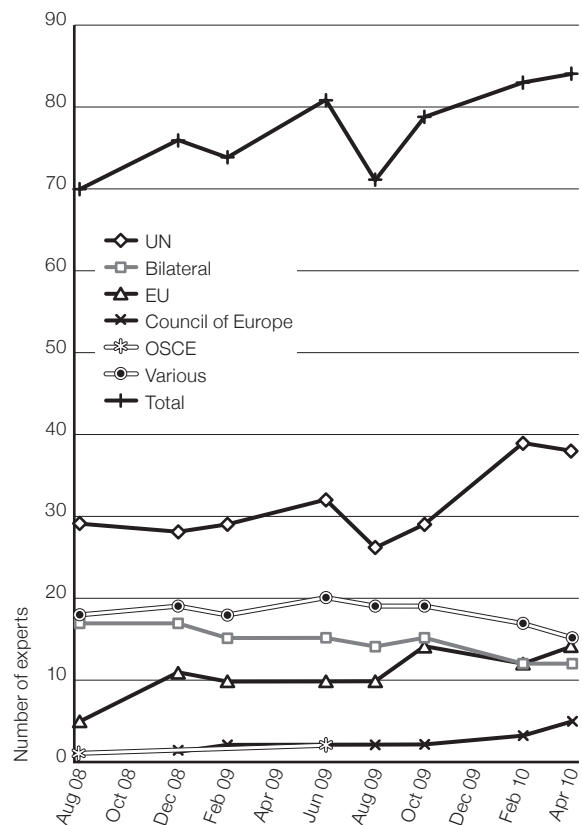
Even if Swiss civilian peace promotion has developed a fully consolidated bilateral base and a corresponding Swiss identity compared to the 1990s, it would be false to assume that the FDFA is focusing exclusively on a bilateral approach. The Federal Council, in its report dated March 25, 2009, stated clearly that there are presently only a few conflicts for which one can develop solutions singlehandedly. Collaboration with international and regional players as well as with other states is increasingly essential. For this reason Switzerland advances its policies regularly in collaboration with partner institutions, be they governments, the UN (deploying experts in various peace assignments; collaboration in mediation teams), the EU (Kosovo, political dialogue), the Council of Europe (Georgia) or other international and regional organizations such as ECOWAS.

If there is a current trend, it will lead to an increasing multilateralization of peace promotion efforts, as is illustrated by the secondments of the Pool of Experts. While bilateral secondments have declined somewhat between 2008 and 2010, they have increased in favour of the UN from 29 to 37, for the EU from 6 to 15 and for the Council of Europe from 1 to 5.

Especially the UN is systematically supported as a peace promotion institution: the multifaceted cooperation with the Mediation Support Unit of the UN-DPA was described in chapter 2.4. In addition, there is the financing of the annual meeting of all UN Special Envoys on Mont Pélérin, the flexible support (process know-how, training modules etc.) of individual special envoys, taking over the presidency of the specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission on Burundi or the role of the Swiss UN mission in New York

as a political platform for promoting peace. An example of the latter is the co-leadership of the UN's Group of Friends for Conflict Prevention.

Swiss Expert Pool: 2008–2010 Deployments without Election Monitors



Source: Political Affairs Division IV, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA).

The collaboration with the EU is clearly closer and stronger than generally assumed.⁴¹ This is evident from:

- the substantial number of nominations for EU civilian crisis management operations
- the biannual informal dialogues on policy with the former policy-unit of the European Council on a broad peace policy agenda
- the close diplomatic-operational collaboration on dossiers of mutual interest such as the Armenia-Turkey mediation or the peace processes in Chad
- the regular interchange at the level of special envoys in regards to important peace processes (Middle East, Sudan/Darfur)
- the mandate for the Georgia inquiry report given to the Swiss top-level diplomat Heidi Tagliavini
- or the Swiss support to the creation of an EU mediation support unit.

Despite limiting factors and deficiencies, especially at the strategic level, there is certainly a broad range of areas of collaboration. The non-member status denies Switzerland access to important decision-making bodies, which cannot be compensated by way of regular consultation and information events with third countries, personal relationships with EU mandate-carriers or the excellent information channels of the Swiss Mission in Brussels. The leadership of EU operations is also denied to the Swiss. This does not, however, preclude that Swiss experts are entrusted with important tasks such as leading the Community Affairs division in the International Civilian Office (ICO) in Kosovo.

The domestic constraints of a more intensive political collaboration as regards peace promotion, however, may be even more substantial than the formal obstacles. This is revealed by the relatively reserved communication in Switzerland with regards to the various forms of collaboration with the EU or by the fact that steps to formalize the collaboration have been delayed for years. Even though increased collaboration with the EU has been demanded by several parliamentary motions and approved in principle by the Federal Council, the completion of a Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) framework agreement about collaboration on security policy is still pending. A collaborative agreement still has to be completed and the respective flow of

information has to therefore be arranged for each and every individual operation.

Collaboration with other regional organizations is clearly less pronounced. This can, for one, be ascribed to the fact that these regional organizations are either still in the early stages (examples being ECOWAS and UNOWA for the West-African zone) or that they have greatly declined in comparison to the 1990s (example of the OSCE). In the future, the collaboration with the OSCE should be revived. A more intensive collaboration with their conflict prevention and conflict management instruments would be beneficial. In view of the potentially important role of the organization in the Caucasus and Central Asia, this is a key point.

With regards to collaboration with other important peace promotion actors, peacebuilding issues are a regular part of discussion agendas in meetings with countries of the Permanent 5 and other states with political ambitions in peace promotion at the levels of Minister and State Secretary. Regular discussions on promoting peace take place in Brussels as well as in Washington at the respective department head levels. Communication is also maintained with Paris, Berlin and Stockholm. Among the new players, especially Turkey and Qatar have aroused Switzerland's interest, and respective relationships are being formed. Admittedly, as of today, an actual strategic partnership with a comprehensive political peace promotion agenda and systematic follow-up exists only with Norway. This is not so much due to a lack of will to utilize other relationships for peace promotion interests in a similar thorough manner, but rather a problem of insufficient capacities.

2.8 Comprehensive and coherent communication strategy

Proposition 8

Switzerland should prepare and implement a comprehensive and coherent communication strategy for civilian peace promotion. Such a strategy serves to broadly anchor civilian peace promotion in Switzerland, to generate the required political will within the country as well as to increase visibility internationally.

There are indeed good reasons why the FDFA has paid more attention to active communication with regards to its activities in civilian peace promotion in recent years. Among them is the right of the parliament and the public to be informed about Switzerland's commitment to this important aspect of foreign policy and the manner in which the means provided are utilized. In its report

⁴¹ See Goetschel, Laurent / Michel, Daniel. *Switzerland's foreign-policy scope of action as a non-member of the European Union: Looking at several aspects of peace promotion*. Basler Publications on European Integration No. 89. Basel: Center for European and International Studies of the University of Basel, 2009.

dated March 25, 2009 the Federal Council, however, points out a relevant dilemma when it comes to providing more public visibility to the promotion of peace: in the realm of peace policy and especially in conjunction with attempts at mediation, the interest in communicating actively may come into conflict with the obligation of confidentiality. Discretion is essential in order to be recognized as a trusted partner, and trust is a key to success in the promotion of peace. It is, therefore, possible that an interest in maintaining confidentiality outweighs an interest in communication. In this way the obligation of confidentiality may actually lead to a situation where certain civilian peace promotion activities are not reported or are reported only with great delay, sometimes as much as several years. A very clear example of the premature publication of an action are the confidential informal negotiations between Syrian and Israeli representatives that were facilitated by Switzerland's Special Envoy to the Middle East between 2004 and 2006 – once they became public, through no fault on the part of Switzerland, the involved parties broke off the process.

Nevertheless, there is sufficient material to report. This is first of all the case in relation to the parliament: within the scope of the Federal Council reports and in response to numerous parliamentary motions, there is a regular flow of information related to peace promotion developments. In addition, the Head of Department of the FDFA as well as the Head of Political Affairs Division IV frequently have the opportunity to present activities in this area to the Foreign Affairs Committees and to provide in-depth information on certain topics. This leads, at least in the specialized committees, to a satisfactory level of information, an active interest and a positive attitude toward civilian peace promotion.

Because they are multipliers, the media are an equally important target group for communication efforts. Information is provided to the media who is also invited to various events. These include:

1. **Annual conference of the Political Affairs Division IV:** With the participation of top-level figures these conferences have regularly attracted four to five hundred attendees on current peace promotion topics. Most recently the topics were: Religion and Worldviews (2010), Dealing with the Past (2009), Conflict Mediation in Africa (2008), Opportunities and Challenges of Migration (2007) and Business and Human Security: Political Risks in a Globalized Market (2006).
2. **Launching important publications and meetings of experts:** A current example here is the launch of the study "Cost of Conflict in the Middle East" from the Indian Strategic Foresight Group (ISFG) on January 23, 2009 at the UN in Geneva,

which was backed by Switzerland. The study not only received a positive response on television and radio, it was equally well received in more than 100 newspapers and blogs from more than thirty countries.

3. **Contact with foreign delegations:** Access to interesting members of international delegations, such as Prachanda, the leader of the Nepalese Maoists on the occasion of a federalism study tour, enable those working in the media to receive first-hand knowledge of Swiss engagements.
4. **News conferences** and background discussions with FDFA diplomats and experts.
5. **Newspapers** such as the NZZ, Le Temps, La Tribune de Genève, La Regione Ticino, as well as trade publications such as the KOFF-Newsletter regularly publish articles, which have contributions by FDFA experts, on current issues and questions.

The substantially more consistent use of all these channels led to an increased demand for interviews with FDFA experts and a greater presence of peace promotion issues in the national and international media. The Colombia engagement was, for example, deemed important enough for an independent documentary film by the television broadcaster of French-speaking Switzerland in their series Temps Présent, which proved to be extremely well researched and well made. Armed violence was the subject on Tagesgespräche, and peace policy and human rights were the topic on the Samstagrundschau on Radio DRS, radio broadcaster of German-speaking Switzerland. The Sri Lanka engagement provided content for a report on the Rundschau, while the Tages-Anzeiger und Bund reported on various Swiss mediation services.⁴²

In conclusion, media interest in civilian peace promotion has grown considerably in recent years. Nevertheless, it is still not easy to feature content related to peace promotion in the Swiss media world. In German-speaking Switzerland and especially within the almost exclusively domestically oriented Federal parliamentary media, it still requires quite an effort to awaken interest. Often an initial interest is sparked by a crisis, such as the question of the Colombia facilitation in 2008 or the human rights dialogue with Iran in the summer of 2010. It is then important to make use of this interest, to turn the attention away from the "crisis" and to explain the instrument in a broader context. In this regard it would also be incorrect to assume that the public has gained a comprehensive understanding of peace policy or even

⁴² Ferrari, Luciano. Swiss Engagements are Not Without Risk; *Tages-Anzeiger*, August 5, 2010.

that an identification with peace promotion has developed, as can be assumed for the Norwegian population.

Even the means of education and continuing education, such as web-based training platforms on human security or human rights, which were developed in recent years, have not yet been able to accomplish that. We can merely assume that there is selective knowledge and understanding within an interested segment of the population. An active communications policy aimed at the political class as well as the general public, therefore, continues to be absolutely essential in order to establish the necessary support for sustainable civilian peace promotion. An appropriate strategy could simply entail easily implemented measures such as a more accessible and attractive web presence of the Political Affairs Division IV. Continuously communicating about ongoing peace processes and related background is more challenging, but also more useful than focusing exclusively on individual events.

Interestingly enough, there are already warnings of contrasting trends, namely of over-selling the most recent Swiss peace promotion successes. Daniel Trachsler, for example, points out that for some time now the FDFA has been emphasizing Swiss civilian peace promotion activities and warns that “these [peace support] successes should not, however, distort perceptions as to what Switzerland’s peace promotion is capable of achieving in the field of conflict resolution and in terms of enhancing the country’s political standing.”⁴³ He justifiably concludes that unrealistically high expectations can only lead to disappointment and an erosion of domestic support.

An active communications strategy is indeed a balancing act between creating understanding and establishing support in the population on the one hand, while on the other hand avoiding illusions and unrealistic expectations. There is, however, no alternative to a more active communication in regard to peace policy, especially in view of the current level of knowledge within the Swiss population and the still modest political significance of this foreign-policy domain. Swiss peace promotion deserves to be presented confidently, as long as this goes hand in hand with openness to criticism and is firmly rooted in reality.

43 Civilian Peace Support: Potential and Limitations. *CSS Analysis of Security Policies*, No. 63. Zurich: Center for Security Studies, November 2009. <http://www.sta.ethz.ch/CSS-Analysis-in-Security-Policy>

3. Conclusions

Switzerland has a vision of making a major contribution to the improvement of global peace and security, also through its peace promotion activities. This vision is anchored in the Swiss constitution, which is the guideline for the efforts of the Federal Council and Parliament's accelerated efforts to promote peace. The vision of Switzerland as a champion of peace and human rights policies is also firmly anchored in Swiss humanitarian values. Yet it is also an expression of clear interest-based politics. A wealthy country that benefits from globalisation needs to contribute to the resolution of global issues, especially if it has comparative advantages in this field.

The 2006 study by the CSS ETH Zurich provided an important road map for the Federal authorities commissioned with the promotion of peace, especially for the Political Affairs Division IV. The Federal Council, in its report to the control committee of the parliament, stated that the recommendations contained in the report had been widely implemented. The control committee agreed with this assessment and closed the file. The discussion of the eight propositions in this article has led to a similar conclusion. The eight spheres of ac-

tivity have not lost any of their topical relevance and remain vital for the continued development of civilian peace promotion in Switzerland.

Areas of development that are very satisfactory include the increased Swiss commitment to civilian peace promotion, both in terms of quality and scope. Furthermore, the geographic and thematic concentration of resources has also been successfully set on track, and this is a key factor to increasing the likelihood of positive impact. In addition, the convergence of peace promotion as a value-based but also interest-based policy field was more systematically articulated. Positive developments with room for improvements include the following areas: development of a comprehensive strategy, maintaining and building human resources, increasing the use of synergies with both domestic and international partners, and the development of a clearer communication strategy.

Since 2006, the FDFA has developed its comparative advantages by focusing geographically and thematically, but also through a more systematic use of networks and strategic partners. The developments since 2006, summarized in the table below, indicate progress. Substantial contributions were made to specific peace processes, international peacebuilding institutions and multilateral policy topics.

| No. | Proposition/ Recommendation | Completely fulfilled | Partially completed | Not completed | Comments / Deficiency |
|-----|---|----------------------|---------------------|---------------|---|
| 1a | Civilian peace promotion as an effective contribution to peace and stability; therefore, increased engagement in civilian peace promotion | x | | | 25% budget increase since 2006 while personnel resources in headquarters stagnated. |
| 1b | Strengthen definition of overall peace promotion strategy | | x | | Coordination mechanisms and common country strategies exist, while an overall strategy is still absent. The political will for the consistent use of all means, including military promotion of peace, continues to be inadequate. |
| 2a | Increased expectations of the international community; therefore, increased commitment to civilian peace promotion | x | | | Despite a more challenging environment (anti-terror laws, remilitarization of conflict resolution, more local/regional players with mediation ambitions), civilian peace promotion can be confirmed as an effective conflict management strategy. |
| 2b | Present civilian peace promotion as interest-driven politics | x | | | The Federal Council presents civilian peace promoting consistently as interest-driven politics in key documents (Foreign Policy Reports 2007/2009, Bill to Parliament II). |

| No. | Proposition/ Recommendation | Completely fulfilled | Partially completed | Not completed | Comments / Deficiency |
|-----|---|----------------------|---------------------|---------------|--|
| 3 | Ensure longevity and sustainability of commitment to civilian peace promotion | | x | | Currently the political support is solid, but not yet secure for the long-term. Political peace promotion instruments and capacities have been created, but human resource management must be developed in a more sustainable manner. |
| 4 | Specialization on thematic priorities | x | | | Proven concentration on a series of thematic priorities where Switzerland has a comparative advantage. |
| 5a | Develop long-term geographic priorities | | x | | The state portfolio was reviewed according to defined criteria and reduced to seven priority countries and regions. |
| 5b | Develop geographic priorities according to interest-driven politics | | x | | Interest-driven choices: in the foreground is the added benefit Switzerland can offer in terms of a contribution to a resolution of global problems (burden sharing). |
| 5c | Coordinate determination of geographic priorities with development cooperation and military peace promotion | | x | | Well-functioning mechanisms of coordination, common country strategies have been created. Additional synergy potential between civilian peace promotion and humanitarian aid, as well as development cooperation, especially in the context of fragile statehood exists. |
| 6 | Intensify collaboration with research and non-governmental organizations | | x | | PAD IV personnel mix (1/3 diplomats, 2/3 research staff) permits creation of a solid knowledge base. The means of strategic partnership has proven itself for an impact-oriented collaboration between research institutions, NGOs and the Federation. Classical research funding programs have not been made use of to date (NRP, research priorities). |
| 7 | Use multilateral platforms; intensify collaboration with EU | | x | | Despite a more developed bilateral position compared to the 1990s, there is intensive collaboration with multilateral organizations like the UN and the EU. There are deficiencies at the strategic level and underutilized potentials: Framework agreements for collaboration on security policies with the EU are pending; OSCE collaboration not exhausted. |
| 8 | Define communications strategy | | x | | The consequent utilization of various channels of communication has led to a greater presence of peace promotion in the national and international media. Communication is, however, still inadequate in regard to the broad public and should be oriented even more toward an understanding of processes and background information. |



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The Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich specialises in research, teaching, and the provision of electronic services in international and Swiss security policy. An academic institute with a major think-tank capacity, it has a wide network of partners. The CSS is part of the Center for Comparative and International Studies (CIS), which includes the political science chairs of ETH Zurich and the University of Zurich. (www.css.ethz.ch)

The Mediation Support Project (MSP) was founded in 2005 as a joint venture between Swisspeace, Bern and the Center for Security Studies (CSS) at the ETH Zurich. The Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs is the initiator and main partner of MSP. MSP supports mediators and conflict parties in gaining knowledge and skills for effective peace negotiations.

Further related publications are available at www.css.ethz.ch and www.peacemediation.ch:

- Religion in Conflict Transformation – Politorbis 52
- Mapping Mediators – A comparison of third parties and implications for Switzerland
- Mediating Tensions over Islam in Denmark, Holland, and Switzerland
- Money Makers as Peace Makers? The Role of Business Actors in Mediation Processes
- Transforming Conflicts with Religious Dimensions: Methodologies and Practical Experiences
- Debriefing Mediators to Learn from Their Experiences
- Insider Mediators - Exploring Their Key Role in Informal Peace Processes
- The Tormented Triangle: The Regionalisation of Conflict in Sudan, Chad and the CAR
- To Be a Negotiator: Strategies and Tactics
- Mediation Essentials: Business Actors in Mediation Processes
- Mediation Essentials: Decentralization, Special Territorial Autonomy, and Peace Negotiations
- Mediation Essentials: Dealing with the Past in Peace Mediation
- Mediation Essentials: Federalism and Peace Mediation
- Mediation Essentials: Gender and Peace Mediation
- Towards Realizing the Strengths and Mitigating the Challenges of NGO Mediators
- Unpacking the Mystery of Mediation in African Peace Processes
- Linking Environment and Conflict Prevention – the role of the United Nations
- Tools for Building Confidence on the Korean Peninsula
- Mediation and Facilitation in Peace Processes