



SWISS WITH US



NEWS & VIEWS

From the Embassy of Switzerland in the U.S.

November 2023

From the Ambassador's desk

Dear Friends of Switzerland,

The recent escalation of violence around the world, including in Israel and Gaza, the continuation of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, and the many conflicts throughout Africa have deeply affected me. Before you start reading this edition of our newsletter, I would like to invite you to take a moment to reflect on the lives that were lost in these conflicts and in other war zones across the globe.

In dark times, finding the right words to address more mundane issues is a difficult task. Please allow me to use this space to highlight some more lighthearted achievements of our Embassy in recent months.

If you have had the chance to visit Switzerland, you will know how much pride we take in our train system. As a country in the heart of Europe, we rely on a strong partnership with our neighbors to ensure the quality of our transportation sector. I invite you to learn more about the event we recently hosted with our friends in the Austrian and German embassies and our contributions to U.S. train infrastructure below.

Switzerland and the United States are both powerhouses in post-secondary education. Many of our brightest minds come to the U.S. to study – and vice versa! We offer the [ThinkSwiss scholarship](#) to a select number of American students who are interested in expanding their horizons at one of Switzerland's world-class universities. In this newsletter, you will learn more about the ThinkSwiss network and how you can become a part of it.

We love to promote our innovative infrastructure and first-rate universities, but it is also our duty to shine a light on more serious topics. Switzerland is dedicated in its promotion of the global abolition of the death penalty and here in Washington, DC, we collaborate with other embassies to advance this goal. Below, you can read more about our recent collaboration on an art project highlighting the work of inmates incarcerated on death row.

Additionally, as highlighted below, our defense section attended the annual meeting and exposition of the Association of the United States Army and our public diplomacy section organized a 5K race in partnership with Swiss sportswear company On. We also want to remind our Swiss readers living in the United States of the services offered by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Organization of Swiss Abroad, and Soliswiss.

Finally, I would like to conclude this editorial on a lighter note. Beautiful scenery, cold weather, expensive currency: Are you thinking of Switzerland or are you thinking of our friends in Sweden? The Swedish tourism agency recently started a campaign to clear up the confusion between our two countries and I was very happy to offer my rebuttal. You can watch the video [here](#) and on our [SWISS IMPACT website](#).

As the nights get longer and the days get colder, I encourage you to take the time to reflect on your surroundings and to rediscover the appreciation for things you may be taking for granted. Happy Thanksgiving!

Sincerely,
Jacques Pitteloud



Jacques Pitteloud is the Ambassador of Switzerland to the United States of America.

Embracing the spirit of “Rail-volution” with Track is Back II

The Embassy of Switzerland, in partnership with the Austrian and German embassies, hosted the second edition of Track is Back, an annual event series which focuses on cross-continental collaboration in the rail sector. This event unfolded within the framework of the historic Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which provided a surge of funding to the U.S. rail landscape.

Project managers, policymakers, industry professionals, and academics from both sides of the Atlantic convened to discuss the rail industry’s future, which is built upon three key pillars: strong infrastructure, effective project management, and robust partnerships. This event ultimately conveyed a strong message: collaboration and cooperation with Europe are indispensable factors for success and innovation in the U.S. rail sector. This dynamic partnership promises to revolutionize the rail industry and shape its future in an ever more interconnected global landscape.

Take a look at the highlights from the event [here!](#)



Rail industry experts from the United States, Switzerland, Germany, and Austria met with Ambassador Jacques Pitteloud to further strengthen existing partnerships.

Elevating Swiss academia in the United States: The annual ThinkSwiss alumni gathering at the Swiss Embassy

The 2023 ThinkSwiss alumni event was a remarkable celebration of academia in the United States with an audience comprising [ThinkSwiss](#) and Fulbright alumni, Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) fellows, and, for the first time, representatives from Swiss academia, including professors and scientists from Switzerland working in the United States.

The day commenced with a visit to the Central Maryland Research and Education Center Headquarters, where attendees had the opportunity to delve into the innovative use of drones in agriculture, shedding light on the evolving landscape of technology in farming practices. Following this visit, participants explored the zebrafish research center at the National Institute of Health, delving into the intricate world of zebrafish research and its implications in various scientific endeavors.

At the evening reception, Severin Hacker, the co-founder and CTO of Duolingo, captivated the audience with an engaging speech, providing insights into his journey and experiences. Subsequently, the event featured a series of pitches by ThinkSwiss alumni, SNSF fellows, and Swiss academics, showcasing their groundbreaking "science to market" innovation ideas.



Group visit at the Central Maryland Research and Education Center Headquarters.

Opening speech by Severin Hacker, co-founder and CTO of Duolingo, during the evening reception.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS!

The ThinkSwiss scholarship offers students enrolled in a Canadian or U.S. university an invaluable opportunity for a research stay lasting 2 to 3 months at a Swiss university or research institution. This program is in line with the Embassy's mission to promote academic and research exchanges between Switzerland and North America.

It is with great excitement that we announce the opening of the [application](#) period for the 2024 ThinkSwiss scholarship. Prospective undergraduate and postgraduate students from all disciplines are encouraged to seize this opportunity to apply and enhance their academic perspectives with a research stay abroad!





Watch this video to see what past ThinkSwiss awardees have to say about their time in Switzerland.

Participation in the “Fence Project”: A street exhibition to raise awareness about capital punishment

The Embassy of Switzerland, in collaboration with 15 other embassies in Washington, DC, took part in an [art project](#) promoting the global abolition of the death penalty, a practice which violates the right to life, is irreversible, fails to provide deterrence to criminal behavior, and does allow for neither atonement nor closure as it fails to deliver effective compensation to the victims affected.

During the month of October, each participating embassy exhibited paintings created by people currently incarcerated on death row at the San Quentin State Prison in California. A painting by Keith Loker, who has been incarcerated for 28 years, was installed for public viewing on the wall and fence of the Swiss Embassy.

This project aligns with Switzerland’s [overarching strategy](#) to champion international human rights by — amongst other priorities — focusing on the death penalty issue.



Artwork displayed on the Embassy's fence to raise awareness about capital punishment.

Run with ON: The Climb to Switzerland

On September 23, the Climb to Switzerland invited runners and friends of the Embassy to take on a 3-mile uphill run in Washington, DC. During their run, participants had the opportunity to experience the innovative world of ON Running, a Swiss sporting brand that blends cutting-edge design with a strong commitment to sustainability. The Embassy shares the same goals of promoting Swiss innovation, economic collaboration, and sustainability. Learn more about this event on our [SWISS IMPACT](#) website.

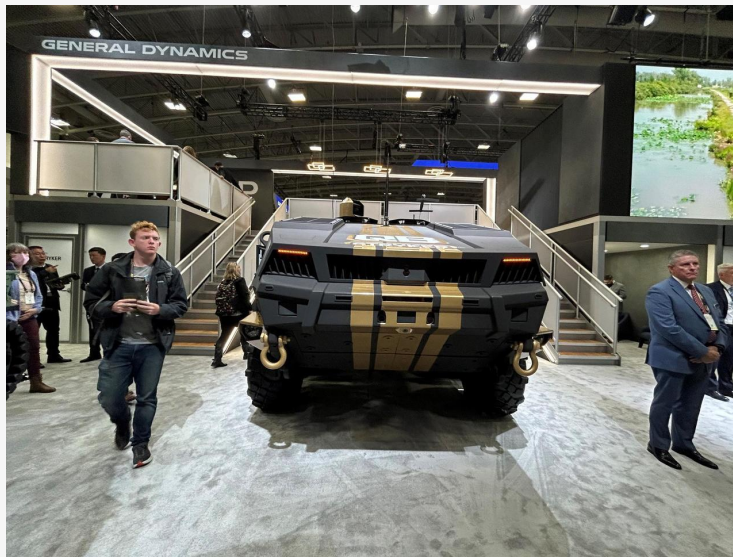


Racing to the finish line at the Embassy of Switzerland, where runners were welcomed by Ambassador Jacques Pitteloud.

Representatives of the Swiss Armed Forces and armasuisse meet defense industry at AUSA 2023

Representatives of the Swiss Armed Forces and armasuisse along with their respective offices at the Embassy of Switzerland were pleased to attend this year's annual meeting and exposition of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C.

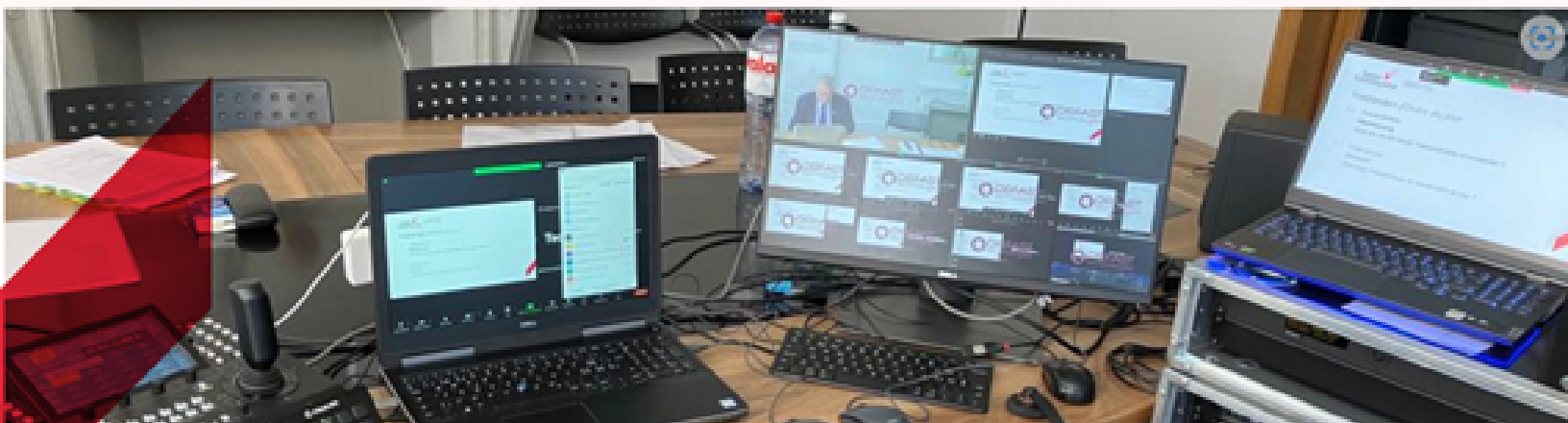
As the largest land power exposition in North America, the event showcased a variety of inspiring ideas and innovative products over the course of three days. Serving as a strong indicator for upcoming trends and providing a comprehensive overview of the current defense market, this exposition offered an excellent opportunity for the Embassy to engage with the U.S. army and defense industry. After an impressive opening ceremony, including speeches, awards, and musical performances, the Swiss delegation visited many stands spanning over two floors. Their focus was set on Uncrewed Systems and Munitions. Notable highlights included the strong presence of drones as well as innovative aircraft designs, which are anticipated to make a significant impact on the future of military strategies.



Exposition of loitering systems and a general dynamics tank at AUSA 2023.

Webinars organized by the FDFA, ASO, and Soliswiss

The [Consular Directorate of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs](#), the [Organization of Swiss Abroad \(OSA\)](#), and [Soliswiss](#) regularly organize engaging webinars designed especially for Swiss citizens living abroad. Highlights from previous webinars and access to their recordings can be found [here](#). Please note that the webinars are only held in German and French.



Mark your calendar for the upcoming webinar spotlighting the world of banking, scheduled for December 13, 2023, and stay tuned for more details and relevant links, soon to be shared on the OSA website.



**SWITZERLAND
(NOT SWEDEN)
IN THE U.S.**



Have you ever confused Switzerland and Sweden? Ambassador Jacques Pitteloud is here to help. Our response video to [the new Swedish tourism campaign](#) has already been watched over 140.000 times across the globe. Find out more about this ongoing video campaign on our [SWISS IMPACT website](#).



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