



SWISS WITH US

NEWS & VIEWS



From the Embassy of Switzerland in the U.S.

June 2024

From the Ambassador's desk

Dear Friends of Switzerland,

Our country has been showing off its best side recently: our men's ice hockey team won the silver medal at this year's world championships, our soccer team has not lost a single game at Euro 2024 so far, and for the first time in over 30 years, a Swiss singer won Eurovision – and, believe me, music is not usually our biggest strength.

While our Swiss athletes and artists have been making us proud, my team at the Embassy in Washington, D.C., has continued to contribute to our country's excellent bilateral relations with the United States. This spring, we organized two study trips for U.S. policymakers to Switzerland: a group of Capitol Hill staffers and a group of women mayors from cities across the United States. Find out more about their experiences below.

In May, we partnered with the International Committee of the Red Cross to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, a seminal set of treaties addressing international law in wartime. Below, we outline why the Geneva Conventions remain crucially important in today's polarized environment.

Education is one of Switzerland's greatest exports. We are immensely proud of our vocational training model, which prioritizes work experience and onsite learning throughout a student's education. In June, my colleagues participated in a panel at the U.S. Department of Labor, where we shared our expertise with our American counterparts. Of course, we also promote exchanges at institutions of higher learning: read more about the experiences of a Swiss army lieutenant colonel at the National Defense University in Washington D.C. below.

If you are planning a trip to Switzerland this summer, you will experience our world-class train infrastructure firsthand. Along with our colleagues at the German and Austrian embassies, we recently shared our best practices in rail policy with the U.S. Federal Railroad Association. Read more to find out about our ongoing "Track is Back" series.

I cannot wait for Switzerland's next game at Euro 2024—and the opponent is none other than Euro 2020 champion Italy! Part of my family came to Switzerland from Italy and I will always have a soft spot in my heart for our southern neighbors—but that doesn't change the fact that I will be cheering wildly for Switzerland on Saturday! If you also want to join in, you should take a look at [our overview of Euro 2024 watch](#) parties here in the U.S. Hopp Schwiiz!

Sincerely,
Jacques Pitteloud



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

US Congress Staffers Visit Switzerland

The Embassy was pleased to lead a study tour of Switzerland with a delegation of senior staff from the U.S. Congress from May 27 to 31. The group was comprised of nearly a dozen staffers, spanning both parties and chambers and representing a number of leadership offices, legislative committees, and key members who are driving important debates on Capitol Hill.

The study tour visited Zurich, Bern, and Geneva. Beyond the overarching theme of Swiss-U.S. bilateral relations, topics of discussion included European security, digital policymaking on issues such as artificial intelligence and cybersecurity, and sustainability. Meetings were held with relevant offices in the Swiss government and parliament, along with a number of external institutions across the private, academic, and multilateral sectors. These study tours are part of a long-standing and successful relationship between the Embassy and Capitol Hill, and [the 2024 trip](#) was the 25th study tour organized by the Embassy for Congressional staff.



Delegation Trip of U.S. Women Mayors to Switzerland

In April 2024, the Embassy hosted a week-long delegation visit to Switzerland for U.S. women mayors. This inaugural visit allowed participants to explore local governance with a focus on “Shaping Urban Landscapes for a Sustainable Future.” The program included meetings and field visits focused on infrastructure, economic resilience, affordable housing, public safety, and sustainability, reflecting shared priorities between the U.S. and Switzerland. Swiss cities had the opportunity to highlight their best practices in urban development that contribute to creating safe, prosperous, and innovative cities that consistently rank among the highest in global livability.

Throughout the week, the mayors visited Zurich, Basel, Bern, Lausanne, and Geneva. The program covered a wide range of topics, including urban development, mobility, economic promotion, public-private partnerships, and digital governance.

Over the course of these exchanges, the leaders found that, on a local level, they face similar challenges and shared their visions for addressing them. The trip emphasized the important role of women in decision-making, with discussions on gender parity and valuable exchanges with Swiss women trailblazers in politics.

Read more about their trip here on the [SWISS IMPACT](#).



75th Anniversary of the Geneva Conventions

On May 22, the Embassy of Switzerland [hosted an event](#) in partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) with the aim of exploring the enduring impact of the 1949 Geneva Conventions on international humanitarian law. The discussion concluded with a Q&A and remarks by Mr. Patrick Hamilton, Head of the Regional Delegation for the United States and Canada of the ICRC.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the [four 1949 Geneva Conventions](#), which have been ratified by every state in the world. Despite their universal acceptance, this anniversary is taking place at a time of heightened geopolitical tension and polarization, as well as shifts in the post-World War II multilateral landscape. These developments have created new and extraordinary challenges that cannot be avoided.

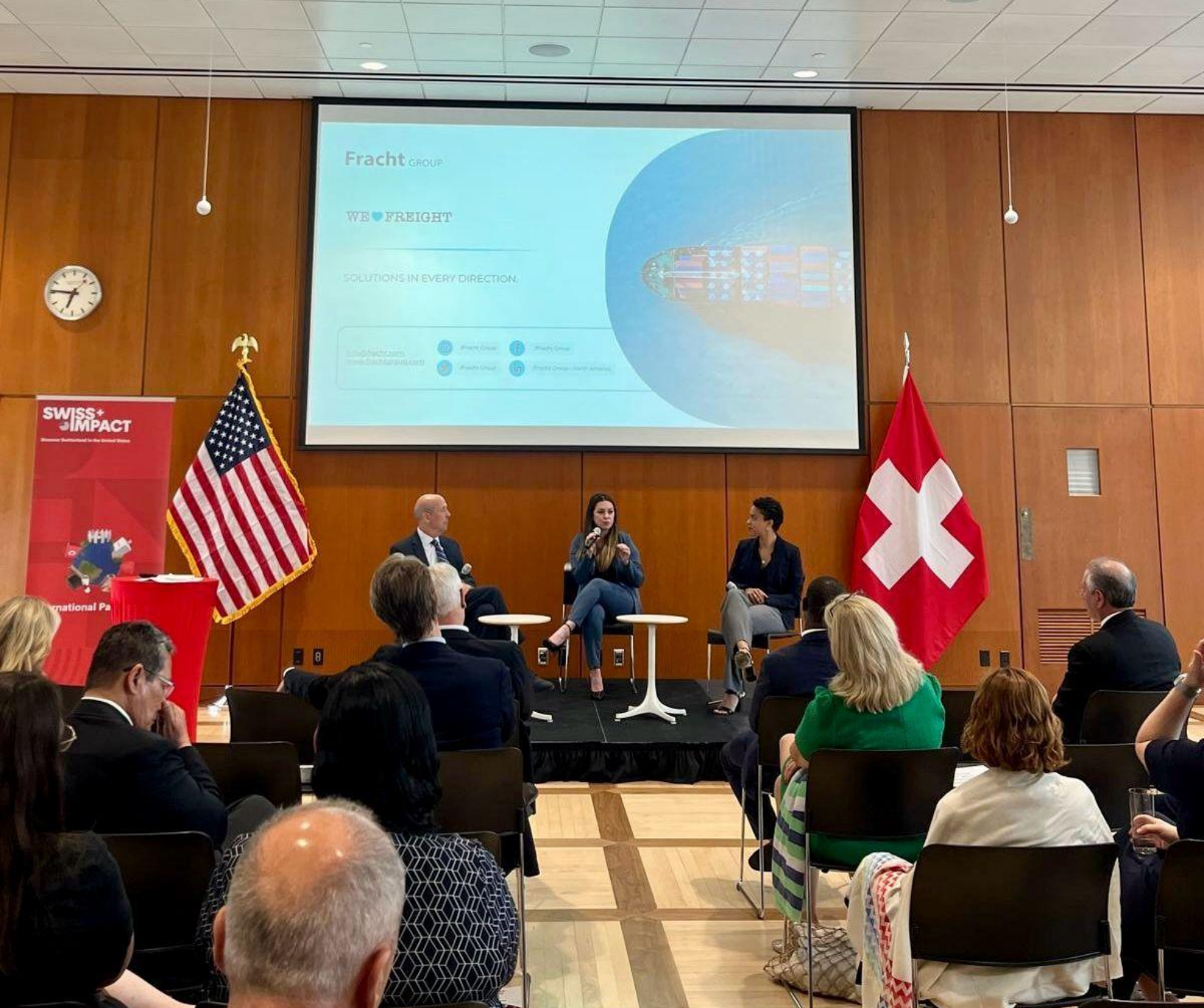


Dr. Cordula Droege, Chief Legal Officer, International Committee of the Red Cross, Brigadier General Robert A. Borcharding, Legal Counsel to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Ambassador Sandra Lendenmann Winterberg, Vice Director, Directorate of International Law, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (from left to right).

Switzerland Promotes Apprenticeship at U.S. Advisory Committee Meeting

The annual meeting of the Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (ACA) took place on June 4 at the U.S. Department of Labor where the Embassy of Switzerland had the honor to participate in the international perspectives panel. In the evening, the Swiss Embassy hosted a briefing and networking reception for ACA members, where we were joined by Fracht Group - North America, who shared insights on their [newly announced Registered Apprenticeship Program in Freight Forwarding](#).

Through this endeavor, Switzerland proved its commitment to advancing Vocational Education and Training (VET) in collaboration with the U.S. while sharing expertise and successful approaches to apprenticeship programs, and discussing federal and state initiatives.



Walter Groeli, VP Business Development, FRACHT GROUP, Janet Joosten, VP, Human Resources, FRACHT GROUP, Olivia Gachoux, Head of Science & Education Section at the Embassy of Switzerland in the United States (left from right).

From the Alps to Academia: A Swiss Officer's National Defense University Experience

The Swiss Armed Forces regularly send service members to the United States to undergo professional military education with one of the service branches of the U.S. military and at institutions of higher education of the U.S. Department of Defense.

Lieutenant Colonel Reto Wassmer is a career officer in the Swiss Armed Forces who recently completed a Master's program at the National Defense University in Washington, D.C. His most recent prior assignment was as chief of staff of the CBRN-EOD Center of Excellence. Click [here](#) to find out more about LTC Reto Wassmer's personal experiences during his time in Washington, D.C. and this U.S.-Swiss cooperation initiative.



Drones & AI Technologies: Monitoring Fast Developing Technologies

In this age of technology, very rapid progress is being made in information systems and especially in the domain of drone & artificial intelligence (AI) defense. This varies from small drones that can fit in the palm of a hand to drones bigger than cars that will accompany a 5th generation fighter jet such as the F-35 Lightning II or the F-22 Raptor.

As the information flow produced by these systems is so great, AI is used to filter data and help the operator to make the best possible decisions. The goal is to reduce the amount of information to help the pilot focus on his mission. AI also enables a single operator to control multiple drones at the same time, a so-called drone swarm. Using this technique someone can conduct multiple missions at the same time, such as doing reconnaissance, defending the operator, or attacking an enemy.

Switzerland is actively monitoring these developments to evaluate how those technologies can influence future Swiss Armed Forces operations, to most optimally defend its territory at all times.



Track is Back: Advancing Transatlantic Rail Dialogue in the U.S.

On Thursday, June 6th, the Embassy hosted [the third “Track is Back” event](#) along with the Austrian and German embassies. This event series promotes transatlantic dialogue on passenger and freight rail policy in the United States.

We began the day with an insightful breakfast briefing on the U.S. rail industry, followed by a session at the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and a visit to Congress. In the afternoon, we convened at the Austrian embassy for "On Track to Sustainability," where we explored sustainable, resilient rail infrastructure solutions.

Mark Patterson, Associate Administrator at the FRA, delivered a powerful keynote, setting the stage for leading rail companies to present themselves. The event culminated in a panel discussion featuring Stadler US, Plasser American, and DB E.C.O. North America.

We concluded the day with a lively reception, providing networking opportunities for Austrian, German, and Swiss rail companies. Through this event, we highlighted our countries' expertise in rail infrastructure and demonstrated the valuable contributions we can make to advancing rail in the United States.



P.S. from Switzerland

MATCH SCHEDULE

UEFA
EURO
2024

JUNE 14–JULY 14
2024

SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 2024



SWITZERLAND

VS

ITALY



FIND OUT WHERE TO SUPPORT
TEAM SWITZERLAND IN THE US

SWISS+
IMPACT

Join us this Saturday as we cheer on the Swiss national football team in their game against Italy! Watch parties are happening across the United States, find the one closest to you on [SWISS IMPACT](#).

How do you think the match is going to go? [We asked our experts at the Embassy](#) for their guesses — can you beat them?



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