

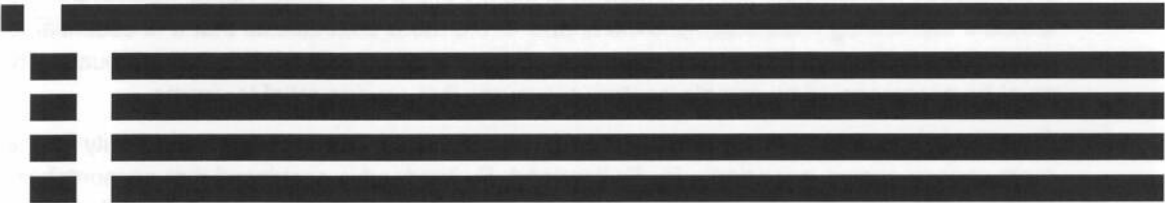


Sprachregelung: Militärische Aggression Russlands gegen die Ukraine

Federführender Dienst, Dossierverantwortliche: Abteilung Eurasien (CHE, RAILE)

Gutgeheissen von: PMU

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1. General

1.1. Military Aggression

- Switzerland condemns Russia's military aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms and calls on Russia to de-escalate the situation immediately, cease all hostilities and withdraw its troops from Ukrainian territory without delay. Already before the military aggression on 24 February 2022, Switzerland had repeatedly and strongly condemned Russia's measures directed against Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- This is a serious violation of international law. Russia's actions violate the prohibition of the use of force and the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine as enshrined in international law.
- Switzerland has also condemned the involvement of Belarus in Russia's military aggression.

1.2. Sham referendums / Annexation

- The annexation of additional Ukrainian territories declared by Russia on 30 September 2022 is a serious violation of international law. The Federal Council condemns this serious violation of Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty. It does not recognize the incorporation of the Ukrainian territories into the Russian Federation. Switzerland underlines that these territories are still part of Ukraine's territory.
- Already in 2014, Switzerland had emphasized that the referendum on 16 March 2014 on Crimea was illegal and that the annexation of Crimea by Russia violated international law, in particular the principle of territorial integrity of states.

-> [Press release](#) of 30.09.2022 and chapter 2.2 (Occupation)

2. International humanitarian law and human rights, protection of various objects

2.1. General and accountability

- **[General message on IHL]** Switzerland calls on all parties to strictly respect international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The parties must ensure the protection of the civilian population as well as of persons *hors de combat*, and respect the rules on the conduct of hostilities. Attacks must not be directed against civilians or civilian objects. Rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access must be allowed and facilitated by all parties.
- **[Accountability]** Switzerland is alarmed about reports of war crimes and violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law. These crimes must be investigated and prosecuted, no matter who committed them. Switzerland supports national and international efforts to document and prosecute war crimes and violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law. On 2 March 2022, Switzerland referred the situation in Ukraine to the International Criminal Court (ICC) together with 40 other states. Moreover, Switzerland supported the establishment of several multilateral mechanisms that document the most serious crimes and make the documentation available to national and international criminal prosecutions (for example the Commission of Inquiry of the UN Human Rights Council and the OSCE's fact-finding mechanism). Switzerland furthermore emphasizes that it is essential to place the needs of victims at the center of all accountability efforts. Criminal accountability must be accompanied by complementary measures that provide relief to victims.
- **[Special tribunal for the crime of aggression in Ukraine]** The fight against impunity for the most serious crimes is a priority for Switzerland. Switzerland is convinced that accountability for the crime of aggression is essential. We **regret that the ICC currently lacks jurisdiction** to investigate the crime of aggression in the situation in Ukraine. This leaves an accountability

gap. It strengthens our resolve to promote universal ratification of the Rome Statute. **We urge all states [, including Ukraine,] to ratify the Statute and its amendments and to implement it in domestic law.** In view of the existing accountability gap for the crime of aggression, **Switzerland supports the idea of a special tribunal.** We are convinced that such a special tribunal would only be successful if it: (a) were embedded in the multilateral framework, (b) complement existing accountability mechanisms in particular the ICC, (c) enjoyed a sound legal foundation and respected international standards; (d) we prefer an international tribunal to a hybrid mechanism. **Switzerland joined the core group supporting the establishment of a Special Tribunal** and communicated this at the group's meeting on 16 November 2023. In parallel to these efforts, we also support strengthening the ICC's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression through the harmonization of the Court's jurisdiction over the four core crimes of the Rome Statute.

- **[Arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court ICC]** Switzerland takes note of the international arrest warrants issued by the ICC against Vladimir Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova (*Russia's Commissioner for Children's Rights*). Switzerland supports the work of the ICC as an independent and impartial judicial institution.
- **[Register of damage of the Council of Europe]** Switzerland welcomes the creation of a register of damage which will record evidence of damage, loss or injury caused in the territory of Ukraine since 24 February 2022. On 30 August 2023, Switzerland joined the register. Switzerland supports the fight against impunity and the search for accountability and intends to contribute to the reconstruction of Ukraine. As a database recording the damage caused in Ukraine by the illegal acts of Russia, the register contributes to both these objectives.

2.2. Specific obligations under international humanitarian law

- **[Attacks on infrastructure]** IHL prohibits attacks directed against civilians or civilian objects. In addition, the principles of precaution and proportionality must be respected. We condemn the large-scale and repeated attacks on infrastructure essential for the civilian population that the Russian Federation is conducting in Ukraine. Attacks against objects indispensable to the survival of the population are not only prohibited, they also cause immense harm to the civilian population. They must immediately stop. It is also prohibited to direct a hostile act against cultural property or to use such property for military purposes. Military actions must not cause unnecessary damage to the natural environment or cause future environmental problems.
- **[Cluster munitions]** Switzerland is very concerned by the reported use of cluster munitions and other explosive ordnance in areas populated by civilians. Indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks are prohibited and constitute a serious violation of international humanitarian law.
- **[ABC Weapons]** The use of chemical and biological weapons is a violation of international law and is prohibited to all actors at all times and in all circumstances.
- **[Anti-personnel mines]** Switzerland is gravely concerned about the reported use of anti-personnel mines in Ukraine. These weapons kill and maim without distinction and are notably banned under the Mine Ban Convention. Switzerland calls on the parties to the conflict to refrain from using anti-personnel mines.
- **[Humanitarian access]** Switzerland calls on the parties to respect their obligation to allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need.
- **[Detainees and prisoners of war]** Prisoners of war and other detainees or internees must be protected and treated humanely. Prisoners of war must at all times be protected, particularly against acts of violence or intimidation and against insults and public curiosity. Prisoners of war who fall into the hands of the enemy shall not be punished for their direct participation in hostilities. The ICRC must be granted access to all prisoners of war.
- **[Occupation]** Crimea has been occupied since 2014. Since 2022, certain other areas in Ukraine, e.g. in the east and south of the country, are also occupied. Russia, as the occupying

power, has to respect the law of occupation. For example, collective or individual forcible transfers of population within the occupied territories are prohibited. Deportations of the population of the occupied territories to Russia are also prohibited. The transfer of the civilian population of the occupying power into the occupied territory, regardless whether forcible or voluntary, is prohibited. The occupying power is also prohibited from deporting or relocating parts of its own civilian population to the territory it occupies. Russia is also obliged to respect the existing Ukrainian legal system and must take measures to restore and ensure, as far as possible, public order and safety. Furthermore, the occupying power does not acquire sovereignty over the territory.

- **[Missing persons]** Parties to the conflict must take all possible measures to account for persons reported missing and must provide their family members with any available information on their fate.
- **[Forced resettlement and deportation of Ukrainian children].** Switzerland is appalled by the findings of the UN Human Rights Council's Independent Commission of Inquiry, as well as those of the OSCE Moscow Mechanism's missions of experts, into the forced displacement and deportation of Ukrainian children, which are qualified as war crimes. Human rights and international humanitarian law afford special protection to children. Switzerland stresses the importance of the international obligations of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Fourth Geneva Convention and its First Additional Protocol. Switzerland calls on Russia to comply immediately with its obligations under international law and requires the Russian authorities to return the children immediately to their parents, guardian or other person legally responsible for the child.
- **[ICRC]** As an impartial humanitarian actor, the mandate of the ICRC is to establish a dialogue with all parties to an armed conflict in order to protect the civilian population, to ensure that aid reaches those in need and to promote respect for international humanitarian law.
- **[Health care]** Switzerland calls on the parties to protect the wounded and the sick, medical personnel, medical infrastructure and transports – also from the enemy side – in all circumstances.

2.3. Protection of nuclear facilities

- We urge the parties to cease all hostilities in the vicinity of nuclear facilities and against nuclear sites. We condemn attacks against nuclear facilities. We call attention to the special protection of nuclear power plants under international humanitarian law.
- We call on Russia to continue engaging with the IAEA and with the Ukrainian authorities to ensure nuclear safety and security on the ground. Switzerland stands ready to facilitate this process.
- We stepped up our efforts for nuclear safety and security in Ukraine in political, practical and financial terms, for example, with regard to the IAEA missions securing Ukrainian nuclear power plants.

3. Implications for Switzerland, measures

3.1. Neutrality

- Switzerland is permanently neutral. The basis of Switzerland's neutrality is neutrality law, which is based on the Hague conventions of 1907. Neutrality law only applies to the military sphere: Neutral states cannot join a military alliance and are not allowed to support warring states militarily. Regarding the delivery of military goods, neutral states cannot deliver weapons from their own stocks. If the private sector in their territory would like to supply military goods, all warring parties have to be treated equally.

- At the same time, Switzerland is a member country of the UN and as such bound by the UN Charter and the binding decisions of UN bodies. If the UN Security Council does not take any decision regarding a war, neutrality law remains applicable.
- In the absence of a UN Security Council decision, Switzerland is complying with the obligations of neutrality law in Russia's military aggression against Ukraine.
- Neutrality does not mean indifference. Switzerland strongly condemns Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Outside the military sphere, neutrality law does not stand in the way of providing solidarity and support for Ukraine and its population.
- In response to the serious violations of international law by Russia, Switzerland has adopted the EU sanctions against Russia and taken further measures outside the military sphere. This is compatible with neutrality.

3.2. Transfer of war material

- As a neutral state, Switzerland is not allowed to supply war material to the warring parties under the Hague Agreement. In the case of private exports of war material, Switzerland is bound by the principle of equal treatment.
- These requirements under neutrality law become relevant in the transfer of Swiss war material via the non-re-export declaration. If such a declaration exists, Switzerland must give its consent to the transfer. If the Swiss material is to be passed on to a warring party, Switzerland cannot give its consent due to the obligations under neutrality law.
- The War Materiel Act also contains a provision that excludes exports of war material to warring parties. This provision is also relevant when Switzerland is requested to give consent to the transfer of war material.
- Due to the provisions of the War Material Act and the principle of equal treatment under neutrality law, Switzerland cannot agree to a request for transfer of war material of Swiss origin to Ukraine.
- Several parliamentary proposals for amendments of the War Material Act have been submitted. They are currently being discussed in the commissions and parliamentary chambers. A final decision has not yet been taken.
- On 28 June 2023, the Federal Council rejected a request by the Swiss company Ruag for the sale of 96 Leopard 1 A5 tanks stored in Italy that would have been sent for refurbishment in Germany before being re-exported to Ukraine. The Federal Council has concluded that the sale of these tanks is not possible under the law as it stands. In particular, such a sale would have contravened the War Materiel Act and would have resulted in a shift from Switzerland's policy of neutrality.
- On 22 November 2023, the Federal Council approved the application for the export of 25 Leopard 2 A4 main battle tanks to their original manufacturer, Rheinmetall Landsysteme GmbH in Germany. Germany has given assurances that the tanks will remain either in Germany, with NATO or with its EU partners in order to meet existing shortfalls, created by arms deliveries to Ukraine. (Press release in FR, GE or IT)

3.3. Sanctions

- The Federal Council took the decision to adopt the EU sanctions against Russia and thus strengthen their impact. The Federal Council also decided to adopt the expanded sanctions, in light of Belarus' involvement in Russia's serious violations of international law. In these decisions the Federal Council took Switzerland's neutrality and aspects of peace policy into account.
- The assets of the persons and companies listed in Annex 8 of the ordinance are frozen. In addition, no funds or economic resources are to be made available to these persons and companies.

- Switzerland is also implementing the financial sanctions imposed by the EU on Russian President Vladimir Putin, Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. These persons are, however, not subjected to entry bans (similar to the EU).
- In addition to freezing accounts and entry bans against certain individuals and entities (such as companies, banks, etc.), the sanctions against Russia include further restrictions within the financial sector as well as trade restrictions for various categories of goods.
- With regard to the work of the Task Force "Russian Elites, Proxies and Oligarchs" (REPO), Switzerland is as determined as ever to maintain the fruitful and constructive cooperation with its partner countries, guided by common values and goals. Cooperation at the technical level is running smoothly, and Switzerland therefore sees no need to formally join the REPO Task Force at present. Should membership prove to be in Switzerland's interest in the future, the Federal Council may re-evaluate the situation (see the statement by SECO on 18.04.2023).
- The sanctions against Belarus are largely identical to those against Russia. Specific trade restrictions with Belarus exist for the export of certain machinery and for goods of the tobacco industry. Import bans apply to wood, petroleum, cement, potassium chloride, iron and steel or rubber products.
- Switzerland ensures that exemptions are included in sanctions so as not to hinder humanitarian activities.

-> For further details see FAQ Sanktionen gegen Russland (SECO) (in German/French/Italian)

3.4. Confiscation of Russian assets (« Freeze and Seize »)

- The assets of private persons targeted by the sanctions against Russia cannot be confiscated, if they are not of illicit origin. Such a confiscation would be contrary to the constitutional guarantee of property and the principles of the rule of law.
- However, Switzerland will continue to follow and participate in discussions at the international level, in particular on the possible use of (public) Russian State assets and on the strengthening of the rules applicable in the event of sanctions violations.

-> Press release of 15.02.2023.

- In the EU there are ongoing discussions on whether assets of the Russian Central Bank should be invested and the proceeds used for the reconstruction of Ukraine. Switzerland is following these discussions closely.

-> Press release of 10.05.2023 and press release of 13.12.2023

3.5. Airspace closure / Entry requirements for Switzerland

- In line with airspace closures in other European countries, Swiss airspace has been closed to all flights from Russia and to all movements of aircraft owned, chartered, operated or otherwise controlled by citizens of the Russian Federation and to Russian air operators since 28 February 2022, with the exception of flights for humanitarian, medical or diplomatic purposes.
- On 16 September 2022, the Federal Council has decided to suspend the 2009 agreement on visa facilitation with Russia. This means that regular visa procedure will once again apply for Russian nationals. The Federal Council is thus contributing to a uniform visa policy throughout Europe.

3.6. Confiscation proceedings in connection with the 2014 Ukraine revolution

- On 15 February 2023, the Federal Council announced that it had decided to initiate administrative confiscation procedures for assets frozen in Switzerland following the Ukrainian revolution of February 2014. Switzerland is thus supporting Ukraine.

- These proceedings concern a total of more than CHF 130 million belonging to persons in the entourage of former Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich, who was deposed in February 2014.
 - These administrative confiscation proceedings are not related to the sanctions adopted against Russia from February 2022.
- > Press release of 15.02.2023.

3.7. Good Offices and protecting power mandate Ukraine

- At the beginning of the military aggression, Switzerland offered its good offices to both parties. Upon request by Ukraine, Switzerland and Ukraine negotiated an agreement for Switzerland to represent Ukrainian interests in Russia (protecting power mandate) which was finalized in June 2022. Since Russia publicly rejected the mandate, it could not be activated. As for mediation, it depends on the conflict parties to agree on a third mediating party.
- Switzerland is therefore concentrating on Ukraine and has redoubled its peace building efforts in Ukraine. It puts the Ukrainian people and especially the victims of the war and their need and demand for accountability, justice and security in the centre and contributes to their resilience. It promotes an inclusive and participatory social and political recovery and reconstruction process.
- The Swiss peace building program focuses on 1) the documentation of war crimes and human rights violations, 2) the search and identification of missing people, 3) fostering people's participation and strengthening the democratic and social resilience, 4) supporting the involvement of victims in the dialogue on comprehensive reparations, and 5) humanitarian demining.

3.8. 10-point-peace-formula of Ukraine and NSA meeting in Davos

- Switzerland supported the UN resolution for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace introduced by Ukraine on 23 February 2023 with a yes vote along with 140 states from all regions of the world, thus sending another strong signal from the world community in favour of the UN Charter and of Ukraine.
- Switzerland welcomes the principles outlined in the 10-point-peace-formula presented by President Zelenskyy. We are committed to all initiatives aiming for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, in line with the UN Charter.
- Switzerland is actively involved in the Working Group on "Radiation and Nuclear Safety" and seeks to ensure complementarity with its support for the IAEA's work in Ukraine. Switzerland also confirmed its interest to participate in the working groups "Food security" and "Confirmation of the end of the war". (-> Press release of 28.10.2023)
- Together with Ukraine and with the support of the World Economic Forum (WEF), Switzerland is organising the fourth edition of the National Security Advisor's Meeting on the Peace Formula. This will take place on 14 January 2024 in the run-up to the WEF 2024. It is the last edition of this format and follows on from previous meetings in Copenhagen, Jeddah and most recently Malta. These talks are not peace negotiations, especially as Russia has not been invited. The meeting should be a stepping stone for possible future peace negotiations. In the interests of transparency, the FDFA has informed Russia about the meeting.

3.9. Ukraine Recovery Conference (URC), 4-5 July 2022 in Lugano

- The Ukraine Recovery Conference, co-hosted by Ukraine and Switzerland, launched the political recovery process in Ukraine at the international level. Fifty-eight international delegations were present.
- > Press releases of 4 July 2022 and 5 July 2022

- In particular, the URC provided an opportunity to present Ukraine's national reconstruction and development plan to the world public for the first time. Another aim of the URC was to show the broad support of international partners for the reconstruction process in Ukraine and to exchange views on the resources needed.
- At the end of the conference, Switzerland and Ukraine, with the support of international partners, presented the "Lugano Declaration", which unites the guidelines for the reconstruction of Ukraine.

3.10. International Cooperation and reconstruction of Ukraine

- IC has been present in Ukraine since the 1990s. Since February 2022, the federal government has provided more than CHF 350 million for international cooperation in Ukraine and neighbouring countries. Parliament approved three supplementary credits, in particular to alleviate the humanitarian emergency, for winter aid in 2022 and other measures such as supporting healthcare systems, promoting decentralisation and strengthening the agricultural sector.
- In the framework of its upcoming international cooperation strategy 2025-2028, the Federal Council intends to devote CHF 1.5 billion for Ukraine and neighbouring countries. Together with the amount already planned for 2023-2024, Swiss support to Ukraine and the region in the coming 6 years will reach at least CHF 1.8 billion.
- This amount is made up of 5-10% of the total international cooperation (IC) budget used for support actions (humanitarian aid and development cooperation) in favour of Ukraine and the region, plus the growth in expenditure in this strategy period, which is reserved forehandedly for reconstruction in Ukraine (around CHF 650 million). An interdepartmental working group is currently preparing a basis for a decision on medium-term support for reconstruction in Ukraine for submission to the Federal Council.
- Based on the Lugano principles, Switzerland considers that it is of utmost importance that the recovery process not only includes physical reconstruction but also a continuation of the reform process and social reconstruction.

-> for a factsheet on the different calculation of support to Ukraine (Kiel tracker vs. APD-Expenditure) see the following link (in [FR](#) or [GE](#))

3.11. Humanitarian demining – Swiss commitment in Ukraine

- The new action plan on humanitarian mine action 2023-2026 states, among other things, that Switzerland will provide targeted support to Ukraine in the coming years.
- Russia's military aggression against Ukraine is causing widespread contamination by mines and other explosive ordnance. The Federal Council's 2023 aid package for Ukraine allowed to expand the focus on mine action so as to strengthen support to national authorities, humanitarian demining activities and the provision of appropriate material. A total of CHF 15.2 million was allocated for 2022 and 2023, specifically for the FDFA's support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) operations.
- On 29 September 2023, the Federal Council approved a CHF 100 million package to demine civilian and agricultural areas in Ukraine and aid the country's recovery. With this additional CHF 100 million package, Switzerland will be able to step up the demining work carried out by the FSD and other demining operators, provide equipment and training for Ukrainian deminers, support the government in its efforts to coordinate this undertaking and explore innovative solutions. Projects will be selected on the basis of evolving needs on the ground and the capacities of various humanitarian demining operators, with oversight provided by the Swiss embassy in Kyiv.

- On the occasion of the Conference on Humanitarian Demining in Zagreb on 12-13 October 2023, FC Ignazio Cassis issued invitations to the next High-Level Conference on Humanitarian Demining in Ukraine. The *Ukraine Mine Action Conference* will take place in Geneva on 17 and 18 October 2024. In addition, a technical workshop of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and Ukraine will take place in Kyiv on 17 and 18 April 2024 with Swiss support.
- Presse release: Swiss expertise bolsters humanitarian demining efforts in Ukraine (17.07.2023)
- Press release: Switzerland prioritises humanitarian demining in Ukraine (29.09.2023)
- Press release: Ignazio Cassis to attend donor conference on humanitarian demining in Zagreb (10.10.2023)

3.12. Admission of injured civilians from Ukraine

- In 2022, the FDFA gave a positive assessment of two requests submitted by the Ukrainian authorities for medical care for Ukrainian civilians in health facilities in Switzerland. The Coordinated Medical Service as well as REGA took over the coordination task between the cantons and the hospitals.
- So far, fifteen ambulance flights have transferred 35 patients to Switzerland, who were then transferred to nine different hospitals.
- Since the beginning of the war, Swiss Humanitarian Aid has directly supported Ukrainian hospitals with medical equipment such as operating tables, intensive care beds, ventilators and medical consumables and financed the rehabilitation of hospital facilities for the treatment of war-damaged patients in the north-east of the country. Swiss-funded partners in Ukraine, such as the ICRC and the WHO, also support hospitals on the ground.

3.13. Migration

- In late December 2023, the protection status S was active for over 65'900 displaced persons from Ukraine and was dissolved for more than 20'900 persons. Due to the ongoing precarious situation in Ukraine, it can be assumed that the refugee movements to Europe and thus also to Switzerland will continue. (Note: The SEM publishes the current figures on active and terminated protection status S on its X account).
- On 1 November 2023, the Federal Council decided not to lift the protection status S for people seeking protection from Ukraine until March 4, 2025 unless the situation in Ukraine changes fundamentally before then. This decision is linked to the fact that no lasting stabilization of the situation in Ukraine is in sight. In addition, support measures for people with protection status S will be extended by one year.
→ Press release of 01.11.2023.
- In addition to Ukrainian nationals, persons from third countries who have left Ukraine because of the war are also granted S protection status; the prerequisite is that they had a valid residence permit in Ukraine before fleeing and cannot return safely and permanently to their home country. (cf. FAQ "Who is eligible for protection status S").
- On 28 March 2022, Switzerland announced to take in a contingent (500 persons) of persons seeking protection residing in Moldova under the "Solidarity Platform Moldova". As of end of August 2023, more than 190 people have entered Switzerland.

3.14. Military Service of Swiss nationals for the Ukrainian army

- Service by Swiss nationals in a foreign army is subject to punishment if it takes place without the permission of the Federal Council. It does not matter whether the service is carried out by members of the armed forces or not. Nor does fitness for duty play any role. The only exceptions are Swiss-Ukrainian dual citizens residing in Ukraine. If the military justice system

becomes aware of such acts, it investigates them. The recruitment of Swiss nationals for such service is also subject to punishment. The nationality of the recruiter is irrelevant.

- The Office of the Armed Forces Attorney General is responsible for any prosecution of potential cases. (--> [Background](#))

3.15. Conscientious objection and desertion

- **[Persons from Russia]** Possible sanctions to which conscientious objectors and deserters may be exposed are not relevant from the point of view of refugee law, as a possible punishment is purely of a criminal military nature and is not based on a reason under Article 3 AsyIA. However, the SEM examines each asylum application individually, taking into account the specific circumstances.
- **[Persons from Ukraine]** On 11 March 2022, the Federal Council determined that Ukrainian nationals and their family members who were in Ukraine before 24 February 2022 would be granted protection status S. According to protection status S, persons seeking protection who evade military service in Ukraine do not have to leave Switzerland

3.16. International Geneva

- Switzerland takes its role as host state very seriously and is doing its utmost to ensure that all delegations can come to Geneva to work in the best possible conditions. This also applies to the delegations from the Russian Federation. Official Russian delegations are not prevented from travelling to Geneva by the Swiss authorities. Russian entry requests are handled as flexibly as possible in line with the applicable legislation.
- As the European headquarters of the United Nations, Geneva offers significant added value for the efficiency of peace processes, especially those that must take place under the auspices or with the participation of the UN. The location combines continuity, expertise, infrastructure and the presence of relevant actors, including a strong UN presence.

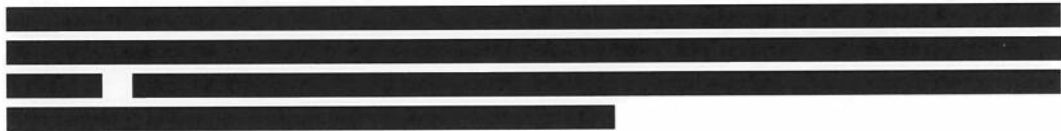
3.17. Consequences of a nuclear escalation by Russia

- Switzerland has strongly condemned Russian threats of using nuclear weapons. Any crossing of the nuclear threshold (any use) would be utterly irresponsible and would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences.
- In this context, Switzerland is concerned about the agreement between Russia and Belarus to deploy nuclear weapons in Belarus, i.e. on the territory of a non-nuclear-weapon State.
- It is inconceivable how nuclear weapons could be used in accordance with international humanitarian law.
- These developments demonstrate the need for risk containment. Risk reduction measures are a priority for Switzerland (-> cf. Arms Control Strategy).
- Russia's military aggression against Ukraine fundamentally changes the security situation in Europe. This context makes disarmament more difficult, it also underlines the importance of arms limitations.

3.18. Food security

- The sources of acute food insecurity are multiple, interconnected and mutually reinforcing, with armed conflict being the primary factor.
- Russia's military aggression against Ukraine has reinforced pre-existing weaknesses in global food systems and further highlights the heavy dependence on imports from a few exporting countries.
- The Black Sea Initiative was signed on 27 July 2022 by the parties involved (Russian Federation, Türkiye, Ukraine, UN) to enable resumption of grain exports from Ukraine through a safe maritime humanitarian corridor.

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5. Useful links

[Travel advice for Ukraine](#)

[Questions and Answers on Ukraine \(SEM\)](#)

[Dossier "War against Ukraine – measures taken by the Confederation since 24 February 2022"](#)

[FDFA News overview about Ukraine](#)