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Embassy of Switzerland in Jordan

# NEWSLETTER

*The official newsletter of the Embassy of Switzerland in  
Jordan - June 2022*

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**Dear Fellow Swiss Citizens, Friends and Colleagues,**

After four exciting years in Amman, my tenure as Ambassador of Switzerland to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and my accreditation to Iraq has now come to an end. I would like to take this opportunity to bid farewell and to thank you all for making this time such a delightful and rewarding experience to look back on.

I leave Jordan knowing that the relationship between our two countries is even stronger than when I arrived. Together, we worked hand-in-hand to address global issues including science diplomacy, promotion of democracy, human rights, humanitarian affairs, and regional security. I strongly believe that our bilateral relationship will prosper in the future while addressing even more challenging issues.

There is a lot to look back on with pride and a sense of accomplishment, and this was only possible with your support. I want to thank the dedicated team at the Embassy for the support and dedication throughout the successful years; I have been nothing less than amazed by the resiliency, commitment, and perseverance of the staff. I would also like to thank all the partners and stakeholders for their commitments who trust in the value of our work and for ensuring that our foreign strategy is implemented to the utmost level of excellence.

This has been an incredible journey, and I've appreciated having so many of you by my side. As I wrap up my time in Amman and prepare for my next adventure, I urge you to show the same level of support to my successor.

With my deepest gratitude and very best wishes for a bright future,

**Lukas Gasser**



# SWITZERLAND ELECTED TO UN SECURITY COUNCIL



After more than ten years of preparation, Switzerland has become a new member of the UN Security Council. The country was elected to the Council by the General Assembly in New York with 187 votes out of 192 states present. Its term of office begins on 1 January 2023 and will last two years, until the end of 2024.

The Security Council's mandate to promote international peace and security is in line with the main mission of Switzerland's foreign policy. Under its Federal Constitution, Switzerland has a duty to contribute to the peaceful coexistence of peoples and the preservation of natural resources. Its first seat on the Security Council will enable Switzerland to fulfil this mandate even more effectively. It also fulfils a priority of the Foreign Policy Strategy 2020–23 in the area of peace and security. "We want to exploit Swiss expertise to

work for peace and represent our values in the world, and as a neutral country, to be part of the search for compromise and solutions," added the Swiss president, as he explained the role Switzerland intends to play on the Security Council.

Switzerland intends to set four priorities for its seat on the Security Council: building sustainable peace, protecting civilians, addressing climate security and enhancing the effectiveness of the Security Council. The Embassy of Switzerland in Jordan intends to keep these priorities high on its agenda in order to further the impact of Switzerland's seat on the UN Security Council.

SWITZERLAND  
UNITED NATIONS  
SECURITY COUNCIL  
2023–2024



#APlusForPeace

# FROM BAGHDAD TO BASRA, AMBASSADOR GASSER HAS BEEN OUT AND ABOUT

In January, Ambassador Lukas Gasser started the year with a visit to Baghdad and Erbil in Iraq. Accompanied by the head of Diplomatic Affairs and the Political Analyst, they held talks with officials within the Federal Government and the Kurdistan Region and with members of the diplomatic community.

In Baghdad, the talks focused on the formation of the Iraqi government, the Baghdad Summit for Cooperation and Partnership, the overall economic situation, and the signing of the double taxation agreement between Switzerland and Iraq. During this visit, The Ambassador congratulated Iraq for the EU's decision to remove it from the list of high risk countries for financing terrorism and money laundering.



While in Erbil, discussions were focused on the relationship between The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and the Federal Government, the reopening of Fishkhabur/Samalka borders and facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

The trip was highlighted with meetings with the Kurdistan Region President Nechirvan Barzani

and Prime Minister Masrur Barzani. On a lighter note, the delegation visited Erbil fortress and the old Bazaar.

Back to Iraq in February, a delegation headed by the Ambassador visited Najaf and Basra where a meeting with the Shia seminary Director of Balaghi Academy and Al-Khoae Institute Mr. Zeid Bahr al-Ulum. The two sides discussed the possibility of inter-religious exchanges with Switzerland.



On the way to Basra, the Ambassador visited the marshes and discussed the issue of climate change in Iraq. In Basra, they met with representatives from ABB/Hitachi were briefed about the business environment and investment opportunities. On route, the Basra Port and the Cultural and Arts Palace were also visited.





With the advent of spring, the Embassy celebrated the Francophonie week by highlighting the work of Swiss Architect Le Corbusier and the construction of Baghdad Gymnasium building in Baghdad.

The Ambassador also met with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Ali Allawi, the Minister of Planning, and the chief of the National Security Agency. The talks focused on the political developments and the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on Iraq. In Sulaymaniyeh, where the trip coincided with the celebrations of Nowruz, the Ambassador met with key leaders of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, including Kurdistan Region Vice President Jafar Sheikh Mustafa and discussed the current relationship between the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and the Kurdistan Democratic Party, and the relationship between the Kurdistan Region Government and the Federal Government.



Between 16 and 19 May, Ambassador Lukas Gasser went back to Erbil and Baghdad. In the capital city, he was accompanied by Ambassador Vincenzo Mascioli and Sibylle Schaffhauser from the State Secretary for Migration; and Edouard Jay, Head of Diplomatic Affairs at the Embassy of Switzerland.



The delegation met with Iraqi President Barham Salih as well as several ministers. Discussions took place notably about the formation of the next Iraqi government, and the estimated collaboration between Iraq and Switzerland concerning migration. As this was the Ambassador's last trip to Erbil, he expressed his gratitude and satisfaction towards the great collaboration between Switzerland and the KRG.

# THE FLOODS WAKEUP CALL: FROM BRIENZ TO AMMAN



Jordan and Switzerland have many things in common; the variety of topographic landscapes, the comparable number of population, and the keenness to protect their people, but also both countries have assets and development gains from the natural hazards that they were exposed to in the past. The flood that occurred in Brienz in 2005 was a wakeup call for action, similarly with Jordan's tragic flash flood events that occurred in Petra and the Dead Sea area in 2018.

As Switzerland is an expert in developing an integrated risk management approach to reduce the risks of floods, the Jordanian authorities requested their support in flood risks reduction. The Swiss experts of the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), after consulting with the Jordanian authorities, advised to set-up the foundation of the integrated flood risk management by establishing a National Flood Mapping Programme (NFMP).

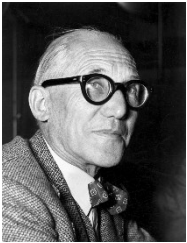
The Government of Jordan (GoJ) formulated a team of 21 national institutions to establish the NFMP which is chaired by the National Center for Security and Crisis Management (NCSCM), and includes the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Ministry of Local Administration, National Agricultural Research Center (NARC), Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) and others. The flood mapping tool and process will inform where are the hotspots and highly sensitive areas exposed to floods and flash floods, to help identify measures of implementation.

The cooperation began by introducing Switzerland's experience on dealing with the natural hazards to the representative of the Jordanian institutions. Two Swiss experts joined 45 Jordanian professionals and representatives of the involved governmental institutions for a three days technical workshop in May 2022 in Amman. During the technical workshop, the participants discussed the scope of the Jordan NFMP, the technical challenges and requirements for the flood mapping process, the national priorities and the mapping products and geographical recommendations for the pilot area of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the programme.

In June 2022, the NFMP team travelled to Switzerland to conduct a study tour. They had the opportunity to meet with Swiss experts from FOEN, SDC, University of Bern, Cantons Bern and Aargau, municipalities, and relevant institutions. The Swiss experts presented the approaches and tools that are used in Switzerland to steer and produce the flood mapping products, the platforms for disseminating the maps and the information, and the application of the flood maps in the different development sectors.



# A JOURNEY WITH LE CORBUSIER



During the Francophonie 2022 celebrations, the Embassy of Switzerland in Jordan, accredited to Iraq, presented an event titled "A journey with Le Corbusier" in Baghdad. The event consisted of a film screening and a panel discussion around the renowned Swiss architect and his connection to the Middle East and Baghdad specifically.



With the aim of promoting the French language, cultural diversity and multilingualism in Iraq, the Embassy decided to shed light on the richness of Switzerland's 2<sup>nd</sup> most spoken language through Le Corbusier's work and influence that spread internationally.



After the opening speech by Ambassador Gasser and the Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports, Mr. Abdul Rahman Al-Louwizi, the film "Une Ville à Chandigarh" by Alain Tanner was screened. The documentary film illustrates the construction of a new city in India in 1951 by Le Corbusier where he had been responsible since the 1950s for general planning and, more particularly, for large-scale buildings typical of the governmental sector in India.

The panel discussion titled "How Le Corbusier came to Baghdad? Le Corbusier's modernism and architecture in the Middle East" took place directly after the film screening. Dr. Caecilia Pieri, Associate Researcher at the French Institute of the Near-East, Mr. Mowaffaq Jawed Al-Taey, Iraqi Architect that was one of the designers of Um Almarak mosque, the great state mosque and the developing of the new Karbala, Dr. Shatha Abbas Hassan, Architect professor at the University of Baghdad and Mr. Mohammed Al Soufi, also an architect in Iraq were panellists and participated in the active discussion which addressed different points of view about modernism in architecture and the influence Le Corbusier had on Baghdad and its architecture.

# WATER MANAGEMENT IN TIMES OF CLIMATE CHANGE



For the first time, the AGUASAN Workshop, an annual global learning event of the Swiss water and development community, took for the first time place outside of Switzerland. From 5 to 9 June 2022, water practitioners aimed to foster actionable solutions in a highly topical and relevant context. With a focus on “Water Management in Times of Climate Change: Finding actionable solutions for fragile contexts in the Middle East” the workshop, hosted by the SDC regional office in Jordan, gathered 35 participants at the Dead Sea in Jordan. During 5 days the participants, including SDC staff and key partners from Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey and Switzerland, intensively collaborated in five thematic working groups to co-create potential actionable solutions for water-climate issues, highly relevant for the region:

- Groundwater resources management
- Wastewater treatment and reuse
- Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) nexus
- Impact of multi-dimensional water scarcity on food security
- Smart WASH approach for refugee camps and host communities

The workshop encompassed field visits, plenary sessions, thematic presentations, group work, and networking events. It was an opportunity for participants:

- To jointly enable the development of initiatives to address critical regional challenges related to water management and climate change
- Share insights, solutions, and approaches to these challenges
- Spark collaboration amongst sector specialists
- Contribute to the launch of the SDC Sub-RésEAU MENA (water and sanitation knowledge exchange platform with SDC)

As a special honour, the participants presented their results at the end of the week to His Excellency, the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation Dr. Jihad Al Mahamid, who demonstrated particular interest in exchanging with other water specialists on the five potential solutions and in continuing the work on these pertinent issues.

This workshop was an excellent opportunity for water sector specialists to not only discuss the most relevant and urgent issues in the Middle East but also to immerse themselves and be confronted with Jordan's socio-political, socio-economic, and environmental realities. The intensive exchange on potential actionable solutions provided the participants the space to deepen their understanding and to refine their current and future projects. The developed solutions were shared with SDC's newly established regional water network, the Sub-RésEAU MENA and will serve as a thematic and strategic foundation in the region in the following years.



# A THEMATIC KNOWLEDGE NETWORK ON WATER FOR THE MENA REGION



From 11 to 13 June, representatives from Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon, Switzerland, Syria, and Turkey participated in the launch of the sub-RésEAU Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA).

RésEAU is SDC's thematic knowledge network on water and sanitation, while Sub-RésEAUs are regional sub-networks under the global RésEAU that focus on specific regions where SDC is working. The launching event, hosted by the SDC regional office in Jordan, gathered SDC staff and key partners from the region. During three days, the 33 participants discussed key water issues and knowledge gaps in the region, learned from other projects and solutions, and helped shape the future of the sub-RésEAU MENA.



This face-to-face event was an excellent opportunity for the participants to check their assumptions and to familiarize with water-related issues in the region including in particular:

- The drying up of the Mujib dam and its high sedimentation level exacerbated by climate change.
- The lowering of the Dead Sea level of about 1 meter per year and the complex interrelations between e.g. economic activities such as the extraction of potassium and the pumping of water and the phenomenon of climate change.
- The Mujib Biosphere Reserve and the impact of both water scarcity and floods on water quality, biodiversity, crop cultivation, and food security.

The launch event was the official kick-off for the network. The structure of the sub-RésEAU, as well as topics and formats of future activities, were discussed. Online activities will take place in the coming months, so stay tuned. If you would like to become a sub-RésEAU MENA member and be informed about upcoming activities, [click here](#).

# SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM



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At the beginning of 2022, the Embassy of Switzerland once again selected a small number of local projects to be supported in the context of its Small Grants Program. This year, we focused on the topics of freedom of expression, gender based violence, and the rights of NGOs to funding, participation, advocating and reporting. Six projects –two in Iraq and four in Jordan –were selected by the Embassy.

In Jordan, the Embassy is partnering with Generations for Peace (GFP) to launch a project titled Amani (My Safe City) application, which will provide innovative solutions for citizen-led crowd sourcing of data, directly powering communities, police and city government to detect and prevent violence in public and private spaces. Such data will enable citizens, researchers and policy makers to create safer spaces by increasing awareness, transparency and public accountability, as well as improving policy and tactical precision with data.

The Embassy is also partnering with 7iber on implementing a project that aims to promote informed debate on issues of public interest through providing the readers with a deep and

nuanced understanding of issues impacting the resilience and socio-economic conditions of different communities in Jordan by publishing five high quality multimedia reports and five social media pieces.

With the Center for Defending Freedoms of Journalists, the project aims at strengthening reporting and advocacy capacities of Jordanian Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and National Institutions.

Our last partner in Jordan is Leaders of Tomorrow (LOT) through a project that aims at “empowering female digital users by providing appropriate knowledge and skills to recognize and protect their cyber rights”. Virtual violence on women is as strong as violence in reality and as such it has to be fought with the appropriate tools.

In Iraq, the Embassy is partnering with two NGOs, the Engineering Association for Development and Environment (EADE) through a project that focuses on building the capacity of local NGOs and especially of young or emerging practitioners to enable them to scale-up their activities and impact. EADE will conduct monthly three days training on human resources, management, finance, logistics, proposal writing, advocacy, reporting and documentation which will be followed with a practical training.

Our last partner in Iraq is JASANA. The Embassy is funding a project that aims at enhancing the capacity of journalists and civil society actors in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq – KRI. Training courses for 200 beneficiaries will be provided to enhance the capacity of journalists and civil society actors in the field of protection of information and privacy.



# UPDATES FROM THE CONSULAR SECTION

## AHV

Dear pensioners who are receiving an AHV/IV benefit,

As you have been informed directly by the compensation office, you will no longer need to visit us every year for the confirmation of the life certificate. The required information will be forwarded directly from our representation to the AHV/IV via the Register of the Swiss Abroad.

Should you nevertheless receive a life certificate, please proceed as before and bring it to the Embassy with an official identification document so that your pension payments are not stopped.

We remind you that it is still important to inform us of any change in your personal and family situation (change of address, marital status, etc.).

## The Swiss Abroad Act

The Swiss Abroad Act governs the rights and obligations of Swiss nationals who live and travel abroad.

According to the Federal Act of 26 September 2014 on Swiss Nationals and Institutions Abroad (Swiss Abroad Act), which came into force on 1 November 2015, personal responsibility is the basic principle that applies to the Confederation's relations with individuals to whom it guarantees rights or can provide assistance. The Confederation's expectation is that each and every individual will assume personal responsibility when planning and undertaking a period abroad or pursuing an activity abroad, act in a risk-appropriate manner, and try to overcome any difficulties on his or her own.

According to the Swiss Abroad Act, Swiss citizens who are not domiciled in Switzerland must register

with a representation abroad (Embassy, consulate-general). Their data are entered in the Register of the Swiss Abroad, subsequently simplifying the provision of consular services including consular protection. Swiss citizens who leave Switzerland must register with a representation within 90 days of deregistering from their Swiss municipality of residence.

Important links: [The Swiss Abroad Act](#), [Swiss Abroad Ordinance](#)



## “Marriage for all”

Same-sex couples will be able to

marry or convert their registered partnership into a marriage from 01 July 2022. After receiving the result of the vote, the Federal Council decided at its meeting on 17 November 2021, to put the bill on "marriage for all" into force on that date.

## No more new registered partnerships possible

As of July 1, 2022, no new registered partnerships can be formed in Switzerland. From then on, only marriage will be open to these couples. However, existing registered partnerships can be continued without a special declaration.

## Did you know?

257 Swiss nationals live in Jordan of whom 150 that are double nationals (Swiss/Jordanian).

# ONLINE DESK FOR SWISS NATIONALS RESIDING ABROAD



It is our pleasure to inform you that the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) is providing Swiss nationals residing abroad with an online desk for consular services.

With the online desk, you can enter your own data yourself at any time or place. You can also view your data at any time, order consular services and pay for them by credit card via ePayment.

The desk can be accessed on the FDFA website [www.eda.admin.ch](http://www.eda.admin.ch) under 'Online desk' and on the websites of the Swiss representations.

You can register with the online desk in two ways that ensure protection of client data:

- Two-factor-authentication via SMS to a mobile telephone number
- SuisseID

You can register with a digital identity card. Information on Suisse ID is available on [www.suisseid.ch](http://www.suisseid.ch)

The online desk has a responsive web design and can be used with a PC and all mobile devices (laptops, tablets and smartphones).

We plan to expand the services offered via the online desk on an ongoing basis and hope that with this innovation Swiss nationals residing abroad will be able to communicate even more easily with the Swiss representations abroad.

If you have any questions concerning the online desk, please contact the Embassy directly.

## Let's travel to Switzerland again!

Since the beginning of May, Switzerland has removed all hurdles related to COVID-19 when entering the country. You are therefore allowed to travel to Switzerland again regardless of your vaccination status. PCR tests are no longer necessary as a travel requirement.





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# EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIPS: MEET THE RECIPIENTS

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Each year the Swiss Confederation awards three types of Government Excellence Scholarships to promote international exchange and research cooperation between Switzerland and over 180 other countries. Recipients are selected by the awarding body, the Federal Commission for Scholarships for Foreign Students (FCS). This year, two recipients from Iraq and Jordan received the grant, Noor Al Alem, from Jordan and Prusha Salih from the Kurdistan region of Iraq.



Noor Al Alem: "I'm a biomedical engineer, and I have completed my masters of science in Biomedical Engineering in Lebanon and finalized my internship in France.

I plan to successfully complete my PhD studies at the Kinesiology laboratory at the University of Geneva and pursue my Post-doc abroad to complete my training. Afterwards, I look forward to becoming a professor in kinesiology.

I want to promote the development of technologies by working together with clinical professionals, scientists and engineers and sharing multidisciplinary experiences. As for my motivation, I seek to improve the healthcare sector in my country and transfer what I have learnt during my PhD years in a high quality Swiss educational system."



Prusha Shwan Mohammed Salih: "I am a medical doctor from Kurdistan region of Iraq. I also hold a master degree in Nutrition from Karolinska Institute in Sweden.

Being an advocate for health awareness and my keen interest in the medical field, I have been invited to meetings, conferences and courses by medical and health organizations around the world such as Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Netherlands and UK.

Currently, I work as a medical doctor and "nutrition and obesity management" specialist at the Diabetes and Endocrinology Center of Sulaimaniyah, Iraq. The Swiss Government Excellence Scholarship was one of my greatest goals to apply for because of its prestige, support and inclusion of its top-ranked universities.

# UNLEASHING THE INNER SWISS CHEF



In light of the Francophonie celebrations in Jordan, the Embassy of Switzerland hosted a cooking class at the Royal Academy of Culinary Arts.

The event took place on 19 March 2022 with 20 participants. The Embassy opened the participation to the public on social media and sent the invitation to Swiss citizens as well as the staff of the Embassy. The slots were filled out within a day of announcement.

The Swiss Chef Jacques Rossel who taught the participants how to cook authentic Swiss dishes was the main chef supervising the attendees. He was accompanied by other students from the Royal Academy of Culinary Arts that helped the attendees with the cooking. The dishes prepared were then served to the students who enjoyed an authentic Swiss lunch.

Zurich-style shredded veal in mushroom cream sauce, cheese quiche and dark chocolate mousse gateau were some dishes on the menu that the participants learned how to make among many other Swiss dishes.



# FROM THE KITCHEN TO THE PARLIAMENT



The 10<sup>th</sup> edition of “Women’s Film Week” kicked off in Amman in March 2022 under the slogan “Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow”, to commemorate International Women’s Day.

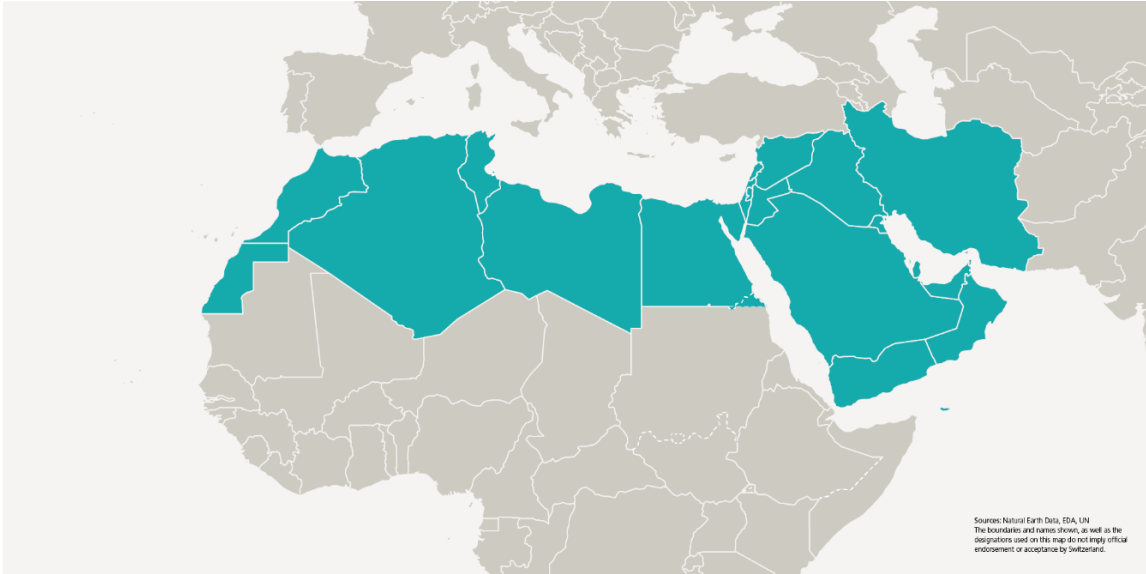
Under the patronage of HRH Princess Basma, Honorary Goodwill Ambassador for UN Women and in partnership with Jordan’s Royal Film Commission and UN Women, the initiative aimed to raise awareness about women’s issues through the work of various national and international filmmakers.

The Embassy of Switzerland in Jordan supported this initiative with the screening of the Swiss documentary film “From the Kitchen to the Parliament” by Stéphane Goël.

The film took the attendees on a journey through a century of Swiss history, tracing the footsteps of those who fought to get out of their kitchens – and of those who tried everything to send them back in – until they obtained equality of rights, the reality of which sometimes still seems very fragile. From the first suffragette demonstrations in the 1920s to the feminist strike of 2019, this film – based on exceptionally rich archival material and testimonials from female activists – summarises the history of women in politics in Switzerland in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.



After the screening of the film, the Embassy received positive feedback from the attendees on the film. Some activists commented that they feel hopeful about Jordan’s future with women’s rights after they saw similarities between the two countries in the fight for women’s rights.



Sources: Natural Earth Data, ESA, UN  
The boundaries and names shown, as well as the  
designations used on this map do not imply official  
endorsement or acceptance by Switzerland.

# FOREIGN POLICY PRIORITIES FOR THE MENA REGION

The Federal Council defined the objectives of Switzerland's foreign policy back in February 2020: Supporting sustainable economic development, better job prospects for young people, as well as peace and human rights.

In Jordan, the strategy entails a strong focus on protection and migration, science diplomacy, and employment. Switzerland is committed to finding lasting solutions and improving living conditions for people in need, refugees and other internally displaced persons. Transnational innovation and research projects run by autonomous institutions such as SESAME and the Transnational Red Sea Center are being maintained and, where possible, used to build bridges for regional peace initiatives.

Switzerland's focus in Iraq is primarily on promoting dialogue as well as on human rights. Migration and humanitarian aid is also a focus.



In June 2022, Ambassador Lukas Gasser hosted the Swiss Ambassadors of the region in Jordan. During the visit, they took a close look at where the implementation of the MENA Strategy stands two years after its launch. Topics of discussion included: migration, security, peace, human rights, economic affairs, science diplomacy, and humanitarian aid.



# NEW FACES AT THE EMBASSY



**Name:** Anne Savary  
**Section:** International Cooperation  
**Position:** Regional Advisor for Migration & Development  
**Starting date:** February 2022



**Name:** Chantal Neuweiler  
**Section:** International Cooperation  
**Position:** Program Officer Yemen  
**Starting date:** May 2022

"I am looking forward to exchange and learn from colleagues on the region"



**Name:** Herveine Du Clary  
**Section:** Diplomatic Affairs  
**Position:** Academic Intern  
**Starting date:** February 2022

"I was inspired to apply for this internship because of Jordan's geographical location and I wanted to have a better understanding of the culture of the Middle East. I was also interested in Iraq so applying for this internship felt very fitting".



**Name:** Ala' Al Qaissi  
**Section:** International Cooperation  
**Position:** National Programme Officer – Water and Income  
**Starting date:** January 2022

"After few months with SDC, I am more excited about the learning and exchange opportunities with my colleagues and our partners. SDC's way of working is satisfying my passion and personal values".



**Name:** Jan Boog  
**Section:** Finance, Personnel & Administration  
**Position:** Deputy Head of Administration  
**Starting date:** June 2022

"The Swiss representation in Jordan is a place full of knowledge and expertise. I am looking forward to acquiring as much of it as possible and hope, that I can also generate added value for this location and the people with my commitment and experience."

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# CONTACT US

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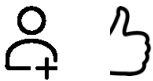
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