

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 31 (2004)
Heft: 5

Rubrik: [Impressum]

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 12.01.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

Swiss stars in the international firmament

With its banks, cuckoo clocks and mountains, Switzerland is often an easy target for caricaturists. Far more serious is the position that Switzerland occupies within the international community, as depository state of the Geneva Conventions. Many of our compatriots were active in the service of various international organisations long before Switzerland joined the UN in 2002.

This spring Nicolas Michel, Professor at the University of Fribourg and former head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs' Directorate for Human Rights, was appointed to head up the UN legal department. From now on the Fribourger will be responsible for international legal issues that concern the UN, and is one of Kofi Annan's five Deputy General Secretaries. Two years ago, during the conference on establishing an international court of justice, the attention of the UN General Secretary was drawn to this tireless fighter of crimes against humanity. Michel now holds the highest office ever held by a Swiss in the UN executive.

Carla del Ponte was appointed Chief Prosecutor of the UN War Crimes Tribunal for ex-Yugoslavia (ICTY) and Rwanda in 1999. Her mandate for Rwanda was not renewed, since Kofi Annan intends to divide the UN Tribunal among two prosecutors. This is a heavy blow for the Swiss federal attorney, who has to pay for her determination to prosecute Rwandan government officials. But she still has the task of seeing the trial against Slobodan Milosevic, the main defendant at the ICTY, through to completion, though this seemingly endless test of endurance is far from over. Whatever the outcome, it is the first time since the Nürnberg and Tokyo trials that an international court of justice has tried a head of state for crimes committed during his term of office. The Ticino lawyer is no prophet in her own country, and her bluntness has earned her few compliments, particularly in Switzerland. Nevertheless, Carla del Ponte has gone down in history and was even considered for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

Heidi Tagliavini, personal representative of the Chairman-in-Office of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for missions in the Caucasus, is another example of a Swiss who shows courage and commitment in the international arena. The Russian-speaking diplomat from Basle proved her diplomatic skills in crisis regions during OSCE missions in Chechnya. Edouard Brunner, also representative of the OSCE, served before her in Georgia. Then there is ex-Federal

diplomat from Basle proved her diplomatic skills in crisis regions during OSCE missions in Chechnya. Edouard Brunner, also representative of the OSCE, served before her in Georgia. Then there is ex-Federal

These examples show that there are Swiss stars shining in the international firmament

Councillor Adolf Ogi, who since 2001 has performed his mandate as the UN Special Ambassador for "Sport in the service of development and peace"; and former SP National Councillor Jean Ziegler, who has been UN Special Rapporteur for the "Right to Food" since 2000.

The list is by no means exhaustive, but the above examples show that there are Swiss stars shining in the international firmament: personalities who have been selected for their experience, expertise and international contacts rather than their red passports with the white cross. Yet their achievements are not always given the recognition they deserve in a country that mistrusts anyone who stands out from the crowd. After all, Henry Dunant, the founder of the Red Cross, would have almost certainly died in a poor-house in eastern Switzerland had the international community not paid him homage for his work to improve the lot of prisoners-of-war, and rescued him from obscurity by awarding him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1901.

Isabelle Eichenberger

Translated from German.



FOCUS

Tourist industry seeks niche markets 4

OFFICIAL NEWS

Tougher penalties for traffic offenders 12

OSA NEWS

Elections to the Council for the Swiss Abroad 14

DOSSIER

Swiss film scene on the up 16

MAILBAG

18

NEWS IN BRIEF

19

The Swiss tourist industry is in the doldrums. Products and service levels have declined compared to prices. But new markets are opening up. What the industry needs is imaginative and innovative products.

COVER: Niklaus Spörri/remote.ch



Isabelle Eichenberger

SWISS REVIEW

www.revue.ch

Swiss Review, the magazine for the Swiss Abroad, is in its 31st year of publication and is published in German, French, Italian, English and Spanish in more than 25 regional editions. It has a total circulation of over 360 000. Regional news appears four times a year.

Gabrielle Keller (gk), Editor-in-Chief; Rolf Ribi (RR), Isabelle Eichenberger (IE), Charly Veuthey (CV), Gabriela Brodbeck (BDK), responsible for the Official News, Swiss Abroad Service EDA, CH-3003 Berne. René Lenzin (RL), reporting from parliament. Translation: Nicolette Chisholm.

Publisher, Editorial Office, Advertising: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3000 Berne 16, Tel. +41 31 356 6110, Fax +41 31 356 6101, Postal Account (Swiss National Giro): 30-6768-9.

Printed by: Zollikofer AG, CH-9001 St.Gallen.

Change of address: Please advise your local Embassy or Consulate – do not write to Berne.

Single copy CHF 5.–

Internet: <http://www.revue.ch> E-mail: revue@aso.ch