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Speech by Mr Joseph Deiss President of the Swiss Confederation, on the occasion of the Swiss National Day

Fellow Swiss Abroad,

On our day of national celebration, I would like to take this opportunity to share a message with each and every one of you.

Whether adults or children, self-employed or employees, working or retired, each and every one of you day after day weaves invisible yet solid threads, between the world and Switzerland. Today, I would like to thank you for what you do. Your presence abroad is a symbol of globalisation, characterised not only by the expanding mobility of goods and capital, but also of people. To a certain extent, you demonstrate to us at home, that we have no grounds to fear losing our identity in a more globalised world. Wherever you may be, despite the years of absence and geographic distance from Switzerland, it is to celebrate our national holiday that you have come together. It is to recognise the ties with your family, your culture and your country. Far from separating us, globalisation actually allows us to come closer together, something that is witnessed by the flurry of SMSs and emails, as well as the celebrations

with 'cervelas' and Fendant. You also demonstrate your interest in our country when popular votes are held. In recent years, more and more of you have chosen to express your opinions in these ballots. This is particularly pleasing because the Fifth Switzerland has a lot of political weight and the right to make itself heard.

Whether it's a matter of Switzerland's place in the world, European integration or more technical questions, you have defended the values of modernity, of opening up to the world and of change, tolerance and liberalism which corresponds well with the image of a Switzerland that is open and that shows solidarity. And sooner or later, when the question of EU membership returns to the fore, your experiences and your influence will be valuable. Help us to shape the future! Right now, there is an imperative need for greater opening, if we want to find the path back to solid economic growth in Switzerland. There needs to be more competition on the domestic market, greater incentive to innovate and start up new businesses. For in our country today, political debate is often marked by budgetary restraint,

strife over the allocation of resources and a tendency to become more inward looking, a by-product of economic stagnation. It is the overall quality of life that ends up suffering. That is why the Federal Council, at the beginning of the year, adopted a programme for growth.

The measures envisaged are reasonably ambitious. You will almost certainly be called upon to express your views on a number of them at some point. I am confident that you will support the Federal Council in its efforts on these occasions. Stronger growth will enable us to face the economic, political and social challenges of the future more courageously. Stronger growth will enable us to shape an attractive and welcoming Switzerland for you and your children, a Switzerland that shows solidarity, a country of which we can all be proud.

I wish you a JOYOUS celebration of this special day.

And for the days ahead I wish you vitality, happiness and prosperity!



The Swiss National Day Collection

In the spirit of the first confederates, who pledged themselves to joint action and mutual help, our National Day must be marked by an act of solidarity which affects the whole Swiss nation. That is why it is called upon, each year, to support a public cause of national importance by purchasing Pro Patria stamps and 1st August badges. So far, the National Day collection has provided millions of francs for the most varied social and cultural purposes.

This year we have beautiful gold coloured butterflies for sale, the proceeds of which will go towards the maintenance and preservation of precious small buildings throughout Switzerland. Many of these historical buildings are symbols of our homeland and would have an uncertain future without the support of Pro Patria. So, go on, buy one of these beautiful badges and help our native country.

Accidental Fitness

Who says you have to "work out" to get exercise. Traditional exercise provides a bigger benefit. "But small daily activities count," says Trevor Shilton, director of cardiovascular programmes for the National Heart Foundation. They may also lower cholesterol and blood pressure, and help you get in shape.

Activity	Works your	Kilojoules
Dusting	shoulders, chest, triceps	750/hour
Tidying cupboards	arms, legs	1065
Pushing a child on a swing	chest, triceps, hips, legs, back, biceps	1170
Vacuuming	back, biceps	960
Shopping for clothes	legs (walking), chest, back, shoulders (wriggling)	960
Planting seedlings	forearms, wrists, triceps	750
Washing washing	chest, shoulders, back, legs	1170
Chasing frisbees	legs, buttocks	1480

Kilojoules burned are for a 58 kilo woman (add 18 per cent for a 77 kilo man).