

National Day address from the President of the Swiss Confederation Viola Amherd to Swiss citizens abroad

Dear Swiss citizens abroad,

Behind me you can see several mountains: the Matterhorn, the Chasseral, the Säntis, the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau. I hope that this panorama brings a sense of home to your screen.

Just as these mountains shape our landscape, you, dear fellow citizens, shape the image of Switzerland around the world.

While we may refer to Swiss citizens abroad as the 'fifth Switzerland', the truth is that there are no such categories.

Switzerland is a nation based on the will of its people and our ties do not stop at any border.

This is particularly evident on 1 August. Even outside our country, you make this day an extraordinary one.

By meeting, talking and celebrating the birth of our nation together, you show that, although you have found a new home, you have not forgotten your old one.

Many of you continue to maintain close ties with Switzerland and visit regularly. This exchange is important for you and enriches our country at the same time.

You have a unique perspective that encompasses both Switzerland and your new home country.

In an increasingly polarised world, people everywhere need to build bridges. Meeting halfway and communicating with each other is part of our Swiss culture.

Set an example and pass on this democratic tradition to those around you in the countries where you live today.

At the same time, I encourage you to share your perceptions with the people here in Switzerland. Our direct democracy thrives when

citizens help to shape it and express their views.

Make your political voice heard and take the opportunity to vote.

Dear fellow Swiss citizens abroad

With the pandemic, the war in Ukraine and regrettably several other conflicts, the past few years have reminded us how important it is to be able to live in safety.

You may also be feeling the effects of these crises and your circumstances may also have become more difficult.

By keeping your personal details with our consular missions up to date, we can provide you with the best possible services.

The Swiss mountains that you see behind me are also a reminder that we can overcome ups and downs together.

On behalf of the Federal Council, I wish you plenty of joy, peace of mind and moments of connectedness on this day, the 1st of August.