



Auslandschweizer-Organisation  
Organisation des Suisses de l'étranger  
Organizzazione degli Svizzeri all'estero  
Organisaziun dals Svizzers a l'ester

## 01.01.70 Speech by President Micheline Calmy-Rey - 1st August 2011

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### **Message of greeting from President of the Confederation Micheline Calmy-Rey to the Swiss Abroad**

Swiss citizens

For many of you our national day is a moment to take stock and to reflect. Wherever you may be on 1 August, you uphold the traditions of our country and confirm your attachment to Switzerland. This is why this is a very special day. Pride, love of your country, perhaps even homesickness: all these feelings may be experienced on 1 August. Take advantage of the opportunity and forget about your Helvetic modesty for a short while!

I would like to assure you that your love of Switzerland is reciprocated. Just as you feel attached to our country, Switzerland also cares about you, not only on 1 August but throughout the year. It is often said that the Swiss Abroad are ambassadors for Switzerland abroad. But in my view they are more than that. They embody our country's attachment to the wider world. Thanks to you, the citizens of your host country learn more about our country. And if one day you come back to Switzerland to live, our economy will benefit from the experience that you have gained abroad. I would like to thank you for this contribution to our country's prosperity.

Ladies and gentlemen

You all know that Switzerland has always depended on exchanges and trade with other countries. But in recent years our interconnectedness with the world has grown even stronger. You as members of the Swiss Abroad are the living proof of this.

A period of time spent abroad is almost a standard experience for many Swiss citizens. The 'fifth Switzerland' is extremely diverse. It includes pensioners in Spain, students in Germany, bankers in Singapore and development helpers in Tanzania. But I am also thinking of the growing number of persons with dual nationality, who in many cases facilitate our relations with their host countries. Their

openness, their interest in people throughout the world and their adaptability are key qualities on the path to success.

The qualities that help you in your daily life have also helped Switzerland. Openness and adaptability have enabled our country to cope relatively well with the economic crisis of recent years. Today in many respects we are better off than other countries. But this also imposes an obligation: the obligation to show solidarity. Switzerland has again and again demonstrated its solidarity, even in the most recent past example of the deployment of Humanitarian Aid after the atomic disaster in Japan, or of Switzerland's activity in connection with the upheavals in North Africa and in the Near East. I am proud of this Swiss solidarity.

Dear fellow countrymen and countrywomen

On behalf of the Federal Council I sincerely wish you a happy 1 August.

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