SWISS WITH US

NEWS & VIEWS

From the Embassy of Switzerland in the U.S.

July 2026

From the Ambassador's desk

Dr. Ralf Heckner is the Ambassador of Switzerland to the United States of America.

Dear Friends of Switzerland,

The past months have underscored the depth and dynamism of the Swiss–U.S. relationship. Switzerland continues to deepen its ties across North America through high-level political dialogue, economic cooperation, scientific collaboration, and public diplomacy. President Guy Parmelin's recent visit to the region exemplifies this broad and forward-looking engagement.

Investment and innovation have been central to our work. President Parmelin's meetings with U.S. leaders, governors, researchers, and industry representatives reinforced Switzerland's commitment to strengthening economic and scientific cooperation. Earlier this spring, Switzerland participated in the SelectUSA Investment Summit and the AI+ Expo in Washington, further highlighting this engagement, while the visit of the Global Women's Innovation Network to Switzerland showcased the power of connecting policymakers, innovators, and entrepreneurs across borders.

Our bilateral relationship is also strengthened through regular dialogue. The fourth U.S.–Switzerland Strategic Dialogue provided an opportunity to deepen cooperation on foreign policy, security, economic affairs, and emerging technologies. These exchanges reflect our shared commitment to addressing global challenges through partnership, dialogue, and a rules-based international order.

At the same time, diplomacy extends beyond policy. Throughout this edition, you will find examples of how cultural and sports events, educational exchanges, and community outreach help build lasting connections. From the annual White House Correspondents' Dinner after-party at the Swiss Residence – celebrating press freedom and transatlantic friendship – to a Swiss-Kosovar concert, and the celebrations surrounding the FIFA World Cup, these events demonstrate the importance of bringing people together and fostering mutual understanding.

As the United States marks its America250 celebrations and

for generations. Our partnership is built not only on shared interests, but also on shared values, trust, and a common belief in innovation, openness, and international cooperation.

I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter. Thank you for your continued interest in Switzerland's engagement in the United States.

With best wishes,

Dr. Ralf Heckner
Ambassador of Switzerland to the United States

President Guy Parmelin Leads Economic and Scientific Mission to North America

From June 29 to July 9, the **President of the Swiss Confederation Guy Parmelin** traveled to North America (United States, Canada, and Mexico) on an economic and scientific mission aimed at strengthening Switzerland’s partnerships across the region.

In Washington, D.C., President Parmelin met with **United States Trade Representative Jamieson Greer** to discuss bilateral trade relations and the strength of the economic partnership between Switzerland and the United States.

The President also traveled to Utah, where he met with **Governor Spencer Cox** and four other U.S. governors during an event held on the margins of the annual meeting of the Western Governors' Association (WGA). The discussions highlighted Switzerland's strong partnerships with the western United States and explored opportunities for cooperation in innovation, energy, vocational education and training, and economic development.

The mission also included visits to Swiss companies and meetings with leaders in research, AI, space, and advanced mobility in California and Texas, underscoring Switzerland’s commitment to innovation and scientific collaboration.

President Parmelin’s visit reaffirms Switzerland’s strong economic and scientific engagement across North America.

SelectUSA Reception at the Embassy of Switzerland

From May 3–6, 2026, a Swiss delegation led by **Ambassador Andrea Rauber Saxer** of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs participated in the 2026 SelectUSA Investment Summit in Washington, DC, which brought together more than 5,500 participants from around the world.

Throughout the summit, the delegation held discussions with governors and economic development agencies from states including Indiana, Nevada, North Carolina, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin underscoring the importance of strong subnational engagement. Meetings with federal officials, industry experts, and think tanks also provided valuable opportunities to discuss trade policy and economic developments.

As the sixth-largest foreign direct investor in the United States, with cumulative investments exceeding $400 billion, Switzerland showcased the depth and continued growth of the Swiss–U.S. economic relationship.

To mark the occasion, **Ambassador Ralf Heckner** hosted a reception on May 5 for Swiss companies attending the Summit. The event featured remarks by **Under Secretary William Kimmitt**, **Ambassador Callista Gingrich**, and Ambassador Andrea Rauber Saxer. Other distinguished guests included **Ambassador Georg Sparber of Liechtenstein**, **Governor Josh Stein** of North Carolina, **Speaker Newt Gingrich**, **State Secretary Alexandre Fasel**, and **Rahul Sahgal**, Head of the Swiss-American Chamber of Commerce.

The event celebrated the strong economic partnership between the United States and Switzerland and reaffirmed both countries' shared commitment to advancing innovation, investment, and prosperity.

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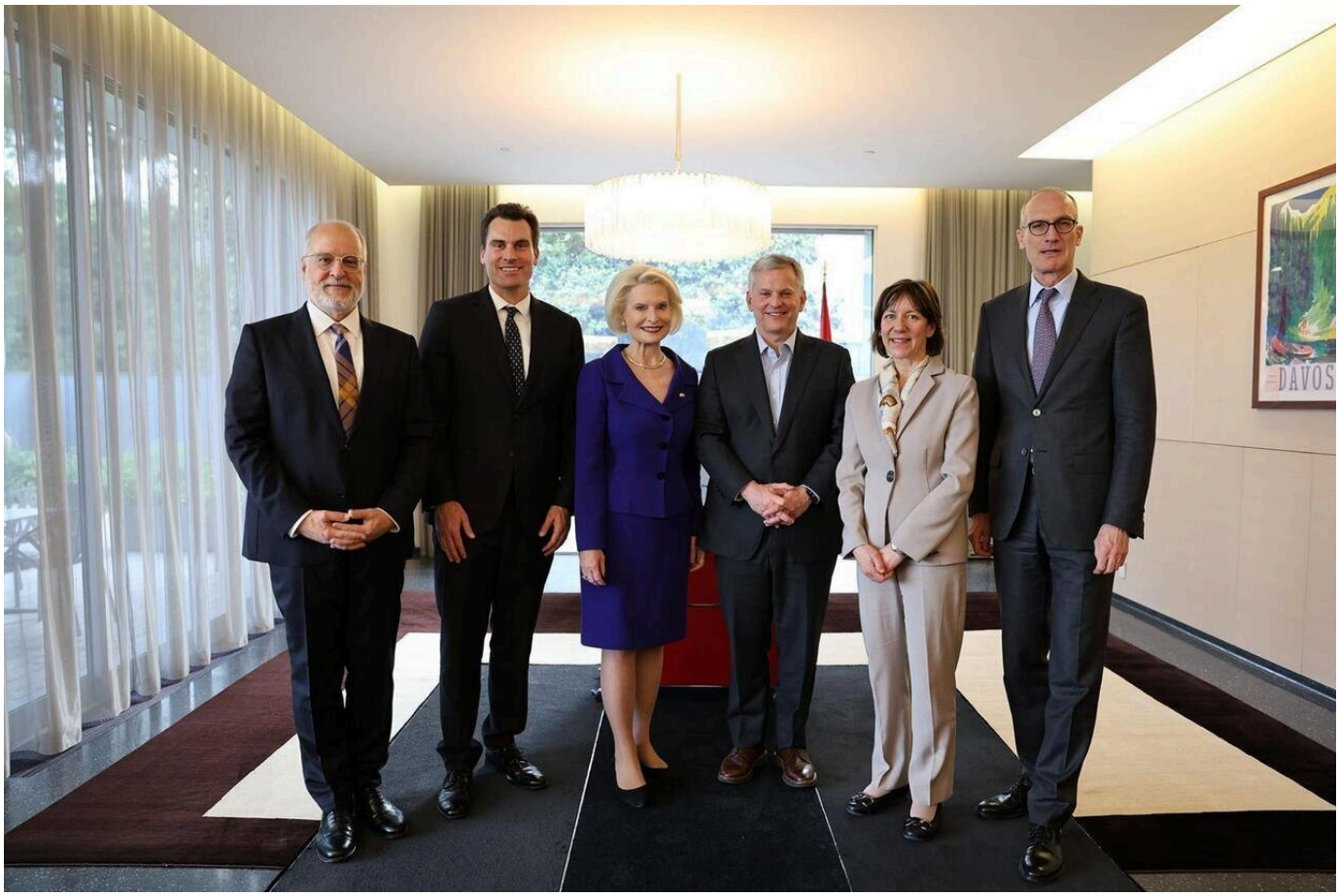

Swiss-U.S. Strategic Dialogue

A Swiss delegation led by **State Secretary Alexandre Fasel** met with **Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau** in Washington, DC, on May 5–6, 2026, for the fourth round of the Strategic Dialogue. Established in 2022, the dialogue serves as a key platform for advancing bilateral cooperation.

Discussions focused on geopolitical developments, economic cooperation, innovation, and emerging technologies. Both sides exchanged views on the Middle East, Ukraine, the Western Balkans, and Venezuela, and reaffirmed the importance of Switzerland's protecting power mandate between the United States and Iran.

The dialogue also addressed investment, scientific cooperation in AI and quantum technologies, research security, export controls, and sanctions cooperation. The meeting concluded with the adoption of a joint statement reaffirming a shared commitment to security, peace, and mutual prosperity.

During the visit, State Secretary Fasel also attended the Swiss reception held in honor of the SelectUSA Investment Summit.

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Swiss Ambassador Hosts Discussion on Combating Antisemitism and Extremism

On April 29, 2026, **Ambassador Ralf Heckner** hosted a discussion at the Swiss Residence in Washington, DC, in partnership with the American Jewish Committee (AJC) on combating antisemitism and extremism in the United States and Europe. The event brought together diplomats, experts, and community leaders to discuss the growing threat these trends pose to democratic societies.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Heckner highlighted the rise of antisemitism and extremism and underscored Switzerland's commitment to addressing these challenges through its 2026 OSCE Chairmanship.

Andrew Baker, Personal Representative on Combating Antisemitism to Swiss Foreign Minister and **Federal Councilor Ignazio Cassis** in his role as OSCE Chairperson, outlined the OSCE's efforts to strengthen security and international cooperation in response to antisemitic attacks.

Hallie Stern focused on how disinformation and social media contribute to the spread and normalization of antisemitic narratives, while **Haftam Yizhak Heathwood** shared personal reflections on Jewish identity and the importance of building understanding across communities.

Moderated by **Julie Rayman**, Senior Vice President of Policy and Political Affairs at AJC, the discussion concluded with a reception at the Swiss Residence.

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Swiss Reception at AI+ Expo: Road to AI Summit Geneva

From May 7–9, 2026, the AI+ Expo in Washington, DC, brought together more than 20,000 government officials, researchers, and industry leaders to showcase advances in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, robotics, energy, and other emerging technologies. Hosted by the Special Competitive Studies Project (SCSP), the event featured leading exhibitors from industry, academia and international organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

On May 7, the Embassy of Switzerland hosted an official reception at the Residence of the Swiss Ambassador, welcoming about 70 guests from academia, government, think tanks, and the private sector. Held alongside the SCSP AI+ Expo, the reception provided an opportunity to strengthen U.S.–Swiss cooperation in the field of AI research, innovation, and policy.

The event also served as an early milestone on the road to the Global AI Summit 2027 in Geneva, highlighting Switzerland's commitment to advancing international collaboration, responsible AI governance, and technological innovation.

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GlobalWIN Study Trip to Switzerland

From May 26–30, 2026, Switzerland welcomed the Global Women's Innovation Network (GlobalWIN), a high-level bipartisan delegation of U.S. leaders from government, business, and academia. Accompanied by **Olivia Gachoud**, Head of the Science and Technology Office at the Embassy of Switzerland in Washington, DC. the group explored Switzerland's innovation ecosystem and strengthened ties with Swiss partners across government, industry, academia, and international organizations based in Geneva.

The delegation included 19 senior staff members from the U.S. House of Representatives and nearly 30 private-sector leaders, representing sectors such as technology, finance, biopharma, energy, and telecommunications.

The program featured visits to leading innovation hubs and institutions, including Disney Research and Google in Zurich, Novartis in Basel, Philip Morris International in Lausanne, EPFL, the World Economic Forum, UNHCR, and the Rolex Training Center in Geneva. In Bern, **U.S. Ambassador Callista Gingrich** hosted a reception bringing together GlobalWIN participants and Swiss women leaders who had participated in a study trip to the United States in 2025. The program continued with meetings at the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI), Innosuisse, and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).

By connecting policymakers, industry leaders, and innovators from both countries, the visit fostered meaningful exchanges. laid the foundation for future partnerships, and reinforced the strong innovation relationship between Switzerland and the United States.

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2026 White House Correspondents' Dinner Afterparty at the Swiss Residence

On April 25, 2026, **Ambassador Ralf Heckner** and **Dr. Ilaria Macconi Heckner** hosted the fourth annual White House Correspondents' Dinner afterparty at the Swiss Residence in Washington, DC. The event welcomed more than 1,500 guests from media, government, business, and culture, making it one of the premier gatherings of the Correspondents' Dinner weekend.

Held in partnership with TIME, Mercuria, Salesforce, General Catalyst, Suntory Spirits, and Total Wine & More, the reception celebrated the mission of the White House Correspondents' Association and the vital role of a free and independent press.

Throughout the evening, Ambassador Heckner highlighted the shared democratic values that unite Switzerland and the United States, emphasizing the importance of press freedom, open dialogue, and accountability. Guests enjoyed Swiss hospitality, cuisine, and networking opportunities in a festive atmosphere.

More than just a social event, the reception served as a celebration of journalism, transatlantic friendship, and the values that underpin open and democratic societies.

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Swiss-Kosovar Concert featuring ARIADITA Duo

On May 20, 2026, **Ambassador Ralf Heckner** and **H.E. Ilir Dugolli**, Ambassador of the Republic of Kosovo to the United States, hosted a concert celebrating Swiss-Kosovar friendship at the Swiss Residence in Washington, D.C.

Held in recognition of America250, the event brought together U.S. government officials, members of the diplomatic community, and friends of both countries to celebrate culture, independence, and partnership.

At the heart of the evening was a performance by the ARIADITA Duo—comprising Swiss pianist **Ariane Haering** and Kosovar pianist **Ardita Statovci**—whose long-standing collaboration beautifully exemplifies the power of music to connect cultures. The program featured works by Mozart, Smetana, Honegger, Piperku/Aliçkaj, Beach, and Poulenc.

A reception featuring Swiss and Kosovar specialties concluded the evening and provided an opportunity for continued cultural exchange.

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Switzerland at the 2026 FIFA World Cup

Every four years, the FIFA World Cup brings together nations, cultures, and fans from around the globe. This year, soccer's biggest tournament returned to North America, with the United States, Canada, and Mexico hosting the largest FIFA World Cup in history.

The Embassy of Switzerland brought Swiss fans and friends of Switzerland together to support the Swiss national team during its matches against Qatar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, and Algeria. The Embassy organized public watch parties, creating opportunities for the Swiss community and soccer enthusiasts to come together and cheer on the national team.

For Switzerland's match against Canada, the Embassy was also honored to be hosted by the Embassy of Canada at a special VIP watch party, highlighting the strong friendship between the two countries and the spirit of cooperation that defines the FIFA World Cup.

We are excited that Switzerland's World Cup journey continues and look forward to cheering on the Swiss national team in the next stage of the tournament alongside our community and partners.

Hopp Schwiiz!

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ETIAS: Important Information for all Swiss citizens

The European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) is an upcoming electronic pre-travel screening system for visa-exempt travelers (like U.S. citizens) entering the Schengen Area and other European countries, starting in late 2026. The website states: «*If you are a citizen of any of the European countries requiring ETIAS or Ireland, you are exempt from ETIAS regardless of any other nationality you may hold. In this case, you must travel with the passport issued by the European country requiring ETIAS or Ireland. If your passport has expired or cannot be used, you should contact the diplomatic or consular authorities of the country that issued it, who can advise you on how to obtain a new travel document. Otherwise, you will not be able to travel to the European countries requiring ETIAS (who-should-apply).*»

For Swiss citizens, this means that you may only enter Europe with a valid Swiss passport. An expired passport does not grant entry—even if you hold another nationality. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to check your travel documents well in advance to ensure they are valid for your next trip to Switzerland and/or Europe. You can apply for a new Swiss passport here.

Please make sure that all your changes in civil status (e.g. marriages, divorces, etc.) have been registered with us (and therefore your place of origin in Switzerland) as it may affect your legal name. Swiss passports can only be issued in the name that is listed in the Swiss family registers.

Please find herewith further information on ETIAS.

ETIAS Merged Flyers.pdf

ETIAS was also the subject of a webinar organized by the FDFA, the ASO (Organisation of the Swiss Abroad), and Soliswiss on 16 June 2026. The webinar was held in both German (Als binationale Familie in die Schweiz) and French (Retour en Suisse en tant que famille binationale).

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Deployment of the mobile passport station in Chicago: An intern’s perspective

At the end of March 2026, two members of the Chancery team traveled to Chicago to operate a mobile passport station for Swiss citizens living in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, and Nebraska.

Preparations began in November 2025, when invitations were sent to Swiss citizens living in these states. Those who fulfilled the requirements were then able to proceed with the application process.

What initially seemed like a straightforward project soon turned into an interesting and rewarding challenge. Many applicants first needed to update their civil status records, register children, or complete other administrative formalities before applying for a passport or identity card. This highlighted the diversity of consular work, as well as the importance for Swiss citizens living abroad to keep their records with Swiss representations up to date.

After months of planning and coordination, the team arrived in Chicago and transformed a hotel room into a fully functioning temporary passport office. Applicants were guided through the administrative procedures before proceeding to biometric registration. Thanks to well prepared and punctual customers and excellent teamwork, the entire operation ran smoothly and efficiently.

The appreciation expressed by the Swiss community was especially rewarding. During the deployment, 217 Swiss citizens visited the mobile passport station, and a total of 352 passports and identity cards were processed. For many citizens, the service eliminated the need for long-distance travel and made access to passport services significantly easier. Beyond issuing travel documents, the visit also strengthened the connection between the Embassy and the Swiss citizens living throughout its consular district.

Article written by Paulina Kunz, Chancery intern.

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