

India and Switzerland's Deepening Partnership

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Context - India and Switzerland will commemorate next year the 75th anniversary of the signing in New Delhi of the 1948 Treaty of Friendship.

India and Switzerland have had cordial and friendly relations since India's Independence, based on shared values of democracy and rule of law.

Background

- India and Switzerland have had good relations since ages and both have common interests in various fields.
- During the cold war era, India's policy of Non-alignment and Switzerland's traditional policy of neutrality has led to a close understanding between the two countries.
- In 1948, a Treaty of Friendship was concluded between both the countries. Both believe in the spirit of democracy and pluralism.

- From 1971 to 1976, Switzerland represented the interests of India over the dispute in Bangladesh.

Cooperation between two countries in various area

- Switzerland and Indian partners are collaborating on digital transformation, sustainability, health, life sciences, medtech, infrastructure, cleantech, fintech, blockchain, AI and robotics.
- Innovation and investment continue to be the primary drivers of our bilateral relations. With over 330 Swiss companies, Switzerland is the 12th largest investor in India.
- About 100 Swiss companies manufacture locally and support the Make in India initiative. Trade talks between Switzerland (European Free Trade Association EFTA) and India are high on the priority list.
- Digitalisation is emerging as a relatively new area of engagement with enormous potential for Switzerland and India.
- Switzerland plays a leading role in researching new technologies and is home to many innovative and world-leading technology companies.
- As one of the most innovative countries of the world, Switzerland seeks to engage with India, the leader of the Industry 4.0 revolution, in areas ranging from digital governance to digital self-determination.

Switzerland in UNSC as non-permanent member

- Switzerland was elected to the United Nations Security Council as a non-permanent member for the first time this year in June.
- Convergence in priorities at Security Council: There are convergences in Swiss and Indian priorities at the UN Security Council. Switzerland, like India, is committed to a robust and effective multilateral system.
- In the Security Council, Switzerland will do everything possible to ensure sustainable peace.
- Many years ago, from 1971 to 1976, Switzerland represented India's interests in Pakistan and vice versa. In the Security Council, Switzerland will focus on the

protection of civilians and on international humanitarian law.

- Impact of climate change on security: Switzerland will also address climate change and its impact on security.
- Reforms of Security Council: Switzerland desires effective UN institutions. India has been advocating for a reform of the Security Council.
- Switzerland's fourth priority in 2023 and 2024 will be to contribute to improving the United Nations Security Council's effectiveness towards greater transparency and accountability.

Conclusion

Two countries can together contribute to global good. This engagement is a result of not only our shared priorities, but also our shared democratic values and foreign policy independence.