

**Sprechnotiz CdA :  
MC/CS + PIAG, 18.01.2024 (5' / d )**

---

KKdt Thomas Süssli, Chef der Armee

**Es gilt das gesprochene Wort**

---

Admiral Bauer, Chair of the Military Committee, Admirals,  
Generals, dear colleagues

Let me start by thanking you for having organized this combined meeting of the MC/CS and the PIAG. The exchange of today is not only timely but essential for the continued strengthening of the cooperation between NATO, its Allies and PIAG nations.

I would also like to congratulate and thank my Irish colleague for the introduction of our interoperability advocacy group. His words were well chosen and reflect in many ways the essence of Switzerland's approach towards a stronger cooperation between NATO and partner nations with a 7NNN status.

PIAG has been and continues to be a key platform for advancing common partner interoperability interests with NATO. With the war in Ukraine, our work has become even more relevant as it reflects the importance of close cooperation at the political and military level among our armed forces.

Promoting interoperability with NATO based on our individual capabilities and operational experiences is an indispensable asset to us all.

Switzerland has been a responsible and trusted NATO partner since 1996. Yet, the dramatically changing security environment affects us all. In September 2022, the Swiss Government adopted an additional report to its latest security policy report. Based on its findings, the political directives are clear: the Armed Forces must be able to defend Switzerland independently from the beginning, while being capable of militarily cooperating with partners in case of an aggression.

From our perspective, we see three main areas in which we continue efforts in advancing common ground while closing existing gaps in our interoperability efforts with NATO: (1) substance-related, (2) status-related, and (3) practice-related. Allow me to explain myself in a few sentences.

On **substance-related cooperation**: priority should be given to topics where NATO and partners have indicated their intention to work more closely and concretely together, like for example military mobility including transit, cyber defence, innovation and resilience.

On **status-related cooperation**: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Furthermore, it offers a wide range of potential access to NATO

documents and concepts. Such access allows partners to benefit from NATO processes while adapting to a higher level of interoperability.

And finally, **practice-related cooperation**: The participation in NATO exercises is a key if not final step in assuring interoperability on the ground, in the air, or in the cyberspace. Exercises at sea might not be the main area for Switzerland but obviously, would count for others too. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Mr. Chair, Admirals, Generals, in these uncertain times, we need to make sure that our individual and common work benefits us all. We will increase cooperation with the Alliance, with Allies, at the bilateral and multilateral level. I would certainly be ready to further brief the Military Committee on the Swiss Armed Forces' development strategy for the future. To this end, the PIAG remains one of our vital platforms to coordinate and further strengthen our work with NATO.

Switzerland is ready to play its part, for peace and security in Europe.

Mr. Chair, Admirals, Generals, colleagues, I thank you for your attention.