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The XIII Francophone Summit in Montreux addresses the topic of “future challenges and visions for the French-speaking world”

The XIII Summit of the heads of state and government of the French-speaking world, which took place in Montreux on 23 and 24 October 2010 under the presidency of Swiss President, Doris Leuthard, also opened its doors to the public with various thematic, literary and cultural events. It resulted in the Declaration of Montreux, which was adopted with several resolutions. Switzerland is holding the presidency of the Francophone Summit from October 2010 to October 2012, while the Democratic Republic of Congo will host the next summit in 2012.

Several days before the opening of the XIII Francophone Summit, the head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), Micheline Calmy-Rey, highlighted the importance of this meeting.

“The French-speaking world exerts significant influence. It represents a third of the states in the UN. An area which fosters democracy, human rights and development, the French-speaking community provides a platform for debate to tackle the challenges which face and concern the entire world”, underlined Micheline Calmy-Rey at the ministerial conference.

Seventy countries were represented in Montreux, with about 40 heads of state or government in attendance. The ambassador Jean-François Paroz, commissioner for the organisation of the Francophone Summit, used specific examples to illustrate

the challenges involved in organising an event of this kind in terms of logistics. 1,750 delegates, around 600 journalists, 1,700 staff, more than 1,000 organisers and over 1,000 police officers and fire service personnel had to be accredited for the summit. The head of the Swiss diplomatic service also emphasised the importance of the Montreux Summit to Switzerland, underlining the fact that the entire country and not just the French-speaking part is a member of the International Francophone Organisation. “Multicultural Switzerland, with its four national languages and federal state, feels at ease in the French-speaking world which contains 870 million people on five continents”, she said. The summit raised Switzerland’s profile and gave it the opportunity to affirm its policy of hosting international conferences and organisations. “In a world where networks are being superimposed, this positioning is beneficial”, added the Federal Councillor.

As 2010 coincided with the 40th anniversary of the Niamey Convention, the founding act of the institutional French-speaking world, Switzerland wanted the heads of state and government to reflect on the “future challenges and visions for the French-speaking world”.

Three topics, in particular, were therefore on the agenda: “The French-speaking world as a player in international relations and its position in world governance”, “The French-speaking world and sustainable development” and “the French language and education in a globalised world.”

The summit topics were made accessible to the public through a dozen roundtables which tackled topics such as food security, water and AIDS. They were complemented by enjoyable events such as the “francophone village” in Montreux, an audiovisual evening organised by French-language television stations to celebrate the 40th anniversary

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL FRANCOPHONE ORGANISATION (OIF) WITH THE COMMISSIONER FOR THE ORGANISATION OF THE XIII SUMMIT AND THEIR MAIN ADVISORS

The Secretary-General of the OIF, Abdou Diouf, alongside (on his left) ambassador Jean-François Paroz, commissioner for the organisation of the XIII Summit, and (on his right) Claude Berberat, deputy commissioner for the organisation of the Summit. Also in the photo: Clément Duhaime, Director of the OIF, Pierre de Cocatrix, Head of the Secretary-General’s office, and Lautaro Sancho, liaison officer for the Secretary-General of the OIF.





sary of the Francophone organisation, and various activities held at the Château de Chillon.

The XIII Summit welcomed the creation, at Switzerland's initiative, of a network of excellence for engineering in the French-speaking world (RESCIF) under the leadership of the Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL). A collaboration initiative will be launched from January 2011 between 14 francophone universities from industrialised and developing countries.

The XIII Francophone Summit also admitted five new observer-status members into its ranks: Bosnia-Herzegovina, the United Arab Emirates, Estonia, Montenegro and the Dominican Republic. The Secretary-General of the Francophone Organisation, Abou Diouf, was elected for a third term. Switzerland will hold the presidency of the Francophone Summit from October 2010 to October 2012 as well as the presidency of the ministerial conference of the Francophone Organisation from December 2009 to December 2011. This task falls to the head of the FDFA, Micheline Calmy-Rey.

The Francophone Summit concluded with the adoption of the "Declaration of Montreux" accompanied by several resolutions. This text formalises the debate on the "future challenges and visions for the French-speaking world." It confirms the commitment of the heads of state and government to cultural diversity, multilingualism and francophone economic solidarity. They called for a reform of global economic governance through the strengthening of cooperation between the UN, the heart of world governance, and the economic forums, including the G20, as well as respect for and application of UN agreements on the threats of terrorism, piracy, organised crime, drugs trafficking and corruption. They also welcomed the creation, in July, of the UN Women agency for equality and strengthening of the posi-

tion of women and encouraged the International Francophone Organisation to work in tandem with it. Furthermore, they reaffirmed their support for efforts towards achieving a fair, sustainable and overall peace in the Middle East and expressed their solidarity with the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. With regard to sustainable development, the Francophone Organisation voiced its willingness to achieve the UN's Millennium Goals by 2015. These include the reduction of infant mortality, food security and specific projects, such as the African Great Green Wall initiative and the saving of Lake Chad. Finally, the heads of state and government stated their commitment to promoting the use of French in the international and regional organisations and, in view of the XIV Summit, called on the International Francophone Organisation to adopt a policy of promoting the French language which integrates and synergises the organisation's initiatives.

The Democratic Republic of Congo was named as host of the next summit in 2012.

Further details can be found at <http://www.francophoniemontreux2010.ch>.

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THE LIAISON OFFICERS OF THE 73 DELEGATIONS

At the centre of the picture, ambassador Jean-François Paroz, commissioner for the organisation of the XIII Summit, ambassador Johannes Matyassy, Director-General of the Summit, and Jacques Lauer, deputy commissioner for the organisation of the Summit.





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NEW POPULAR INITIATIVES AND REFERENDA

At time of going to press, the following new popular **initiatives** had been launched since the last edition:

- "Peine de mort en cas d'assassinat en concours avec un abus sexuel" (The death penalty for murder in conjunction with sexual abuse), initiative committee: "Comité pour la peine de mort". Deadline for collection of signatures: 24.02.2012.
- "Pour la transparence de l'assurance-maladie (Halte à la confusion entre assurance de base et assurance complémentaire)" (For health insurance transparency – stop the confusion between basic and supplementary insurance), initiative committee: "Pour la transparence de l'assurance-maladie" AMG-Initiative fédérale. Deadline for collection of signatures: 28.03.2012.
- "Stop à la bureaucratie!" (Stop the bureaucracy!), initiative committee: PLR. Les Libéraux-Radicaux comité d'initiative "Stop à la bureaucratie!". Deadline for collection of signatures: 12.04.2012.

The following laws are subject to a **referendum**. The deadline for signatures runs until 20 January 2011.

- Federal Law on the Organisation of the Confederation's Criminal Justice Authorities
- Federal Law on Road Traffic
- Federal Law on the Infrastructure Fund for Urban Traffic, the National Road Network and the Main Roads in Mountainous and Peripheral Regions
- Federal Law on the Restitution of Unlawfully Acquired Assets of Politically Exposed Persons
- Federal Law on Financial Assistance for Childcare Places
- Federal Law on the Coordination of Asylum and Extradition Procedures
- Federal Law on the Organisation of the Government and Administration (Data Protection Concerning the Use of Electronic Infrastructure)
- Federal Law on Aviation
- Federal Law on Dams
- Federal Law on the Approval of the Agreement between Switzerland and Serbia on Cooperation between Police Forces in the Fight against Criminality
- Federal Law on the Approval of the Exchange of Notes be-

between Switzerland and the EC regarding the Assumption of the Legal Basis for the External Borders Fund and the Agreement on Switzerland's Participation in the External Borders Fund (Development of Schengen Acquis)

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■ Federal Law on the Approval of the Maritime Labour Convention

■ Federal Law on the Approval of the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways

■ Federal Law on the Approval of the Statute of the International Renewable Energy Agency

■ Federal Law on the Approval

of the Agreement on the European Forestry Institute

Please visit the site www.bk.admin.ch/aktuell/abstimmung. This contains a list of pending referendum proposals and popular initiatives in addition to the signature forms, if available. Please complete, sign and send the forms directly to the relevant initiative committee.

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