

H-Diplo ROUNDTABLE XXVI-11

Sacha Zala et al., *Documents Diplomatiques Suisses, 1992*. Bern: Dodis, 2023. ISBN 978-3-907261-10-1.

28 November 2024 | PDF: <https://hdiplo.org/to/RT26-11> | X: [@HDiplo](#) | BlueSky: [@h-diplo.bsky.social](#)

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The scholarly discussion revolving around the Dodis Research Centre's volume on Swiss diplomatic documents from 1992 gives us the opportunity to reflect on the importance of this type of scientific endeavor in a recapitulatory way. The volumes of the *Diplomatic Documents of Switzerland (DDS)*, which have been published since 1979, occupy a key position in the landscape of Switzerland's diplomatic history and historiography.

Since 2021, the Dodis Research Centre annually selects and publishes approximately 1,800 of the most important documents on Swiss foreign policy at the exact expiry date of the 30-year protection and embargo period—just like a proverbial Swiss clock, so to speak. At the beginning of each year, Dodis uploads these documents via its website and publishes a small, carefully selected sub-set of approximately 62 documents both digitally and in print. The print volume of documents from 1992 was presented to the public at a well-attended book launch on 3 January 2023.¹

In fact, the annual book launches of the DDS series have become somewhat of an institution in and of themselves and enjoy great popularity among scholars, students, journalists, as well as Swiss and foreign diplomats. They also receive considerable press coverage in Switzerland on the day they are held. Media professionals pour over the compiled documentation and convey a “selection of the selection” from the always rich and meaningful collections of documents, which continue to a wider public debate on the continued relevance of Swiss diplomatic history for the present day.² We know that documents that were previously classified as secret are of particular interest.

What is special about the way in which Dodis makes Swiss diplomatic documents accessible to the public is that they are primarily intended to allow interested citizens to encounter historical primary-source material with a sound balance of proximity and distance. The aim is to stimulate curiosity and inquiry. Thanks to the interactive format of both the print and digital versions of the DDS volumes, the index, and the table of contents, interested readers can find out more with little effort, about what was thought and done on their behalf in the arena of foreign affairs thirty years ago. The Dodis volumes also draw interest from the many bilateral and multilateral diplomatic missions based in Switzerland. Of course, current-day policymakers at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs are interested too in what their predecessors have left behind in written reflections.

Yet what significance do these editions have for historical research and for the ongoing academic debates surrounding Swiss foreign policy? They are important intermediate products in a continuous process of academic debate on the history of Swiss foreign relations. These can be used to gauge what has already been—as always—provisionally worked out in the existing literature. In the case of the present volume,

¹ See Dodis, “Vernissage DDS 1992,” www.dodis.ch/de/vernissage-dds-1992.

² See, for instance, Christoph Wehrli, “‘Ein neuer Geist der Kooperation’ – wie die Schweiz ihre Aussenpolitik neu justierte,” 3 January 2023, www.nzz.ch/schweiz/ein-neuer-geist-der-kooperation-wie-die-schweiz-ihre-aussenpolitik-neu-justierte-ld.1719444.

Swiss reactions to the possibility of becoming part of the European Economic Area (EEA) have received considerable attention.³ On the basis of the documentation now available, it is possible to guess what is still waiting to be recorded in an in-depth investigation.

More broadly speaking, the selection of files contained in DDS 1992 provides a condensed overview of the most important foreign policy challenges—big and small—which occurred that year. With its layout, based primarily on archival holdings from the Swiss Federal Archives in Berne, it can provide a glimpse into issues and topics that have received little attention to date. The detailed note of a conversation that took place in Geneva in May 1992 between the president of the African National Congress (ANC), Nelson Mandela, and Swiss State Secretary Franz Blankart, is particularly significant and catalogued as Document Number 19 in DDS 1992 (115-118). In this document, Mandela comments that Switzerland had a “most negative image” in South Africa because of its non-participation in international sanctions and because of the behavior of several Swiss companies. Nevertheless, he added, “Let bygone be bygone, let us now normalize the perception,” referring primarily to financial support for the ANC (118).⁴

On the whole and in the spirit of “blue skies research,” DDS 1992 leaves open which research questions could or should be developed on the basis of the materials provided. Most Dodis volumes are products of what is called *Grundlagenforschung* in German—research that forms a solid basis for further investigations. They are intended as entry points into specific topics for those interested in historical research on Swiss foreign policy. The substantial introduction that precedes the documents provides both context and overview for the selection of documents that essentially mark the beginning of a new year in the declassification calendar at the Swiss Federal Archives (XXXI-LI). It is now also accompanied by a detailed review in the *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte*, an academic journal dedicated to new research on Swiss history.⁵

I do want to stress, however, that while this roundtable primarily revolves around the edited volume of 1992, the publication of these documents in an edited volume—as much as they form the material core of the edition—is only half of the achievement. The other half—which cannot be valued highly enough, especially for further research—is the digital enrichment of the document corpus with metadata and its breakdown according to relevant core themes and key words, which makes targeted research much easier. The editors aptly state soberly in their contribution to our roundtable that, “this is the primary work we do on sources.” In her contribution, Stéphanie Ginalska correspondingly highlights the diversity of diplomatic activities and emphasizes, among other things, the negotiations on climate issues that were conducted in 1992—more than 30 years ago. She also reflects on the reorientation of the conventional understanding of

³ From among the rich body of existing literature see, Dieter Freiburghaus, *Königsweg oder Sackgasse? Schweizerische Europapolitik von 1945 bis heute* (Zürich: Verlag Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 2009).

⁴ As one of my academic teachers, Professor Werner Kaegi, said, something is interesting if you are interested. I find Document number 19 particularly interesting, because I was in charge of the research project NRP 42+ in the years 2000-2005 and wrote the shot report for it. See Georg Kreis, *Die Schweiz und Südafrika 1948–1994: Schlussbericht des im Auftrag des Bundesrats durchgeführten NFP 42+* (Bern: Haupt, 2005); also available as Georg Kreis, *Switzerland and South Africa 1948–1994* (Bern: Haupt, 2007).

⁵ See *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte* 73:3 (2023), 429-341.

Swiss neutrality that occurred that year, stressing Switzerland's participation in international sanctions "without inciting a revolution."

Marianne von Grünigen, meanwhile, dwells on the strengthening of the CSCE and its successor organization over time, as well as on the "soft" institutionalization of its involvement in various conflicts leading up to and including 1992. She emphasizes that the year 1992 was significant in terms of enhanced cooperation among the existing international organizations in Europe. The year 1992 was a turning point after two decades of growing optimism for a more peaceful, secure and democratic Europe. Finally, Thomas Bürgisser and Sacha Zala, the two editors of the volume, respond to the two preceding contributions. They confirm Ginalski's observation concerning the "glaring absence of women" in diplomacy at the time. Women remained heavily underrepresented in the diplomatic corps throughout the 1990s. Von Grünigen herself is a notable exception in the Swiss diplomatic corps and thankfully, the gender balance has since improved considerably.

Contributors:

Thomas Bürgisser studied Eastern European History and Slavic Studies in Basel and Zagreb, and wrote his PhD on the history of Swiss-Yugoslav relations during the Cold War. He has been working at the Dodis Research Center since 2009 with a focus on Switzerland's relations with the USSR and China during the Cold War, as well as on security and migration policy. Since 2019, he is responsible for the DDS series on the 1990s.

Sacha Zala is the Director of the Dodis Research Center and Professor of Swiss and Contemporary General History at the University of Bern. He is the President of the Swiss Association for History (SGG) since 2014, Secretary General of the International Committee of Editors of Diplomatic Documents (ICEDD) since 2013, and member of the Board of the International Committee of Historical Sciences (ICHS) since 2017.

Georg Kreis is a historian and Professor Emeritus at the University of Basel. He was the co-author of the *Diplomatic Documents of Switzerland (DDS)* feasibility study of 1974, co-editor of the fifth round of the *DDS* on the years 1904–1914 together with Herbert Lüthy, as well as the founding director and head of the interdisciplinary European Institute at the University of Basel from 1993 to 2012. Between 1994 and 2000 he served as an expert for the Swiss National Research Program 42 titled "Fundamentals and Possibilities of Swiss Foreign Policy," which analyzed among other things also Switzerland's EEA challenges of 1992. The findings in this regard have been incorporated in the publication: Dieter Freiburghaus and Georg Kreis, eds., *The EEA—Missed Opportunity or Still Existing Opportunity?* (NZZ Libro, 2012).

Stéphanie Ginalski is *Maître d'enseignement et de recherche* in the Institute of Political Studies at the University of Lausanne. She completed her PhD in history and political studies at the University of Lausanne and University Lumière Lyon 2. She is the cofounder of the [Swiss Elites Observatory](#) and her research focuses on the transformations of capitalism in the twentieth century, the history of elites, and the

place of women in large corporations. She is currently co-directing an SNSF Sinergia research project entitled “[Local power structures and transnational connections. New perspectives on Swiss elites, 1890–2020.](#)”

Marianne von Grünigen completed her doctorate in law under Prof. Dr. Max Imboden at the University of Basel in 1961. From 1961 to 1962, she worked as an assistant of Professor Imboden in Paris and Berlin, and in 1963 she worked as a consultant to the legal department of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris. From 1963 to 1965, she worked at the Max Planck Institute for International Law in Heidelberg, and from 1965 to 1966, she completed her LLM at Yale Law School. In 1967, she entered the Swiss diplomatic service, where she served in Bonn (1969–1975), at the UN Division in Berne (1975–1982), as Minister in Moscow (1982–1986), and as Swiss Ambassador to Finland (1987–1989). From 1989 to 1993, she headed the Political Division for Peace, Security and Disarmament in Berne, from 1993 to 1997 she served as Swiss Ambassador to Egypt and Sudan, and from 1997 to 2001 she was the Swiss Permanent Representative at the OSCE and the International Organizations in Vienna.

As in previous volumes, the sources selected and published in this new edition of *Documents Diplomatiques Suisses* for 1992 shed light on the main characteristics of Swiss foreign policy for the period under investigation. The editors selected 62 documents for inclusion. These documents come mainly from the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (EDA). Sources from other departments, as well as letters from private institutions or personalities acting in an official or semi-official capacity for the government, were also considered. As mentioned in the foreword, publishing documents as close as possible to their declassification date creates a historiographical link with current events. This is particularly the case here for documents relating to the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Rio Earth Summit, Switzerland's relations with Europe, and debates on racism. As with previous editions, the documents published in this volume have been digitized and can be consulted on the online database *Dodis*.¹ This database contains all the documents selected by the Dodis research group—for 1992, around 1,800 documents are available online—and provides valuable additional information by linking meta-data regarding individuals and organizations mentioned in the sources.

The introduction to the volume, written by Thomas Bürgisser and Sacha Zala, provides an overview of the major issues that were at stake in Switzerland's international relations in 1992, within the context of the recent end of the Cold War. They begin by showing how Switzerland positioned itself in the face of the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. In line with the policy of "Neutrality and Solidarity" developed by head of the Federal Political Department (forerunner of the EDA) Max Petitpierre after the Second World War, the government sought to show solidarity with Western countries, while defending its own political and economic interests. For example, the EDA wanted to involve Switzerland in the process of stabilizing the Commonwealth of Independent States through financial aid and technical cooperation. On 5 November 1992, the EDA also proposed to the Federal Council that an embassy be opened in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan which was notably perceived as a springboard for access to East Asian markets (295). Finally, the authors look back at the government's response to the war in former Yugoslavia, which the EDA condemned as "a war of aggression by the Serbian government" (XXXIV). The Federal Council recognized the independence of the republics of Croatia and Slovenia, followed by Bosnia-Herzegovina. Here too, economic stakes were closely intertwined with political ones, since citizens of former Yugoslavia represented the largest proportion of the foreign workforce in Switzerland.

Another significant event in 1992 was Switzerland's membership in the Bretton Woods institutions. At the end of the Second World War, Switzerland had not joined them. In particular, membership of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) originally gave rise to fears of a loss of autonomy in terms of Swiss monetary policy.² However, Switzerland collaborated regularly with these institutions and the process for

¹ <https://www.dodis.ch/en>

² Marc Perrenoud, "L'économie suisse et la neutralité à géométrie variable," *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps* 93(2009), 77-86, 83, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3917/mate.093.0010>

joining them was initiated in 1989, provoking a heated debate in parliament.³ Switzerland's membership of the Bretton Woods institutions was finally accepted by the Swiss people and the cantons in the vote of 17 May 1992. The challenge was for Switzerland to obtain a 24th seat on the IMF, despite the reluctance of Washington, which feared that the United States' influence in the decisionmaking process would be diminished. The various documents selected for the present volume show the strategies put in place by Vice-President of the Confederation Adolf Ogi to create a new voting group at the IMF, nicknamed Helvetistan and represented by Switzerland on the IMF Board.

The documents that are selected and highlighted in the introduction also provide interesting information on Switzerland's participation in the third Earth Summit, which took place in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. They reveal how the head of the Federal Department of Home Affairs, Flavio Cotti, worked with the Brazilian Minister of Education, José Goldemberg, to break the deadlock in the negotiations on the climate convention by lobbying certain states, in particular Japan and the United States (40-43). By signing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Switzerland committed itself to stabilizing its CO₂ emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2000. As Cotti's memorandum on the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) of 22 June 1992 points out regarding Agenda 21, "The main thrust of the text has found a form that is consensually acceptable to the international community. Switzerland, too, has no difficulty in adhering to the content of this text, which is not legally binding" (129). This wording shows the limits of the decisions taken at this Convention—and at the various Conferences of the Parties (COPs) that followed in the 1990s—since they were non-binding and not linked to possible sanctions in the event of non-compliance with the commitments made. The document also highlights a major issue that is still relevant today, and which deserves to be emphasized, namely "the scale of the needs of developing countries," particularly in areas related to safeguarding their environment (133). In this respect, it points out that "Switzerland—whose performance in terms of official development assistance remains well below that of other European countries—should eventually agree to assume greater responsibility for international development cooperation" (133-134). Switzerland also campaigned for the secretariat of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which was to coordinate the Rio follow-up work within the UN system, to be established in Geneva. This attempt ended in failure, as the new UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali finally decided to move the secretariat to the UN headquarters in New York.

The editors of the volume also show how Switzerland had to position itself in the face of the various conflicts that arose in 1992, and how the government sought to reorient its foreign policy in terms of neutrality without inciting a revolution which, according to the EDA, would run the risk of offending a population that was largely loyal to the policy of neutrality that had been pursued until then. Of particular interest is the decision to participate in sanctions introduced by the international community, a new practice for Switzerland dating back to the decision in principle of 7 August 1990 to adopt UN economic sanctions against Iraq and Kuwait. At the beginning of June 1992, the Federal Council took part in UN economic sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The case of Libya

³ Sacha Zala et al., eds., *Documents Diplomatiques Suisses*, vol. 1991, Bern 2022, XLI-XLII, <https://www.dodis.ch/en/dds-1991>.

is another very telling example. Switzerland also participated in international sanctions, notably by extending the ban on the export of war materials, while at the same time trying to maintain diplomatic relations with the country. Two issues came to the fore: Libya was a major supplier of oil to Switzerland, and the authorities insisted on the need for an “economically healthy and developed Maghreb” to avoid the risks of increasing migration to the countries of the North, including Switzerland (145).

The question of Switzerland’s rapprochement with NATO, which was advocated in particular by head of the Federal Military Department Kaspar Villiger, additionally posed a challenge to Swiss neutrality, as did Switzerland’s integration into European structures. Yet for the authors, “the most important impact of domestic policy on foreign policy” was the popular vote on the European Economic Area (EEA) treaty on 6 December 1992, which marked a turning point in Swiss foreign policy (L). A slim majority (50.3 percent) of voters voted against Switzerland joining the EEA, as did almost all the German-speaking cantons. A few selected documents look back at the debates on Switzerland’s integration into European structures, covering both EEA membership and membership of the European Community (EC). Building on the recent success of Switzerland’s participation in the Bretton Woods institutions, in May 1992 the Federal Council pledged its support for a request to open negotiations for Swiss membership of the EC. However, the issue divided the government, with several federal councilors fearing that this move would jeopardize the forthcoming vote on Switzerland’s membership in the EEA. The latter was indeed less controversial among the population and various interest groups. The Federal Council also had to face up to opponents of the integration policy, notably Zurich National Councilor Christophe Blocher, who represented the right-wing populist Swiss people party (SVP). He argued that relations with the EC should continue to be governed by bilateral agreements. The various documents selected show the extent to which the issues surrounding Switzerland’s integration in Europe have deeply and enduringly divided not only the political elites, but also Swiss business circles, in a context of globalization and trade liberalization.⁴

In this regard, the government also sought to develop Switzerland’s relations with countries outside of Europe, particularly within the framework of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The Federal Office for Agriculture stressed that the agricultural proposals in the final draft agreement were considered by farming circles to be “totally unacceptable” and represented “disproportionate interference in national policies” (6). In early 1992, Switzerland also aimed to strengthen its bilateral relations with China and welcomed Prime Minister Li Peng on 29 January. This visit was widely criticized in the press and through demonstrations, which brought together Tibetans in exile and Chinese opponents. Economic interests prevailed, however, as demonstrated by the position of head of Federal Department of Economic Affairs Jean-Pascal Delamuraz, who was seeking to guarantee exports of Swiss goods to China and who became the spokesman for Swiss industry that was keen to invest in the country (26). The document that recounts the meeting in Geneva between Secretary of State Franz Blankart and Nelson Mandela, President of the African National Congress, in May 1992 also offers an interesting fact. The South African government had recently abolished the apartheid laws and Nelson Mandela expressed South Africa’s interest in economic cooperation with Switzerland. He pointed out, however, that “Swiss

⁴ See for example André Mach and Christine Trampush, eds., *Switzerland in Europe: Continuity and Change in the Swiss Political Economy* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

business ha[d] the most negative image” among the black population of South Africa, because of Switzerland’s decades-long refusal to participate in international sanctions against the apartheid regime (118).⁵

All in all, the documents that were selected for the 1992 edition and are highlighted in the introduction to the volume provide essential new insights into the contemporary history of Switzerland, as well as into ongoing academic debates on the subject. For instance, several documents demonstrate a tightening of migration and refugee policies and show how, since 1990, the government has been designating certain countries as safe from persecution in order to discourage asylum applications from these countries. This practice is contested internationally. The authorities then took advantage of reports of a partial improvement in the human rights situation in Sri Lanka to repatriate newly arrived Tamils and to establish the “remigration capacity” of Tamils, who had been living in Switzerland for a long time (XLVIII). They also sought to return asylum seekers from former Yugoslavia, against a backdrop of increasing racism and xenophobia in Swiss society. At the same time, the Federal Council promoted Switzerland’s accession to the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination—a topic that continues to be hotly debated in the academic world and in the public arena.⁶ The most controversial consequence of this decision was a revision of the Criminal Code. Here again, there are elements that reveal the government’s desire to protect Switzerland’s economic interests, with head of the EDA and President of the Confederation René Felber stating that the revision of the criminal code should not prevent Switzerland from “retaining its freedom of action in the area of admitting foreigners to the labour market” (77).

As previously mentioned, the documents selected thus open up stimulating new avenues for further research, such as on the highly topical issues surrounding the environment and race. The opening of new archives also helps to fuel research into the impact of European integration, globalization and neo-liberalism on Switzerland, and vice versa. Switzerland’s membership of the Bretton Woods organizations also represents a history to be written. It is always interesting, however, to reflect on the silences in the archives and in historiography. I will conclude this report by mentioning one element, among others, which concerns the glaring absence of women.⁷ This absence is, of course, partly a reflection of power structures. In 1992, for instance, not a single woman was a member of the Federal Council. That being said, there are ways of giving them a voice, for example by including positions taken by women at lower hierarchical levels—or by women’s associations—on the issues raised. This could for example fuel reflections on the

⁵ On relations between Switzerland and South Africa during apartheid, see Georg Kreis, *Die Schweiz und Südafrika 1948-1994: Schlussbericht des im Auftrag des Bundesrates durchgeführten NFP 42+* (Bern: Haupt Verlag, 2005); Sandra Bott, Bouda Etemad and Sébastien Guex, *Les relations économiques entre la Suisse et l’Afrique du Sud durant l’apartheid (1945-1990)* (Lausanne: Antipodes, 2005).

⁶ See for example Jovita Dos Santos Pinto et al., *Un/doing race. Racialisation en Suisse* (Zurich: Seismo, 2022).

⁷ On the subject of history’s silences on women, see for example Michèle Perrot, *Les femmes ou les silences de l’histoire* (Paris: Flammarion 1998).

rapprochement between the liberal and feminist agendas in the first half of the 1990s, in the context of the introduction of the Equality Act.⁸

⁸ See Nancy Fraser, “Feminism, Capitalism and the Cunning of History,” *New Left Review* 56 (2009): 97-117; on the Swiss case, Sarah Kiani, *De la révolution féministe à la Constitution* (Lausanne: Antipodes 2019).

Review by Marianne von Grünigen, formerly of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (EDA)

It has been a great pleasure to re-visit the year 1992 on the basis of the recent publication of *Documents Diplomatiques Suisses*. For Switzerland, 1992 was a year of growing multilateralism, containing remarkable successes, but also important defeats. At the time, I was the head of the Political Division for Peace, Security and Disarmament and I was closely involved with Switzerland's role at the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). My aim in commenting on the present discussion surrounding *Documents Diplomatiques Suisses 1992* is to contribute the former practitioner's perspective. I will particularly dwell on the strengthening of the CSCE and its successor organization over time, on the "soft" institutionalization of its involvement in various conflicts leading up to and including 1992, as well as on what I believe to be a turning point for more cooperation among the existing international organizations in Europe. The year 1992 was critical in this respect and *Documents Diplomatiques Suisses 1992* demonstrates this. It was above all a turning point after two decades of growing optimism for a more peaceful, secure, and democratic Europe.

On the basis of my own experience as a diplomat in the Swiss foreign service, I would argue that 1992 needs to be analyzed in the context of the developments in Europe that date back to the beginning of the CSCE process in 1972 in Dipoli, Finland. I will provide a brief background on the process for those who are not intimately familiar with the workings and the role of the CSCE. I will then dwell on the significance of the year 1992 for Switzerland's role at the CSCE in particular, before expanding on some of the other remarkable developments in Swiss foreign policy that the 1992 volume captures.

The so-called Conference on Security and Cooperation was the first political conference in Europe since World War II, where delegations of 35 countries from Eastern and Western Europe, as well as North America were sitting around one table in alphabetic order to elaborate guidelines for cooperation in all of Europe and North America. For Switzerland, which was not yet a member of UN, this was the first multilateral political conference it fully participated in since 1945. The negotiations also took place in Geneva and were concluded by the Final Act signed on 1 August 1975 in Helsinki by all heads of state or government of the participating states.

The CSCE was also important for Swiss foreign policy, because it had a considerable influence on civil societies, particularly in Eastern Europe. Its member states were obliged to publish the Final Act in their respective countries. In the Soviet Union and in Eastern as well as Western countries, citizens started to build so-called Helsinki Committees. In the 1980s, small changes began to occur in almost all Eastern European countries, most of which were initiated by the people. There were also changes in the Soviet Union with the ascent of Mikhail Gorbachev in March 1985. Under the headings of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, he launched various reforms within the Soviet Union, but achieved unequal results. His real successes occurred at the international level. His first meeting with US President Ronald Reagan in Geneva in November 1985 was significant. In their meeting, which was mediated by Swiss Federal President Kurt

Furgler, they established a whole agenda for bilateral negotiations, mostly on disarmament.¹ Meanwhile, in terms of multilateral diplomacy—in the UN and at the CSCE—Moscow evolved from an opponent to a partner. Yet internal problems within the USSR weakened central control. Instability both within the Soviet Union and beyond in its Eastern European sphere of influence led to popular uprisings and to the fall of many communist governments in 1989. The culmination was the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989. This event opened the gate for the populations of East and West to meet again and enabled the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic to finally unite on 3 October 1990.

The end of the Cold War between East and West, the *Wende* (“turn”) was celebrated as the beginning of a new chapter of world history. But what had to be kept in mind was that lasting equality could only be reached in a process of cooperation with the aim of overcoming lasting political, economic, and social differences. Cooperation of this kind was a precondition for lasting freedom, security, and peace. In politics and diplomacy, it was widely agreed that this process should take place in a multilateral forum and that the CSCE—which assembled European States as well as the United States and Canada—was an adequate place. In 1990, the CSCE organized the negotiation and adoption of the most important document to formalize and celebrate the *Wende*. The “Paris Charter for a New Europe” was a contemporary follow-up of the Helsinki Final Act and was signed by all of the CSCE’s Heads of State or Government on 21 November 1990 at a Summit Meeting in Paris. The negotiations on the Charter took place in Vienna from July until November 1990. For the last time, the ambassadors of neutral states were charged with the moderation and drafting of the three chapters on general principles (this task went to Sweden), future cooperation in Europe (this task went to Switzerland and hence became my responsibility), and the institutionalization of the CSCE (this task went to Finland). The deliberations took place in the atmosphere of a new departure in Europe. The Charter formally stated the end of the Cold War. It confirmed the ten Principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the Principles of the UN Charter, including the non-use of force and the disarmament. It enumerated new fields of cooperation, and better contacts to neighboring non-participating states such as Southern Mediterranean states.

When at a small preparatory committee in June, I dared to mention the necessity to also create instruments in order to avoid possible future conflicts in Europe, the response was one of astonishment that such a peace-loving neutral country like Switzerland would fear new conflicts. Nevertheless, the corresponding Swiss proposal to organize a CSCE-Conference on National Minorities in Geneva in 1991 was accepted. French President François Mitterrand personally supported the inclusion of the former Swiss proposal to create a mechanism for the peaceful settlement of disputes in the Charter. However, it was more difficult to achieve a consensus to create the necessary institutions for the implementation of the commitments that were signed in the Charter. Some participating states did not support the idea of changing the negotiating conference into an operational organization.

¹ See. Edouard Brunner, “Entretiens du Président de la Confédération Furgler et du Conseiller fédéral Aubert avec M. le Président Reagan et le Secrétaire général Gorbatchev, le 18.11.1985, à Genève,” 25 November 1985, <https://dodis.ch/59888>.

Some would have preferred that the CSCE become a “political” part of NATO—especially after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact—or of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. Some counted on the European Community to become the future common structure for the whole of Europe. The recent *Documents Diplomatiques Suisses* does well to hint at this nuance. The security architecture of Europe at the time was in flux. In the end, there emerged a consensus to maintain the “conference format” of the CSCE and to create a minimal structure for the implementation of the commitments of the Charter. It was decided to name one participating state as chair each year, with the relevant foreign minister being the chairman-in office. In addition, each year a ministerial meeting and every other year a summit meeting would take place in the country of the chair. The administrative structure was modest and decentralized: a small Secretariat in Prague, a Conflict Centre in Vienna, and an Office for Free Elections in Warsaw. For urgent crisis situations, a Committee of High Officials should convene in Prague. Yet few people believed that this Committee would ever meet.

Already in 1991 there were signs that the optimism of the *Wende* would not survive for a long time. In Yugoslavia, internal conflicts started to become violent. In the USSR, the position of Gorbachev was increasingly challenged by President of the Russian Republic Boris Yeltsin and by growing unrest in some parts of the country. The CSCE Conference on Human Rights in Moscow in September 1991 was directly affected by the aftermath of the coup against Gorbachev in August. At the meeting of the foreign ministers at the beginning of the conference, Gorbachev still gave a reception in the Kremlin. The next day, however, Yeltsin invited the participating ministers to the White House in Moscow, where he gave a speech on the subject of his future leadership. The end of USSR was close.

By 1992, the euphoria in Europe of 1990 had definitely come to an end. The USSR had collapsed and left behind conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan in Nagorno Karabakh, in Georgia with Abkhazia, in Moldova with Transnistria, and in Chechnya. In Yugoslavia, armed conflicts were on the rise between different populations both within the state itself and through interstate aggression. At the CSCE, the Committee of High Officials met almost every other week for two to three days in Prague, with intensive talks involving the parties in the conflict, but without tangible results. Hesitation towards the institutionalization of the Charter of Paris began to have negative consequences. The CSCE came into competition with NATO, the Council of Europe and the EC, many of which still hoped to integrate the CSCE in some way. Eastern European countries became members of each of these three organizations over time and no longer counted exclusively on the CSCE as they had done in 1990.

The CSCE held a ministerial meeting in Prague from 30-31 January 1992 to review the political situation in Europe and to prepare for the first summit meeting since 1990, which was scheduled to take place in Helsinki during the summer of 1992 (159-162). The President of the Confederation and Foreign Minister René Felber represented Switzerland at this meeting. In addition, he met Czech President Vaclav Havel for a bilateral talk in the Castle of Prague, mainly on the disintegration of the USSR and its influence on the process of democratization in Eastern Europe (28).

The summit meeting in Helsinki took place—after a preparation of several weeks—from 9-10 July 1992. Head of the Swiss delegation was Adolf Ogi, vice-president of the Confederation, who deputized for Felber

for health reasons from May until August (1992). The rapidly worsening international situation required conflict prevention and crisis management through stronger institutionalization for the promotion of security amongst the CSCE participating states. Consequently, the executive organ of the CSCE was enlarged to a troika consisting of the outgoing, the acting and the future chairman-in-office. The Committee of High Officials gained more competences, and the discussion to create a Secretariat with a secretary-general in Vienna began. It was obvious that the CSCE was too weak to create a military section, even for peacekeeping. Therefore, in the Final Document of the Helsinki summit meeting—entitled “The Challenges of Change”²—the participating states declared that CSCE would become a regional organization of the UN in accordance with Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. Moreover, the CSCE undertook a logistic cooperation initiative with NATO and began to send missions of enquiry to various conflict regions. The first of these was dispatched to Yugoslavia in 1992 under the direction of the Swiss international lawyer Thomas Fleiner. Alongside these missions, the CSCE developed specializations in long-term missions of enquiry, post-conflict reconstruction, and election monitoring.³ It is also important to remember that after long discussions on the war in Yugoslavia, the mechanism of “consensus minus one” was adopted and Yugoslavia was suspended on the basis of this consensus. This effectively cleared the way for the later accession of the newly independent former Yugoslav states.

To develop the results of the Geneva Conference on National Minorities of 1991, Helsinki created the High Commissioner on National Minorities in The Hague, the Forum for Security and Cooperation in Vienna, and the Economic Forum in Prague. It endorsed the 1992 Vienna Document on Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBM) as well as the negotiations on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE).³ To the satisfaction of Switzerland, the Swiss delegation, supported by the German and the French delegates, finally reached a consensus on the insertion in the document of the decision to create “a conciliation and arbitration court within the CSCE, enhancing the Valletta mechanism and establishing a CSCE procedure for conciliation including directed conciliation.”⁴ It also fixed a date from 12-23 October 1992 for further negotiations on procedures for a compulsory element on conciliation in Geneva. This entailed setting up a court of conciliation and arbitration. These additional negotiations led to the creation of the court in Geneva (287). Last, in order to strengthen the Human Dimension through direct activities, the Office for Free Elections was transformed into the Office for Democracy and Human Rights (ODIHR) in Warsaw, thereby gaining new functions to support democratization in all its aspects and to promote human rights. It hosts meetings on specific human rights problems, sometimes together with NGOs. It also plays a central role in the planning and organization of all kinds of CSCE missions of short and long duration, in particular the field missions for democratization and development of human rights and missions to observe elections.

² See Ogi, “KSZE-Gipfel von Helsinki (9./10. Juli 1992),” in Sacha Zala et al. (eds.), *Documents Diplomatiques de la Suisse 1992* (Bern, Dodis: 2023), 161.

³ CSCE, “CSCE Helsinki Document 1992: The Challenges of Change,” 9-10 July 1992, www.osce.org/files/f/documents/7/c/30530.pdf, Preamble, paragraph 11.

⁴ CSCE, “CSCE Helsinki Document 1992: The Challenges of Change,” Chapter III, paragraph 58.

Helsinki was a notable success that I want to stress. It is worth including in practical and academic discussions the fact that the delegates at last found a way to integrate the cooperation of non-governmental organizations (NGO) into the CSCE process. Ever since 1992, CSCE governmental delegations and NGOs have been meeting in the ODIHR on an annual basis to discuss the most pressing problems concerning human rights and democratic rules in participating states, as well as measures to solve them. At ministerial and summit meetings, NGOs may now assist, at least in a separate room linked by Zoom, and search for meetings with delegations for discussion on specific questions. They are admitted to opening and closing sessions. The various Helsinki Committees that still exist in particular appreciate these contacts with the governmental delegations.

I would argue that several of these steps strengthened the CSCE and that cumulatively, they contributed to a “soft” institutionalization of the conference’s role in various conflicts at the time. They enabled the CSCE to improve its posture in Europe and to cooperate more effectively with other existing international organizations in Europe. The provisions made in 1992 were crucial for this process and, by extension, they were helpful for Swiss foreign policy, as Switzerland had historically viewed the CSCE as an important pillar of its contribution to multilateral diplomacy in Europe. We have to understand these developments, which took place in 1992, in a wider context of European and world-wide events up to the present.

Overall, I experienced the year 1992 as a year of growing multilateralism for Switzerland. It was marked by remarkable successes, as well as important defeats. Having expanded on the subject of my own expertise in detail, I will now devote the remainder of my commentary to some of the other notable developments that *Documents Diplomatiques Suisses 1992* includes in its selection of documents. The collapse of the USSR and of Yugoslavia created a new challenge for the whole of Europe and obliged Switzerland to rethink its European and worldwide engagements. Switzerland recognized the newly independent states of the former USSR.

At the multilateral level, Switzerland joined the IMF and the World Bank. By including Poland, Azerbaijan and several new Central Asian States—with whom Vice-President Ogi had consulted during the Helsinki CSCE-Summit—it became possible to create a 24th seat in the Executive Council under the chairmanship of Swiss Minister of Finances, Federal Counsellor Otto Stich, which was nicknamed Helvetestan (163).⁵

In the meantime, it was a disappointment that Geneva lost the candidacy for the seat of two new United Nations offices. After long disarmament negotiations on chemical weapons in Geneva, the Office went to The Hague, and after the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio, the Secretariat went to New York in accordance with the decision of the newly elected Egyptian UN Secretary

⁵ See also n.a., “Réunion de la Délégation chargée de la constitution du groupe de la Suisse dans les institutions de Bretton Woods,” in Sacha Zala et al., eds., *Documents Diplomatiques de la Suisse 1992* (Bern, Dodis: 2023), 135-141; see also n.a., “Telefonkonferenz des Bundesrats vom 6. August 1992: IWF/Weltbank: Bildung einer Ländergruppe unter schweizerischer Leitung,” in Sacha Zala et al. (eds.), *Documents Diplomatiques de la Suisse 1992* (Bern, Dodis: 2023), 178-180; n.a., “Question du siège suisse dans les conseils d’administration des institutions de Bretton Woods,” in Sacha Zala et al., eds., *Documents Diplomatiques de la Suisse 1992* (Bern, Dodis: 2023), 251-253.

General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.⁶ However, the greatest defeat of the year was the negative popular vote on membership in the European Economic Area (EEA) negotiated between EFTA—where Switzerland was member—and the European Community (EC) (331-336). Confidential exchanges with other EFTA-members such as Austria, Finland, and Sweden had given the impression that EEA would only build a bridge for membership in the EC. These countries indeed soon became members of the EC, which had become the European Union (EU) in 1992. Thus, the Swiss government decided to deposit a Swiss request for membership to the EC before the vote on EEA. When this became public, many voters became unsecure as to whether they were voting for EEA or EC and voted negatively. Vice-President Ogi reacted with a clear public speech demanding to vote in favor of EEA. However, many citizens had already voted by correspondence. They then asked to recall their negative votes and vote in favor, which was of course impossible. With the refusal of the people to join the EFTA, Switzerland's relationship with the EU became one regulated by bilateral treaties on specific topics.

In the field of security policy, Switzerland had achieved some positive results and took up important topics for deeper reflexion. The growing participation of Switzerland in various kinds of peacekeeping and conflict prevention measures discussed above gave rise to study groups on neutrality, military defense, as well as to possible cooperation with NATO and the Western European Union (WEU) (348-351). After various interventions in Parliament, the Federal Council had charged the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (EDA) with examining the question of neutrality in the new international environment in 1991. A study group consisting of internal and external experts, as well as members of Parliament, presented a report in April 1992 with the conclusion that neutrality—despite having lost significance—should be preserved as long as Europe had not built a security structure that guaranteed equal security to all people (65-69). In future, Swiss foreign policy should concentrate on the legal obligations of neutrality and leave more political space to cooperate in the building of a European security system, as well as for actions against those violating public international law. The Directorate of Public International Law of the EDA cautioned lawmakers not to change Swiss traditional neutrality too much. Such a step would not be accepted by the people (199).

The extent to which Switzerland could go along with modifications in its policy of neutrality became a point of debate between the EDA and the Department of Defense (VBS). In light of the advent of new forms of conflict, the latter became eager to examine possibilities for further cooperation with NATO and the WEU at the European level. The revised neutrality concept opened the way to participate in sanctions by the UN and by the CSCE, to develop participation in peacekeeping operations, and to examine ways of specific cooperation with NATO and WEU. The documents contained in *Documents Diplomatiques Suisses 1992* invite further discussion on this point as well. After all, Switzerland was confronted with the fact that cooperation among the neutral states had gradually diminished. In the CSCE, the group of neutral and non-aligned states—the so-called N+N—was dissolved after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact in 1991. In October 1992, Swiss Defense Minister Kaspar Villiger invited the ministers of defense of the other neutral states to a meeting in order to discuss the status of neutrality in Europe (270-275). The meeting showed very

⁶ See. N.a., “Kampagne zugunsten Genfs als Sitz für die Kommission für nachhaltige Entwicklung,” in Sacha Zala et al. (eds.), *Documents Diplomatiques de la Suisse 1992* (Bern, Dodis: 2023), 323-326.

clearly that neutrality was no longer a basis for common political action. Two months later, the other neutral partners, especially Finland and Sweden, had opted for approaching NATO and WEU. Switzerland could not risk ending up in isolation in the field of security policy. It pursued a compromise through the intensification of dialogue and the exchange of information (348).

Many of these processes remain ongoing to date. That is why the publication of *Documents Diplomatiques Suisses 1992* is important for both academics and practitioners in Swiss foreign policy. I have argued that the year 1992 was an important year for Switzerland, as well as for the whole of Europe. Developments that year required politicians, diplomats, and civil society as a whole to reflect on the new situation after all the optimism of 1990. It was clear that Switzerland was part of Europe and that it should improve its role both on the continent and in the world, where “globalization” became more and more pronounced. Thus, cooperation on all levels and in manifold fields gained importance. In the field of security, Switzerland tried to use new opportunities in its own ways, actively in CSCE, opening up for new partnerships, but also maintaining its traditional protection by neutrality. The very important issue of Switzerland’s relationship with the European Union failed with the negative popular vote on the EEA. This landmark vote continues to influence relations with Brussels until today. In many fields, progress has been achieved with the help of international cooperation. In this respect, it is difficult to overstate the importance of multilateralism in Swiss foreign policy both prior to and since the end of the Cold War.

Response by Thomas Bürgisser and Sacha Zala, Diplomatic Documents of Switzerland

We would like to thank Stéphanie Ginalski and Marianne von Grünigen for their favorable and very insightful reviews as well as Georg Kreis for his well-founded introduction. The idea of inviting not only a scholar of transnational history, but an important diplomatic actor of the time to critically analyze the documents selected for our edited collection of primary sources, has proven to be fruitful. It allows both very different and mutually enriching perspectives on Swiss foreign policy in 1992. Surprisingly, unlike the broad coverage of the mainstream media in Switzerland, both authors have treated the centerpiece of the edition, the fateful vote on the European Economic Area, rather marginally. This is pleasing, because focusing on European economic integration otherwise would have obscured the numerous other facets of Switzerland's international relations, which both Ginalski and von Grünigen rightfully address. The reviewers reflect on the wide range of topics covered in the documents published in the volume. Our research group has worked for more than a year to narrow down a selection of primary source documents from an original pool consisting of millions of files. These represent the greatest possible variety of problems facing Switzerland's foreign policy makers in 1992.

For her part, Ginalski highlights those documents that show how Swiss foreign policy was challenged by the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. She addresses the rapprochement with NATO, relations with China and South Africa, and examines how Swiss diplomacy featured in the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, as well as the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). A story that still needs to be written in detail based on the newly accessible documents is how Switzerland remarkably became a member of the Bretton Woods institutions at the head of its own voting group despite the resistance of the United States. Ginalski also mentions the files that document a tightening of Switzerland's migration and refugee policy, as well as the handling of xenophobia and racism. She emphasizes that the government's efforts to protect Switzerland's economic interests are consistently evident in all these issues.

On the other hand, von Grünigen places the year 1992 in the context of the process of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The end of the East-West conflict fueled hopes that Europe would enter a new era of peaceful cooperation. This euphoria came to an end in 1992 at the latest, with the open appearance of armed conflicts not only in the former Yugoslavia, but also in the successor states of the Soviet Union. As the documents show, the CSCE diplomats, including von Grünigen herself, tried to strengthen the CSCE institutionally and to make it an effective instrument for conflict prevention and peacekeeping at the summit in Helsinki in July 1992. Von Grünigen also emphasizes that cooperation between the neutral states of Europe, which had been so fruitful within the CSCE process, came to an end in view of the new challenges of 1992.

In our response to the reviewers, we will not necessarily delve further into questions of content. As editors, it is our job primarily to present a selection of sources, not to interpret them conclusively. Our selection was not questioned by the reviewers, so we shall now rather shed light on an aspect that understandably tends to get neglected in most book reviews.

To put it somewhat dramatically: “The book is dead, long live the book!” Dodis’ research work in fact goes far beyond the 62 documents selected for the printed volume and discussed by the reviewers. As Ginalski correctly points out, we digitized around 1,800 file items from the Swiss Federal Archives in Bern for the 1992 edition and published them on our online database, enriched with valuable, cross-linked metadata on actors, organizations, and geographic entities. This is the primary work we do on sources. The quantity of hundreds of digitized sources and their metadata actually make it possible to delve into individual aspects of the history of international relations in incomparably greater detail than would be possible only with paper between two book covers. The multilingual (German, French, Italian, and English) online register for these documents comprises 254 thematic keywords, which cover diverse political issues, multilateral relations, actors and institutions, economic relations, migration, cooperation and development, security policy, as well as societal issues.¹

What we would like to emphasize is that apart from documenting “high politics”—fundamental foreign policy decisions and discussions within the government, central negotiations with key partner states, international ministerial conferences, foreign visits by government ministers, and state receptions—we also published a selection of documents on the “low politics” of Swiss foreign relations online. In this way, we offer an insight into the diversity of actors, processes, and decision-making in Swiss foreign relations that would have been lost if we had focused on central cabinet decisions only. We cannot anticipate the questions of future historiography. However, a broad editorial selection increases the chance that our sources will still be considered relevant in the years to come. For the year 1992, we have published numerous examples, including a proposal for federally mandated financial support for savings and loan cooperatives in Rwanda, a strategy document on return assistance for asylum seekers, and a memorandum on Swiss-Japanese cooperation in express mail matters.² Further examples include a memorandum on imports of stuffed toy animals from China, on the launch of an awareness campaign against sex tourism and prostitution, as well as a police report on the effects of the war in former Yugoslavia on the Balkan diaspora in Switzerland.³ Other documents include an analysis of the investment potential arising from the privatization of Guatemala’s electricity industry, a speech by the Swiss chairman of the Business Council for Sustainable Development held at the Rio Summit of 1992, and the transcript of a prominent phone call to outer space—the exclamation “Freude herrscht” (‘joy reigns’) from a member of the Swiss government when he congratulated the first ever Swiss astronaut on his success in a direct connection on the Space Shuttle Atlantis, became a catchphrase in Switzerland.⁴ Last, we have included a list of the women in the

¹ Dodis, “Index Dodis 1992: Thematic Register” dodis.ch/index/des/1992.

² “No 229/92. Rwanda: Appui aux coopératives d’épargne et de crédit (Banques Populaires),” 28 September 1992, dodis.ch/66289; Charles Raedersdorf, “Stellungnahme des EDA zum Rückkehrhilfekonzert des BFF (neue Wege zur Förderung der freiwilligen Rückkehr),” 15 June 1992, dodis.ch/62214; Peter Reinhardt, “Zusammenarbeit der Postdienste Japans und der Schweiz bei Eilsendungen,” 24 July 1992, dodis.ch/63378.

³ Anton Egger, “Einfuhr von Plüschtieren aus China,” 15 April 1992, dodis.ch/62878; Franz von Däniken, “Fachausschuss Frauenhandel, Sextourismus und Prostitution-Information,” 6 August 1992, dodis.ch/66118; Schweizerische Bundesanwaltschaft, “Sonderbericht: Auswirkungen des Bürgerkriegs im ehemaligen Jugoslawien auf die in der Schweiz lebende Emigration,” July 1992, dodis.ch/64340.

⁴ “Nr. 62. Guatemala: Elektrizitätswirtschaft, Mischfinanzierung,” 4 May 1992, dodis.ch/67029; Stephan Schmidheiny, “Chairman Business Council for Sustainable Development address UNCED Conference, Plenary Session, 5.6.1992,

circle of US President-elect Bill Clinton and their presumed roles in the new administration—the nomination of numerous female functionaries was regarded as a remarkable innovation at the time—and a request by then Senator Joseph R. Biden to receive cultural information about Switzerland for teachers at an elementary school in Wilmington, Delaware.⁵

There are hardly any limits to the variety of topics, and we conceptualize international relations in a broad sense, including the interplay between international, transnational, and domestic policy interactions. Some might contend that the Dodis database is a growing digital jungle in which it is easy to get lost. This is precisely what legitimizes the “dead” book and gives it a new-born meaning: the selected overview documents that we print in the volume, with their metadata and further links to the scientific apparatus, are above all a gateway and an orientation aid to the database. They also do not remain dead letters written on paper. We provide all transcribed documents on Dodis in XML (Extensible Markup Language) format. The elaborately tagged, machine-readable documents are easily reusable and can be freely used and processed open access by scholars worldwide. In this way, the book retains its relevance in a radically digital environment.

As the first edition of diplomatic documents worldwide, Dodis went online on 28 May 1997 at the *Palais des Nations* in Geneva and thus wrote a piece of pioneering Internet history. The Diplomatic Documents of Switzerland research center has always advocated open access to knowledge, and with its database, Dodis has consistently been among the vanguard of digital humanities. This programmatic adoption of the idea of open science is reflected in all Dodis publications, which implement open data, open access, and open source. The Dodis database offers access to documents which are central to the history of Swiss foreign policy and supplements these with research-based metadata, creating a unique, high-quality body of sources on the history of international relations after 1848. The database’s contents are freely available to all, at any time. In addition, information on the documents and their origin is available as open data, in a variety of formats, at opendata.dodis.ch for further use. Dodis implements a data management plan and observes the FAIR data principles as well as the Swiss Academy of the Humanities and Social Sciences’ open-science policy.⁶ All the *Diplomatic Documents of Switzerland* (DDS) print edition volumes are available for download on our website.⁷ In order to publish research based on sources freely provided by Dodis in a no-fuss, innovative manner and in open-access form, Dodis has developed two new serial publications: *Quaderni di Dodis* for monographs and edited collections, and *Saggi di Dodis* for shorter research papers.⁸ Both are peer-reviewed and available in all major e-book formats. Lastly, Dodis promotes the use of open-

Rio de Janeiro,” 5 June 1992, dodis.ch/62113; “STS-46. Lucerne / VIP Phone Call. Sequence of Voice Calls,” 19 August 1992, dodis.ch/62124.

⁵ Edouard Brunner, “Bill Clinton et les femmes...: les siennes et les autres,” 15 December 1992, dodis.ch/61253; Joseph R. Biden, Jr., “Correspondence to Edouard Brunner,” 20 March 1992, dodis.ch/61416.

⁶ Mark D. Wilkinson, Michel Dumontier, IJsbrand Jan Aalbersberg et al., “The FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship,” *Scientific Data* 3(2016), <https://doi.org/10.1038/sdata.2016.18>; Schweizerische Akademie der Geisteswissenschaften, “Open Science Policy,” sagw.ch/sagw/sagw/themen/wissenschaftskulturen/open-science/open-science-policy.

⁷ See Dodis, “Volumes,” dodis.ch/en/DDS-Volumes.

⁸ See Dodis, “Quaderni di Dodis,” dodis.ch/en/quaderni; Dodis, “Saggi di Dodis,” dodis.ch/en/saggi.

source software and actively participates in advancing relevant projects. A prominent example is Metagrid, a webservice which promotes links of biographic data between historical databases.⁹

Another issue we would like to emphasize, which tends to be forgotten in a review of our printed volumes, is the fact that the research group Dodis is incredibly fast to publish. We have already published the edition of 1993 and have since moved on the selection process for documents from 1994. The classification period for the vast majority of files in the Swiss Federal Archives is 30 years. Dossiers dating back to 1992 became freely accessible from 1 January 2023. On that very day, at the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve, our 1,800 or so documents went online. Those relating to 1993 were available on 1 January 2024, while the documents selected for 1994 will be accessible on Dodis on 1 January 2025. With our edition, we are breaking new ground in contemporary historical research. Yet this progressive annual rhythm also demands a lot from our research center. Unlike our sister editions abroad, such as the *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS), Dodis is not a government agency, but a project of independent research of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences. As such, it is subject to the same legal conditions as the general public.

It is true that in 1992, there were no women in the Swiss government and Ginalska has commented on the role of women in Swiss foreign policy in her review. The right to vote and to be elected for women was introduced in Switzerland only in 1971 (through a vote by male citizens). Women remained heavily underrepresented in the diplomatic corps throughout the 1990s and therefore appeared less frequently in the files than their male colleagues. As Ginalska puts it, this absence reflects the power structures of the time. On the other hand, Ambassador von Grünigen in particular, who in 1992 occupied an outstanding position as a top diplomat in the field of security, peace, and disarmament policy, is a weighty exception. That being said, if one looks at the number of people working on international matters in the entire Federal Administration, a certain trend reversal was already becoming apparent at the time. Of the approximately 1,800 documents selected for Dodis in 1992, 135 were written or co-authored by women. This does not include the more than 300 minutes of Federal Council decisions selected for the edition, which were signed by Hanna Muralt Müller, Switzerland's first female vice-chancellor. In the *longue durée* from the founding of the federal state in 1848 to the end of the Cold War, this still modest female presence in international relations seems almost groundbreaking. In 2022, three out of seven federal councilors were female. In this same year, all five state secretary posts, Switzerland's highest civil servant posts, were held by women. Among some of the diplomatic documents from 1992, some were written by two of these female state secretaries, Livia Leu and Christine Schraner, when they were at the beginning of their respective diplomatic careers.

We end our response to our reviewers with an anecdote taken from an older edition of the *Diplomatic Documents of Switzerland* series. In September 1977, William P. Bundy, editor of the quarterly review *Foreign Affairs*, wrote to Switzerland's highest-ranking diplomat at the time, Ambassador Albert Weitnauer. At Bundy's invitation, Weitnauer had written an article on Swiss foreign policy in *Foreign Affairs*. After reviewing the manuscript, however, the editor backed down. "The subject is potentially an interesting one, although the pace and degree of change in Swiss foreign policy are not such that one can make the subject

⁹ See metagrid.ch.

truly dramatic,” Bundy wrote. “As the manuscript stands, I am afraid it would strike most readers as quite bland and stating the fairly obvious for the most part.”¹⁰ Weitnauer was hit hard by the rejection. Offended, he snippily wrote back that, “Maybe I had better suggested to you a text on ‘The interest Swiss foreign policy presents despite its apparent boredom.’”¹¹

Just as international scholars often consider Switzerland to be a rather marginal player in world affairs, it is also clear that some of the sources we have edited are not necessarily perceived as exceptionally exciting. We can very well live with the fact that the sources we research will rarely represent the core of the international scholarly community’s preoccupations. However, Dodis can be of interest to an international audience due to its free access, the solid presentation of its data and, most importantly, the publication of the documents in perfect time—30 years after the events—when the archives open. We are, indeed, the first research project in the world to be able to present a thoroughly and systematically researched, broad selection of official sources on foreign relations up to and including 1993. In their reviews, both Ginalski and von Grünigen emphasized the strong connection between certain topics from 1992 and our present. What collective security structures does Europe need in order to effectively prevent and contain conflicts? How can industrialized, emerging, and developing countries work together to protect the environment and combat global warming and its consequences? Through the lens of Swiss diplomacy, historical conclusions can be drawn about international events that go far beyond the significance of a small European state. Dodis is indeed a powerful icebreaker in the yet unexplored frozen sea of unreleased diplomatic documents.

¹⁰ William P. Bundy, “Correspondence to Albert Weitnauer,” 6 September 1977, dodis.ch/49401.

¹¹ Albert Weitnauer, “Correspondence to William P. Bundy,” 14 September 1977, dodis.ch/49327.