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| Committee: DISEC |
| Topic: The Issue of Afghanistan |
| Country: Switzerland |

**POSITION PAPER**

 Switzerland, officially the Swiss Confederation, is a landlocked country at the confluence of Western, Central and Southern Europe. It is a federal republic composed of 26 cantons, with federal authorities based in Bern. Switzerland is bordered by Italy to the south, France to the west, Germany to the north and Austria and Liechtenstein to the east. The Swiss population of approximately 8.5 million. The four national languages of Switzerland are German, French, Italian and Romansh.

 In 2002, the Government of Switzerland established the Cooperation Office in Kabul to support the stabilization and reconstruction of the war-torn country. Today, the Swiss Cooperation Office runs and supervises a development and humanitarian aid program with an annual turnover of a minimum of CHF 27 million for the years 2019 – 2022 as well as an additional CHF 33 million to bolster aid on the ground and alleviate the suffering of the Afghan population. In all, we have earmarked CHF 60 million for Afghanistan over the next 16 months.

 The Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs fully supports the United Nations' plan for a political solution in Afghanistan, which was approved by the Security Council on 14 November 2001, and we are still willing to contribute to the measures the UN adopts for this purpose. In fact, a detachment from our army had reached Kabul, where it will work closely with U.S. forces to assess the situation.

 Cooperation between Afghanistan and Switzerland did not just start in 2002 after the fall of the Taliban. In the early seventies, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) already sent specialists to northern Afghanistan to teach farmers how to produce cheese. At the same time, other Swiss specialists were involved in water projects. After the invasion by Soviet troops in 1979, however, the SDC withdrew from Afghanistan and resumed its work from its base in Pakistan. During the eighties and nineties, we provided humanitarian assistance to mainly internally displaced persons and Afghan refugees through multilateral channels such as UNHCR, WFP and ICRC in the country as well as in Pakistan and Iran. Starting in 1997, we actively participated in the Afghanistan Support Group (ASG), a donor aid coordination mechanism that existed until 2001. Moreover, boosting donor aid became the focus of the conference which we held in Geneve, Switzerland, again, under the auspices of the UN this year.

 We support Afghanistan's pathway leading out of fragility and out of poverty. We contribute to reduce poverty, human suffering, and loss of life in Afghanistan by promoting social cohesion and a peaceful society with effective, accountable and inclusive institutions for all people to be safe and live-in dignity. To this end, we contribute to increase the respect of human rights and improve protection of vulnerable population groups, in particular returnees and internally displaced people (IDPs). Furthermore, we contribute to improve rural livelihoods and promotes access to quality education.

 As Switzerland, we are going to find solutions to the Afghanistan’s situation of soldiers, civilians, armed interest groups, and the UN forces that are in the region and overlooked issues in this simulation.

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