



Lateinamerikanische Handelskammer in der Schweiz
Cámara de Comercio Latinoamericana en Suiza
Câmara de Comércio Latino-Americana na Suíça
Chambre de Commerce Latino-Américane en Suisse

Federal Councillor Calmy-Rey at Latcam AGM 2010

The Latin American Chamber of Commerce (Latcam) held its annual general meeting on June 16, 2010 at the Hotel Savoy Baur en Ville, Zurich. This year, the Chamber was particularly honored to have Federal Councillor Madame Micheline Calmy-Rey as keynote speaker.

The annual general meeting, preceding FC Calmy-Rey's appearance, was devoted to a review of Latcam's activities and operations in 2009. Dr. Richard Friedl, President, launched the event with his Annual Report 2009. Dr. Friedl emphasized that despite the global economic downturn, the countries of Latin America had fared relatively well due to an overall sound economic and fiscal policies. He then turned his attention to Latcam activities in 2009 and relations with partner networks. Of note was the appearance of top calibre speakers at Chamber events, including Daniel Vasella, Novartis, Peter Brabeck, Nestlé and Pedro-Pablo Kuczynski, Former Prime Minister of Peru.

Furthermore, 2009 was the first year that Latcam organized its now annual Latin American Day with Osec. Indeed, the Chamber's collaboration with Osec has gone from strength to strength, with the two organizations partnering on several projects to promote Swiss business in Latin America. Dr. Friedl also noted that the Chamber's relations with the GRULAC (Ambassadors from Latin America and Caribbean Countries), SECO and EDA were extremely dynamic and thanked all key actors for their ongoing support of the Chamber. Finally, the members approved several new board representatives – Stefan Birrer, Bühler Management, Joaquin Fischer, Mercantil Bank (Schweiz), Jürg Haller, UBS and Dr. Daniel Brunner, ZKB,.

Taking some precious time out of a very busy schedule, Federal Councillor Calmy-Rey, made her keynote speech following the networking cocktail. The Federal Councillor observed that relations between Switzerland and the Latin American countries are not taking place in a vacuum. These have come about because Switzerland and Latin America share common cultural roots, leading to a "like-mindedness" between the two. Economic relations are greatly facilitated by this shared vision of legal, economic and political values, however, there is still untapped potential in the area of trade and investment. The Federal Councillor concluded that her priority is to further intensify collaboration between Switzerland and the countries of Latin America in a variety of areas, including environmental protection and human rights (on the multilateral level) and in business, science and research (on the bilateral level). *dps*

