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Directorate of Political Affairs DPA
Political Affairs Division II, The Americas

Latin American Chamber of Commerce in Switzerland

Recent Political Developments in Switzerland's Relationship with Latin America, and Implications for Swiss Business

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Latin America in a Changing World

- Latin America on the fringe of traditional partners' attention in the past years
- Rediscovering Latin America's huge potential
- Sustained efforts to build more democratic, more just and more prosperous societies
- Strong ideological debate in a context characterised by considerable challenges
- General renewal of interest for Latin America



The Interest of New Actors in Latin America

- New actors in a multipolar world: China, Russia, India
- Race for natural resources in order to sustain growth
- Investments in Latin America in energy and mining sectors
- Asia as a target market for Latin American exports
- Russia's strategic rapprochement with Latin America
- Renewal of US relations with Latin America



Regional Leaders in Latin America

- Brazil as an increasingly important actor
- Regional leaders as bridge between the South and the North



Switzerland's Interests with regard to Latin America

- Political interests: Political stability, security, social justice and the defense of shared values
- Historic and cultural links: like-mindedness+
- Economic interests: Access to markets, trade and investments opportunities, investment climate



Strengthening Relations with our Latin American Partners

- Strategic partnership with Brazil
- Regular political consultations with several countries in the region
- Frequent high level meetings



Implications for Swiss Business?

- Subjects of economic interest on the agenda of the bilateral talks
- Opening doors and reinforcing the Swiss network with foreign authorities
- 18 Swiss Embassies in Latin America providing services



Development Cooperation and Global Issues

- New priorities of Swiss development cooperation in Latin America:
 - Economic development cooperation by seco (Colombia, Peru)
 - Development cooperation by SDC/Cosude (Central America, Bolivia)
 - Resources to tackle issues of major global importance (climate change, migration, food security and water)
- Increased collaboration between public and private sector in the area of development cooperation



Cooperation in the Area of Science and Technology

- Establishing institutionalized cooperation with Brazil and Chile
- Exploring opportunities to extend cooperation to other countries in the future
- Opportunities for cooperation between public and private actors



Conclusion: the Swiss Foreign Policy Contribution

- Switzerland as a useful partner
- Promotion of a more stable environment
- Strengthening relations with Latin American partners
- All the more important in the current global crisis



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Thank you !