

Your message to the FDFA dated 23 April 2024

From Maya Tissafi | sts.mena@eda.admin.ch

May 14, 2024 at 5:14:46 AM EDT

To Marshall Goldman | [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Goldman

Thank you for your letter dated 23 April, to which I reply on behalf of Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis.

I share your concern about the situation in the Middle East and the recent attacks on Israel. Switzerland has condemned the Iranian military attacks in the UN Security Council on 14 April as they considerably increase the risk of further escalation in the region. Switzerland has been using its bilateral contacts with Iran since 7 October 2023 to make it clear to the Iranian government that it should refrain from attacks and provocations, and use its close ties with armed groups in the region to prevent further regional escalation. As part of its mandate as a protecting power, Switzerland also keeps open the channel of communication between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran in order to help defuse tensions and avoid misunderstandings and miscalculations.

For many years, Switzerland has participated in all UN sanctions and a large number of EU sanctions against Iran, including financial and travel sanctions. As recently as 18 October 2023, Switzerland maintained sanctions against individuals and entities involved in Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile programs, as well as sectoral measures (originally stemming from the JCPOA Annex) based on EU measures. Also, with regards to the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), many of its members, including high-ranking officers are sanctioned in Switzerland and are therefore subject to travel restrictions and financial sanctions. The IRGC itself - as well as the Qods Force - and many other IRGC-related entities are also subject to financial sanctions. Switzerland prosecutes and condemns terrorism of any origin and form, including acts of preparation and support, as a serious criminal offence.

I can assure you that Switzerland will continue to stand up for the observance of human rights and against violence in Iran. We use the regular and critical dialogue with the Iranian government to persistently demand precisely these points, as we did for the last time on 22 April 2024 during the political consultations with Iran in Bern. The FDFA discussed the regional situation with the Iranian delegation and called on Iran to cease all violent actions against Israel and in the region in general, including via Iran-affiliated groups such as Hezbollah or groups in Syria and Iraq.

Best regards

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