Swiss Security Forum (SSF)




## Keynote speeches



**Major General Thomas Starlinger**
Military Representative of Austria to the European Union and NATO



**Dr. Markus Mäder**
State Secretary for Security Policy

## Panel discussion | Moderation Fredy Müller, Managing Director SSF



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State Secretary for Security Policy



**Dr. Urs Loher**
Director, Federal Office for Armaments armasuisse



**Dr. Marcel Berni**
Lecturer Strategic Studies ad interim, Military Academy (MILAK) ETH Zurich



**Dr. Wolfram Kuoni**
Chairman of the Board of Directors, Ferrexpo AG

**Invitation to the 17th FSS Security Talk**

# "The Rules-Based International Order Under Pressure – Challenges for the West and Switzerland"

Dear members, interested parties, and guests,

Russia and China have reaffirmed their "friendship without borders" on the occasion of President Putin's recent state visit to Xi Jinping in Beijing. The deepened partnership and cooperation between the two superpowers is based on **clear strategic interests**. Mutual political support and growing economic exchange are just one side of the partnership. On the other hand, there is a **much larger goal at stake**, namely the replacement of the rules-based (western) world order that has dominated the world for many decades. Moscow and Beijing are using every opportunity to assert their influence in numerous countries and conflict regions.

The West, especially Europe and the EU - driven by the idea of "change through trade" - have stood idly by for far too long. The USA, as a strategic rival of the two superpowers, recognized the danger early(er) and tried to curb their influence and that of other autocratic states. With varying degrees of success.

The struggle for geopolitical supremacy is in full swing, and "**the change of history in real time**" could be observed first hand in recent years.

- What is the background to these geopolitical changes?
- How long can the current rules-based world order be maintained? What does this mean for the West?
- What are the security and arms policy consequences of these developments for the West, Europe and Switzerland?
- What does this mean for the global economy and the well-being of individual countries and people?

We would like to invite you to discuss these important topics and challenges with experts at the **17th FSS Security Talk**.

We look forward to your participation!

Sincerely yours

**Hans-Jürg Käser**

President

Swiss Security Forum (SSF)

**Fredy Müller**

Managing Director

Swiss Security Forum (SSF)

# Program

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| 17:30 | **Arrival of the guests** | |
| 18:00 | **Welcome speech** | **Hans-Jürg Käser,** President of the FSS |
| | **Turning point – a multipolar world order and its consequences for security and the economy** | **Major General Thomas Starlinger,** Military Representative of Austria to the EU and NATO |
| | **The rules-based international order under pressure – challenges for the West and Switzerland** | **Dr. Markus Mäder,** State Secretary for Security Policy |
| 19:00 | **Panel discussion and Q&A session** | |
| | Panel guests : | **Major General Thomas Starlinger,** Military Representative of Austria to the EU and NATO |
| | | **Dr. Markus Mäder,** State Secretary for Security Policy |
| | | **Dr. Urs Loher,** Director, Federal Office for Armaments armasuisse |
| | | **Dr. Marcel Berni,** Lecturer Strategic Studies ad interim, Military Academy (MILAK) ETH Zurich |
| | | **Dr. Wolfram Kuoni,** Chairman of the Board of Directors, Ferrexpo AG |
| | Moderation: | **Fredy Müller,** Managing Director SSF |
| 20:00 | **Apéro** | |

We would like to thank our event partners and annual partnerships!

CSS ETH Zürich

VMG Verband Militärischer Gesellschaften Schweiz
ASM Association des sociétés militaires suisses
ASM Associazione delle società militari svizzere

Höhere Kaderausbildung MILAK

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- Free and privileged participation in all SSF networking events,
- Access to a network of high-calibre decision-makers and experts from Switzerland and abroad with links to the topic of security,
- The opportunity to actively participate in and have a say in the SSF.

Registration at: www.forum-sicherheit-schweiz.ch/mitglied-werden | or contact our secretariat: sekretariat@forum-sicherheit-schweiz.ch | +41 44 533 04 00

# Short biography of the speakers | panelists

**Major General Thomas Starlinger** took up his current position as Austria's military representative to the EU and NATO in Brussels in July 2023. Prior to this, he was National Security Advisor to the Austrian Federal President and Commander-in-Chief of the Austrian Armed Forces Alexander Van der Bellen from February 2017 to June 2023. During the expert government of Brigitte Bierlein, he served as Austria's Minister of Defense for just over half a year. Major General Starlinger also served in several UN peacekeeping missions in Syria (UNDOF), Iran (UNAFHIR), Cyprus (UNFICYP) and Tajikistan (UNMOT) and was commander of the Multinational Task Force South in the KFOR mission in Kosovo.

As State Secretary for Security Policy, **Dr. Markus Mäder** has held overall responsibility for SEPOS, which ensures a coherent and forward-looking security policy at federal level, since the beginning of this year. He was previously Head of International Relations Defense from 2016 to 2023. From 2015 to 2016, he studied at the National War College of the National Defense University in Washington D.C. and graduated with a Master of Science in National Security Strategy. He served in several foreign assignments for the VBS, including as Swiss Defense Attaché for Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran in Islamabad from 2011 to 2015, as Deputy Military Representative at the Swiss Mission to NATO in Brussels from 2007 to 2010 and as a staff officer in the international peacekeeping mission KFOR in Kosovo in 2001.

**Dr. Urs Loher** took over the role of Head of Armaments on 1 August 2023 from Martin Sonderegger, who had reached his normal retirement age. From 2019 until his appointment as Director of the Federal Armaments Office, he was CEO of Thales Suisse AG and President of the Aeronautical, Security & Defence (ASD) industry sector at Swissmem. Prior to that, he had been with Rheinmetall Air Defence AG since 2012, where he got to know the supplier side of procurement projects and progressed to CEO/Head of Global Program and Key Account Management through a variety of roles. In addition to his professional career, he is a Colonel in the General Staff of the army.

**Dr. Marcel Berni** has been a lecturer for Strategic Studies ad interim at the Military Academy (MILAK) at ETH Zurich since this year. Previously, he had already worked as a research assistant at the Department of Strategic Studies for almost ten years and took over as its deputy in 2022. In 2020, he published his doctoral thesis on communist prisoners in the Vietnam War, which won the André Corvisier Prize for the best military history dissertation.

**Dr. Wolfram Kuoni** has been Chairman of the Board of Directors of Ferrexpo AG, based in Baar and listed on the LSE in London, since 2007. Ferrexpo owns Europe's largest iron ore mine (8,000 employees) in the Ukraine (Poltava) and operates a port in Odesa. Ferrexpo has been massively affected by the war in Ukraine.
He studied law at the University of Bern and wrote his dissertation on the federal export risk guarantee. He is Managing Partner of Kuoni Rechtsanwälte AG.