



Préambule e CdA 2022 for Homepage Association Suisse des Troupes Historiques

Thanks to the Swiss Association of Historical Troops, it is possible to better understand certain aspects of our country's history. Moreover, the cultivation of memory can help future generations to understand the decisions of their fathers and grandfathers. Things were not better in their times, but they were different.

Since the Sonderbund War of 1847, we Swiss have succeeded in holding off military threats from outside - that means 175 years without armed conflicts on our own soil. Our militia army, and with it the population's will to defend itself, have played a significant role in this. The generations before us did many things right. We all owe them our thanks for that.

But will the recipes for success of the past also suffice for the future?

The present is already characterised by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. We live in the VUCA¹ world. The fact is that never before in history have there been so many changes in such a short time. These changes are driven by the four global forces of urbanisation, demography, climate change and the fourth industrial revolution. The four forces are changing our world, are proceeding exponentially and can no longer be stopped.

The changes also affect the threats. Modern threats can be categorised less clearly, because today's conflicts follow a classic escalation process less than in the past. Rather, the line between war and peace is becoming blurred. The pattern consists of a combined use of non-military and military means, of deploying fighting troops on foreign territory without signs of sovereignty.

They use a variety of means, biological, chemical, even improvised, as well as different systems, from very simple to complex technology such as drones. These actions are accompanied by political and economic pressure, disinformation and propaganda campaigns, and cyberattacks; cyber does not replace existing threats, but on the contrary makes them even more dangerous.

With the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24.02.2022, war is back in Europe. A first insight from this is that national defence remains the *raison d'être* of the army. And we must have the courage to put preparations for this type of operation back at the centre.

The Armed Forces must consistently align themselves with modern threats so that we can still fulfil our missions in 2030 and beyond. The basis for this is the Vision 2030 of the Defence sector; this vision is implemented with 21 Strategic Initiatives. In concrete terms, the aim is to guarantee security in the long term - in order to secure the conditions for Switzerland's success in the future as well.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Swiss Association of Historical Troops for continuing to stand up for security and freedom together with the Armed Forces.

¹ Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity

Chief of the Armed Forces

Lieutenant General Thomas Süssli