

The Importance of Geneva to the United Nations

Address

by Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky

Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations

Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva

at the Seminar on the United Nations for Swiss Parliamentarians

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Mr. President,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I accepted the invitation to participate in our meeting today with great satisfaction. The dialogue with the parliamentarians whose decisions affect both national and international affairs is part and parcel of our work. Our dialogue with you is of particular importance. For the UN, Switzerland is not just a host country. It is our good partner and supporter for more than half a century. With this in mind I would like to outline the major recent developments at the Geneva UN Headquarters with the hope that this will help you to better understand what we are doing here and what role the UN is playing in this city.

To begin with, I would like to stress that "Geneva International" is unique in many respects. The birth place of the first international organization, the League of Nations, in which Switzerland played an active role, Geneva is now the second largest UN center in the world. While New York is preoccupied mainly with political deliberations and acts as well in strategic decision-making, Geneva

