
Switzerland National Day Special

Working together toward a future of vitality

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What does vitality mean to us? How can we foster vitality at the individual and societal levels? How can Switzerland and Japan join forces to tackle common challenges — climate change, global health

or aging societies? On Aug. 1 we celebrate the 731st birthday of the Swiss Confederation, but also the first event of Vitality.Swiss, a public diplomacy program driven by my embassy on the road to the 2025 World Expo in Osaka.

The purpose of Vitality.Swiss? Exploring solutions and scenarios for a prosperous and vitalized future along three themes: a healthy life, human-centered innovation and a sustainable planet. Our inaugural project, which opens Monday at Aichi Triennale, focuses on

the future of architecture: “Collaborative Constructions” consists of robotically built timber installations designed by ETH Zurich and the University of Tokyo. The project explores digital fabrication and circularity.

Our countries are innovation champions with few natural resources. Our long-standing friendship is rooted in common values: democracy, multilateralism and a rules-based international order. These close bonds were highlighted once again in April, when Swiss President Ignazio Cassis visited Japan and met with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

Security and the war in Ukraine were high on their agenda, along with the election of Switzerland and Japan to the U.N. Security Council for 2023-24. Digitalization, science and bilateral trade were other focal points of the president’s visit. Japan is our largest Asian investor and ranks eighth as an export market for Switzerland.

On the science front, the president broke ground in Osaka for a new Swiss Consulate dedicated to research and education. The con-

sulate will boost cooperation in research and development and academic relations, including in the buildup to the 2025 Expo.

What’s next? This autumn, a group of Swiss parliamentarians, members of the Foreign Policy Commission of the National Council, will travel to Japan for exchanges with their Japanese counterparts. People-to-people encounters are — hopefully — back on track after the long COVID-19 hiatus.

Following the launch of the Vitality.Swiss program and website, we will explore health, innovation and sustainability through multiple angles: management, economics, design, startups, food, medical technology, clean technology, performing arts, regional revitalization and much more.

And you – what does vitality mean to you? Join us and let us know!

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