

Switzerland

# The federal council ignores the country's neutrality

## No to PESCO participation!

Statement of the "Swiss Peace Movement SFB"

On 21 August 2024, the Federal Council decided to join two PESCO (Permanent Structured Co-operation) projects. In doing so, the Swiss government is taking a further step towards the NATO war alliance and increasingly undermining Switzerland's neutrality and independence. The "Swiss Peace Movement" sharply criticises this decision.

PESCO is described as a military Schengen and includes free military transport within Europe as a central element. Although PESCO is sold as a European Union project, it is clearly part of the larger NATO co-operation at military level. The strategic objectives are explicit: To "actively support" the NATO Supreme Command (SACEUR) and to "fulfil NATO obligations".

### Troop deployments through Switzerland?

According to the Federal Council, Switzerland will participate in the "Military Mobility" and the "Cyber Ranges Federation" projects. By participating in "Military Mobility", it will be possible to process "applications for cross-border transports and relocations" i.e. for the transport of weapons and NATO troops through Switzerland, in a shorter space of time.

NATO official *Boris Ruge* has already stated that Switzerland's accession to PESCO would allow NATO to deploy "very large forces in a short space of time" "in the event of a conflict on the eastern flank". In plain language: The NATO war alliance could therefore send war material or even troops to the front more quickly in the event of a war with Russia with the help of Switzerland. What this means for the Swiss population is clear: In the worst-case scenario, there is a risk

that Switzerland could become a target in such a war to prevent the supply of troops.

The "Cyber Ranges Federation" project involves military cooperation in cyberspace. As the EU explained in a strategy paper, the "distinction between war and peace" is unclear in cyberspace. Switzerland could therefore wage cyber wars with other NATO countries in the future because the law of neutrality does not formally cover cyberspace. There is also a risk that Switzerland could be drawn into non-digital wars through provocations in cyberspace.

### Breach of neutrality

The "Swiss Peace Movement" strongly condemns the Federal Council's decision to join PESCO. It is a clear breach of the law of neutrality. The *Hague Conventions*, which enshrine the law of neutrality under international law, clearly state that a neutral country may not "tolerate" belligerents "passing troops or columns of ammunition or supplies through the territory of a neutral power".

By participating in PESCO, NATO countries that are known to be involved in various wars – including the ongoing US war on terror – are allowed to transport troops and ammunition through Switzerland. By joining PESCO, the Federal Council is advancing Switzerland's involvement in the military structures of the NATO war alliance and demonstratively siding with the Western military bloc. If you want to secure peace, say no to NATO, no to PESCO and no to this warmongering Federal Council.

Source: <https://www.friedensbewegung.ch/2024/08/29/nein-zur-pesco-beteiligung/>, 29 August 2024

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