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## The Federal Authorities of the Swiss Confederation

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### Federal Council addresses the situation in Ukraine

**Bern, 26.03.2014 - The Federal Council today has condemned Russia's annexation of Crimea. It has taken note of the sanctions imposed by the European Union and the United States, and has decided to take all measures necessary to prevent Switzerland from being used to evade any of these sanctions. It will also strengthen coordination between the federal departments to analyse and monitor the situation in Ukraine.**

Since the crisis began, Switzerland has been closely observing developments in Ukraine and the measures that have been taken by the international community. While maintaining political neutrality and dialogue with all parties, the Swiss authorities have decided to freeze any possible assets held by the former Ukrainian president and his entourage in Switzerland, to halt exports of war materiel to Russia, to put on hold negotiations on a free trade agreement with Russia together with member states of the EFTA, and to provisionally stop a training programme for the Russian military.

The Federal Council is concerned about the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine. It has condemned the breaches of national and international law that have taken place such as the referendum of 16 March 2014, which it considers to have been in violation of the Ukrainian constitution and therefore illegal. Furthermore, Russia's annexation of Crimea contravenes international law and the principle of the territorial integrity of states in particular. With this action, which also runs counter to the Helsinki Final Act, Russia has violated its international obligations under several bilateral and multilateral treaties.

The Federal Council is calling on all parties to work for a political solution to the conflict and to respect human rights, including the rights of minorities without discrimination based on race, sex, language or religion. It welcomes the commitment shown by various international partners, particularly the decision of the OSCE Permanent Council on 21 March 2014 to deploy an observer mission to Ukraine.

The Federal Council has also noted the sanctions that have been taken by some members of the international community, and has stated that the European Union's decision to impose Schengen visa restrictions also applies to Switzerland. It has also decided that Switzerland take all measures necessary to prevent its territory being used to evade any of the current or future sanctions imposed by the international community. The Federal Council reserves the right to reimpose all or a part of the sanctions decreed by the European Union, United States or other countries depending on how the situation evolves.

It will continue to closely monitor the measures adopted by the EU and the United States as well as developments in Ukraine. To this end, the Federal Council is strengthening coordination between the federal departments at the technical level and will be guided by the work undertaken within this framework, obtaining regular updates which will enable it to take the necessary decisions as quickly as possible.

At the same time, the Federal Council underlines the importance of direct talks with all partners to find a political solution to the conflict and will continue to work for de-escalation and dialogue. This also falls within the remit of Switzerland's chairmanship of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) this year.

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