

Madam President of the National Council,
Mr Federal Councillor,
[Mr Foreign Secretary],
Excellencies,
Madam President of the Locarno Film Festival,
Mr Mayor of the City of Locarno,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Locarno significa molto per me.

Amo il cinema, in particolare quello britannico, e da anni
seguo le proiezioni sulla Piazza Grande. Ma la città ha un
valore speciale anche per un altro motivo: è qui che è
cresciuto mio nonno ticinese. Per questo è un vero
piacere salutarvi oggi in una regione che mi sta
particolarmente a cuore, al termine di questa Giornata
della Diplomazia.

My colleague Maja Riniker will speak about the role of
cinematic storytelling in diplomacy.

I, in turn, will look at it the other way around – at how
diplomacy is portrayed in film. Actually, it is not a frequent
topic on screen — with notable exceptions such as the
excellent Netflix series *The Diplomat* or the British political
satire *In the Loop*. Or take *Argo*, the Oscar-winning thriller
about the rescue of US diplomats during the Iran hostage
crisis, with the famous rescue scene involving the Swissair
plane (by the way, dear Maja, the actual plane used was
called “Aargau”).

And tonight, we'll watch *The Deal* on the Piazza, a Swiss political miniseries about the Iran nuclear negotiations, in which Switzerland acted as a host and facilitator. I'm looking forward to it.

Diplomacy can be just as gripping, complex, and consequential as any work of fiction.

Perhaps that's why I once tried to become a diplomat myself.

Mr Federal Councillor, did you know that I once applied for the diplomatic service exam to start a career at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs? Shortly afterward, however, my election to Parliament steered me in a different direction: politics, rather than diplomacy. With the interesting twist that a mandate in Bern allows one to engage in *parliamentary* diplomacy.

It involves of course the official trips linked to a presidency of a Council, which have taken me to Brazil and several European capitals since January, and which will soon take me to China and Japan. London, in July, stood out: I met with the Lord Speaker and had the chance to attend the weekly ritual of Prime Minister's Questions in the House of Commons: witnessing these verbal jousts was truly filmworthy.

But parliamentary diplomacy goes beyond official visits. It also means representing Parliament in international bodies. I had the privilege of chairing the Swiss delegation

to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a delegation I am still part of. A few weeks ago, the IPU hosted in Geneva the presidents of almost all of the world's parliaments - 102. That was multilateral parliamentary diplomacy at work, with Switzerland at the center.

In a time when geopolitics is undergoing profound changes, when international trade is subject to the shifting moods of a single leader, and when even the scriptwriters of *House of Cards* would be outpaced by reality, diplomacy can contribute to maintaining a minimum of stability in this world.

One hundred years ago, the Locarno Treaties aimed to do just that, to guarantee collective security in Europe after the First World War. The Treaties were born here, and [as you know] were sealed in London. You've heard a lot about them today – and rightly so.

Their deep message still matters: diplomacy can chart a path to peace, even after war, even across mistrust.

The “spirit of Locarno” did not last long. History showed us how fragile peace is. But like in film, what stays with us is not just the ending, it's everything that happens along the way.

Today, Europe's collective security is again at stake. Diplomacy again matters. And Locarno's spirit still speaks to us.

2025-08-11 Diplomacy Day – Dinner Welcome Speech by President of the Council of States Andrea Caroni

Including at this Festival, which does so much more than screen films. It sparks dialogue. Across disciplines. Across borders. This Diplomacy Day is a case in point. Thanks to the Festival, to my “could-have-been” employer, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, and all involved for making it happen.

And now, over to Madam President of the National Council Maja Riniker – who steps into the next scene, with the spirit of Locarno in her script.