Viola Amherd Becomes President of the Swiss Confederation
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The Swiss American Historical Society maintains ties with the Embassy of Switzerland and many of our members have an interest in both Swiss and American politics. 2024 begins a new presidency in Switzerland under the leadership of Viola Amherd who began her term on January 1. Born in the canton of Valais in 1962, Amherd was mayor of Brig and then represented her home canton in the Swiss National Council from 2005-18. She was then elected to the Federal Council and served as Vice President from 2023-24. Amherd is the ninth woman to serve as President of the Swiss Confederation.

Ms. Amherd was elected President by the Federal Assembly on December 13, 2023. She is a member of the Centre political party, and is also head of the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport (the first woman to head this department). Amherd has advocated strengthening the Swiss Armed Forces and opposes the possibility of Switzerland joining NATO. In her New Year’s speech, she called for “respect and courage” (see more at https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/politics/new-year-s-speech--swiss-president-calls-for-respect-and-courage/49095722).

Presidents of Switzerland serve a one-year term. It is a rotating presidency between federal ministers. To learn more about the presidency and those who have served in it, this website has biographies and images of all Swiss Presidents: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_presidents_of_the_Swiss_Confederation.

In the U.S., as all readers are likely well aware, we will have a presidential election on November 5, 2024. As of this publication, it seems likely to be a rematch from 2020 between the incumbent President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. and his predecessor, former President Donald J. Trump.