



# Media Invitation

Bern, 23 October 2014

## Arab Forum on Asset Recovery (AFAR III)

1 – 3 November 2014

### Centre International de Conférences Genève (CICG)

(17, rue de Varembe, 1211 Genève 20)

Opening address by Didier Burkhalter, President of the Swiss Confederation

According to World Bank estimates, the quantity of funds misappropriated each year through the corruption of public officials in developing and transition countries amounts to USD 20 to 40 billion, the equivalent of 20% to 40% of the total resources budgeted worldwide for cooperation and development assistance.

In response to challenges of the Arab Spring related to this reality and based on a US initiative, the G8 launched the **Arab Forum on Asset Recovery (AFAR) in 2012**. It works as a platform bringing together the G7, the Deauville Partnership\*, as well as countries from the region in order to cooperate in the return of stolen assets. The Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) Initiative – a partnership between the World Bank and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime – is closely involved in organizing and running the Arab Forum.

Having had a successful asset recovery policy for many years, Switzerland has been involved in AFAR from the outset and **has thus accepted to host the third session of the forum (AFAR III). It will take place from 1-3 November 2014 in Geneva**. Its objective is to analyze progress made so far in asset-recovery proceedings of Arab countries in transition and to identify the factors of success in order to accelerate and improve asset-recovery proceedings in countries facing more difficulties.

Since successful asset recovery always depends on constructive cooperation, the event will be **co-chaired by Egypt and Tunisia at the ministerial level in a spirit of partnership between requesting and requested states**. The meeting has also been supported by a steering committee, composed of the United States, the United Kingdom, the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Center based in Qatar, and the Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) Initiative. Ministers of Justice and Attorney Generals of several countries will attend the opening session of AFAR III, Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> November, and the closing session, Monday, 3 November. Moreover, around 170 experts will attend the forum and hold bilateral meetings.

## Press Arrangements

**The President of the Swiss Confederation and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Didier Burkhalter – followed by the co-chairs, the Ministers of Justice of Egypt and Tunisia – will deliver the opening address on Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2014, between 2-3 pm. After the opening, the co-chairs will give a **press conference** (3-3:30 pm) at the CICG. The media are invited to attend this first part of the conference at the Centre de conférences internationales, Genève (CICG), from 2-4 pm as well as the closing session on Monday, 3 November from 5-6 pm.**

Media representatives who wish to attend sessions opened for journalists during the AFAR III Conference are requested to register with FDFA Information ([info@eda.admin.ch](mailto:info@eda.admin.ch)) **by Thursday, 30 October 2014, at 12 noon** in order to obtain a conference badge on site.

In addition, to help media representatives gain a better understanding of asset recovery, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) will organise a **“background briefing”** (“off the record”, with no possibilities for quotes) with **Ambassador Pascale Baeriswyl**, vice-director of the Directorate of International Law, **on 28 October 2014, 2 pm**, at the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations and to the other international organisations at Rue de Varembé 9-11, Geneva. Media representatives who wish to attend the “background briefing” are requested to **register separately** with FDFA Information ([info@eda.admin.ch](mailto:info@eda.admin.ch)) by **Monday, 27 October, at 12:00.**

## Media Center at CICG

Working spaces with cabled and wireless internet access are available in the CICG on Saturday 1 November 2014 from 11 am to 6 pm. Media representatives are requested to bring their own **cable** and **adaptor**.

Photo or TV pool images are not provided.

For broadcast services, stand-up, play-outs, and tailor-made solutions, please state your interest to the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) by emailing [newsoperations@eurovision.net](mailto:newsoperations@eurovision.net). More information can be found on <http://www.eurovision.net/ops/events.php>

If you want to bring your own SNG and stand-up gear, advanced booking of parking space is mandatory, since parking space is very limited. To book an SNG spot: email [linda.shepard@eda.admin.ch](mailto:linda.shepard@eda.admin.ch).

## Media Invitation • **AFAR III**

For more information, check the following **links**:

[FDFA web file on the AFAR III event](#)

[FDFA – Illicit assets of politically exposed persons \(PEPs\)](#)

[World Bank - Arab Forum on Asset Recovery \(AFAR\)](#)

[World Bank - The Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative \(StAR\)](#)

[Deauville Partnership](#)

Twitter: @returningassets

### **Contact information**

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\* Members of the Deauville Partnership: Canada, Egypt, the European Union, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Libya, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States.