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RECHT BERATUNG WEITERBILDUNG

 Churchill Symposium

Alain Berset

Secretary General of the Council of Europe

From Zurich to Strasbourg: European unity in a time of war and rupture

Wednesday, 16 September 2026, 18:00 – 19:15, Aula KOL-G-201, at the University of Zurich



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From Zurich to Strasbourg: European unity in a time of war and rupture



Alain Berset

Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Time & Place

Wednesday, 16 September 2026

18:00 - 19:15 in the Aula KOL-G-201, at the University of Zurich

Rämistrasse 71, 8006 Zurich

Topic of the Lecture

On 19 September 1946, in his historic Zurich speech, Winston Churchill called for the creation of a Council of Europe as a first step towards rebuilding the European family. Less than three years later, on 5 May 1949, that call became reality. Marking the eightieth anniversary of Churchill's speech, Alain Berset, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, will address the future of European security at a time when war is raging in Europe and at its borders, democratic backsliding is deepening, and the post-war international legal order is experiencing its most profound rupture in decades. The lecture will explore how the values that inspired the creation of the Council of Europe – democracy, human rights and the rule of law – have helped build a common legal space across Europe, and why they remain indispensable in responding to today's political and security challenges.

Speaker

Alain Berset became Secretary General of the Council of Europe on 18 September 2024. Between 2012 and 2023, he was an elected Minister in the Swiss government (Federal Council). He headed the Federal Department of Home Affairs, with responsibility for health, social affairs, culture, equality and anti-discrimination, and led Switzerland's public health response during the Covid-19 pandemic. He served as President of the Swiss Confederation in 2018 and 2023. In 2003, he was elected to the Council of States and served as its President from 2008 to 2009. From 2005 to 2011, he was Vice-Chair of the Socialist Group in the Federal Parliament. He holds an MSc in political science and a PhD in economics.

Registration

Free entry. Registration mandatory. Limited seating capacity. Additional seats are available in the live broadcast room KOL-G-217.



More Information

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