

Swiss Minister Postpones Russia Visit Over Ukraine Crisis

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Swiss Economy Minister Johann Schneider-Ammann.

A four-day visit to Russia in October by Switzerland's economy minister and high-profile Swiss business representatives has been postponed until next year due to the crisis in Ukraine, a government spokesman said Tuesday.

The alpine nation is quietly scaling back a series of events meant to celebrate 200 years of economic ties with Russia in the coming months due to the conflict between pro-Russian rebels and Ukrainian troops, in which more than 2,000 people have been killed.

Swiss Economy Minister Johann Schneider-Ammann had wanted to travel with a high-profile business delegation, including chief executives of Swiss firms such as Roche, Novartis and Nestle, he told a Swiss newswire Monday.

A source familiar with the planning said the response by Swiss business representatives to the

October trip had been lukewarm, contributing to the decision to postpone.

Spokespeople for Roche, Novartis and Nestle were not immediately available for comment. Economiesuisse, a business lobby that would have put together the list of business delegates, did not comment.

Switzerland has not joined the European Union and the United States in imposing sanctions against Russia over its role in Ukraine, but has said it wants to avoid being used to circumvent those sanctions.

Two weeks ago, the Swiss parliament withdrew an invitation for the head of Russia's lower house of parliament to visit Berne next month and also cancelled Russia's participation in an airshow later this month.

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