This link from my friend Kathie...

It seems I was partly right, and partly wrong. He wasn't about to usurp Solana's role as future EU Foreign Minister, but I was wrong in that he was linked with Switzerland. The Swiss government has revealed the identity of its special EU mediator, that was involved in secret negotiations between Israel and Syria for a couple of years. Haaretz first broke the story that a deal had been negotiated between the two states which would have paved the way for the handover of the Golan Heights to Israel, in return for an end to the support of terrorism by Damascus. But the talks ended soon after the outbreak of the Israeli-Hizbullah conflict. The EU's secret negotiator was a man called Nicholas Lang, a minister in the Swiss Foreign Office.

Quote: *"Former foreign minister Silvan Shalom, a Likud MK, confirmed last week that he knew of the secret talks while serving at the ministry. Meretz chair Yossi Beilin said after Haaretz first revealed the initiative that the European who mediated between the Israelis and Damascus was the head of the Middle East desk in the Swiss Foreign Ministry, Nicholas Lang. Lang had played a key role in the talks between Israelis and Palestinians that led to Beilin and Yasser Abed Rabbo's Geneva Initiative. Earlier, Lang had served as Swiss general consul in Jerusalem. Over the weekend, Lang visited Jerusalem, later travelling to Damascus to meet senior government officials, including Vice President Farouk Shara and Foreign Minister Walid Muallem.*

Syrian American Ibrahim Suleiman stated that he believed the revelation of the secret talks between Israel and Syria would end hopes of an agreement, but it seems in spite of this development Switzerland has expressed a desire for the negotiations to resume. But with denials by both Israel and Syria that any talks had taken place, or that any agreement had been reached, it is doubtful the talks could take place on an official level, at least for the present.

Quote: *""As a neutral country, Switzerland is well positioned to facilitate such dialogues. In this context, Switzerland welcomed Syria's repeated calls for a resumption of dialogue and peace talks with Israel." The embassy statement made no mention of Lang, coordinator of Swiss Middle East peace efforts, being in Damascus.*

Source Haaretz , YNet News