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The importance of receiving your copy of the "Swiss Review"

In the last Swiss Review Issue of 2009 and particularly Issue No.1 of 2010 on page 6 in a "yellow box", readers were surprised to read: "All Swiss citizens living abroad whose e-mail address is known to their Swiss representations will receive "Swiss Review" by e-mail only from this year onwards. Anybody who would still like to receive the printed version should let us know via www.swissabroad.ch Please also notify us of any changes to your postal or e-mail address via this website. That way, you will continue to receive "Swiss Review" as before."

This is a direct reversal of the assurances given to your delegates to the Council of the Swiss Abroad in Fribourg at the council meeting in August 2008, when the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs (EDA) unilaterally saw fit to axe some CHF 500,000 off the usual CHF 2 million required to produce the 6 annual issues of the "Swiss Review" world-wide to the more than 600,000 Swiss Abroad. This left us with no other option but to reduce the issues from 6 to 4 per year, and the assurances we received were that only Swiss Abroad who registered for e-mail receipt would receive the informative magazine that way, and that all others would receive it by post as has been the case in the past.

Elderly with no internet access

The importance of a "printed version" of the Swiss Review cannot be overstated. Already the postal service in Africa leaves much to be desired, but it is infinitely better than believing that a very patchy and often sporadically "down-time" internet service can "replace" the printed version. Many elderly Swiss Abroad in Africa do not have a computer or the ability or equipment to download and print a 32-page full colour magazine. Over and above this, the receipt of a fully

finished, attractive magazine enables easy multiple-readership which an e-mail version clearly does not.

Register to receive the printed version

We thus urge ALL Swiss in Southern Africa to visit the website www.swissabroad.ch and register to CONTINUE RECEIVING THE PRINTED VERSION.

If you do not have a computer, ask a friend who has one to do so for you. Or phone your nearest consulate, and ask to be left on receiving the printed version.

We have written a short letter in French to Foreign Minister Calmy-Rey, enclosing this article, and saying that we object to this summary, unilateral and in our view, destructive and short-sighted "new policy", which does not take into account the realities of Africa.

We sincerely hope you agree with our actions, and would urge you to do as suggested above. It is important for you as a Swiss Abroad, to be fully informed on matters Swiss, so that you can continue to be an effective ambassador for Switzerland.

Peter Müller,
Delegate 2002- present,
and Francois Jeannerat,
Delegate 1988-2001

Swiss Mobile Consulat during World Cup

During the upcoming Soccer World Cup in South Africa the Embassy of Switzerland will set up the "Swiss Mobile Consulate". It will be stationed in the cities where the Swiss national team will be playing, which are, in the first round, Durban (16 June), Port Elizabeth (21 June) and Bloemfontein (25 June). These services include general information and assistance in consular matters and in cases of emergency.

Useful information can be found on the website of the Embassy:

www.eda.admin.ch/pretoria

A foreign affairs visit

Between the 11th and the 13th of March 2010, (Ms.) Ambassador Helene Budliger Artiega, Director for Management at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) in Berne paid a visit to South Africa. During a fruitful workshop she presented several topics related to Consular Affairs, such as biometric passports and visas, as well as broader topics e.g. the ongoing reform of the FDFA, the tasks of the Directorate for Management, human resources, leadership, tasks evaluation by the Federal

Council – issues of interest to the personnel of the Embassy as well as of the Swiss Development Cooperation.

Biometric Passport 2010

Since 1 March 2010 Switzerland is only issuing biometric passports (Model 10) containing one picture of the face, two digital fingerprints and signature which are electronically registered on a chip embedded in the passport.

Applicants for a biometric passport or ID will have to come to the Embassy of Switzerland in Pretoria or to the Consulate General of Switzerland in Cape Town to have their picture, signature and fingerprints taken. The data in the passport is based on the data recorded in the Swiss Civil registers. Before submitting an application for a biometric passport, it is of the utmost importance that the current civil status is registered and processed well in advance in order to avoid unpleasant delays in the issuing of a new passport. Updating personal data entries in Swiss civil registers can take several weeks.

Since 1 March 2010 it is mandatory for all Swiss nationals wishing to apply for the Swiss passport and/or an identity card to make an appointment prior to visiting

Continued on next page ...



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the embassy. This can be done through the following website:-

www.schweizerpass.ch (de/fr/it) or, alternatively, by ringing the Embassy on 012- 452 0661 or the Consulat General in Cape Town on 021- 418 3665. All applicants must appear in person.

Please note that the passports 03 (machine readable) or 06 (biometric) remains valid until their expiry date.

FEES (payable in local currency)

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valid until 5
years CHF 60

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Adult valid for
10 years CHF 148

Minors (0-18)
valid until 5
years CHF 68

CHF 100 for a
temporary passport

Temporary passports are only valid for 1 year and will only be issued in case of emergency. Late application for Swiss passport is not considered as an emergency.

Please add the following amount for postage fees:

within South Africa
R. 20.00 for registered mail

Namibia R.50.00 for one passport sent monthly with DHL to Mr Kurt Neuenschwander, Honorary Consul in Windhoek. You can also organise an individual courier service.

If you apply for the first time for a Swiss passport, your identity needs to be authenticated and therefore please bring your I.D.Book or foreign passport along.

Swiss Embassy, Pretoria

Pro Helvetia Cape Town on Facebook

Pro Helvetia Cape Town invites you to join its group on Facebook. The group complements the existing website, www.prohelvetia.org.za, as a second resource for information about upcoming and previous Pro Helvetia Cape Town projects, as well as funding and artist in residency applications.

Swiss artists in residence: Pro Helvetia CPT is hosting high profile artists in residence in the first part of 2010: Irene Hug is a visual artist who works with found objects, sculptures and actions in public space; Sylvie Cachin is a film artist who will use her time in the South Africa to work on a part fiction-part documentary feature-length film; and Michael Pelzel is an organist and composer who has collaborated with a long list of specialised ensembles.

Swiss Cham event: The Consumer Protection Act

Thami Bolani, (pictured below) Chairman of the National Consumer Forum, delivered the keynote address at a SwissCham luncheon at the Country Club

Johannesburg in Woodmead. Jürg A. Schalch, SwissCham President, welcomed the 40 guests and introduced our Speaker who is well-known for his radio programmes on Ikwekwezi FM on SABC and Unitra Community Radio Station, Eastern Cape, educating more than 1.5 million listeners every week.

In his address, Thami said that he is convinced that 2010 would be a memorable year for South Africa not only as it hosts the FIFA World Cup, but also because of the new Consumer Protection Act which will come into force a few months later. He announced a new era for consumer protection in the country which he says will transform the way we conduct business.

He said that the far-reaching legislation would ensure that South Africa will follow developed countries and United Nations guidelines for consumer protection.

Why do we need a Consumer Protection Act

Thami explained that South Africa's consumer laws had not been revised since 1988 and thus we were lagging behind other international jurisprudences. Regulation was fragmented across different sectors of the economy and as more citizens



were able to enter the formal economy more exploitation became apparent.

Consumer rights as a tool against poverty

The new Act acknowledges the reality of our country such as poverty, illiteracy and geographic marginalization. South Africa's history places a particular burden on consumers facing issues like these, he said and the Act refers to the need to "fulfill the rights of historically disadvantaged persons and to promote their full participation as consumers".

He said that with the support of two large South African corporations – Nestlé and Metropolitan – the NCF launched the first of what is planned to be a national network of Access to Knowledge (or A2K) centres.

He expressed the view that "knowledgeable and confident consumers are much more likely to get a fair deal and get the right results when things go wrong".

The A2K centre will train, advise and research in the fields of financial literacy, computer literacy and internet access whereby consumers can build their own capabilities and improve the quality of their lives.

The consumer voice

Another new and exciting part of the Act, Thami Bolani says, is that the government is now expected to promote the growth of the consumer movement in the country and should support groups that contribute to consumer education and work in the interests of consumers.





Swiss Chamber of Commerce

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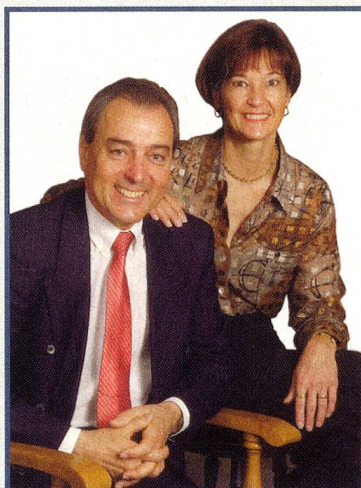
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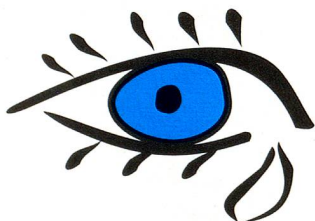
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