

**Zeitschrift:** Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad  
**Herausgeber:** Organisation of the Swiss Abroad  
**Band:** 37 (2010)  
**Heft:** 3

**Anhang:** Regional news : South Africa

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## Visit of Doris Leuthard

**As guest of FIFA, the President of the Swiss Confederation, Doris Leuthard, accompanied by her husband, travelled to South Africa to attend the opening ceremony of the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup.**



*Doris Leuthard and Joseph Blatter*

On 11<sup>th</sup> of June, President Leuthard paid a visit to the Swiss Football Team at Vaal University of Technology (VUT) to encourage the players, and then left for the Soccer City Stadium in Johannesburg where the opening ceremony and the first match between Bafana Bafana and Mexico had to take place. On this occasion, she held short informal bilateral talks with some foreign representatives, in particular with the American Vice-President Joe Biden.

During her stay (from 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> of June), President Leuthard, accompanied by Ambassador Rudolf Baerfuss, had the possibility to discover many of the South African wealth and beauties. As guest of His Majesty King Kgosi, King of Bafokeng, she experienced a trip in the depth of a Platinum mine, at 300 meters below the surface, in the region of Rustenberg, where she developed her skills at extracting this raw material which is one of the most important export goods to Switzerland. After a lunch

with the King and the General Manager of the mine, she left for Pilanesberg Game Reserve to enjoy a cold but fascinating game drive.

The main social event of the visit of Mrs Leuthard was the reception she hosted in partnership with SwissCham at the Swiss Residence in Pretoria in honour of FIFA President, Joseph S. Blatter, on 13<sup>th</sup> of June. About 300 guests, among them South African authorities, foreign diplomats representing the 32 participating countries, members of the Swiss Football Association and FIFA, representatives of the Swiss and South African business community as well as media and other guests took part in the reception. They could enjoy some Swiss traditions like "raclette cheese" with typical Swiss white wine, and hearing the sound of 2 alphorns. During her speech, President Leuthard underlined the importance that represents for South Africa this World Cup since it is the first event of this magnitude ever organized on

the continent. To express his sincere thanks, Mr Blatter offered Mrs Leuthard, as souvenir, a miniature replica of the Jules Rimet World Cup Trophy. The reception unfolded in a very friendly and relaxed atmosphere, and President Leuthard could still attend the first halftime of the match between Serbia and Ghana at Loftus Versfeld Stadium in Pretoria before returning to Switzerland.

### *Swiss Mobile Consulate*

**During the soccer World Cup the Swiss Mobile Consulate has taken up its services.**

The three woman team from Pretoria - Nadia, Cape Town - Marianne and Kinshasa - Marion, have been providing consular assistance from a van to the Swiss supporters

that were travelling to the matches of the Swiss soccer team. The first station was Durban, where Switzerland played against Spain. The Mobile Consulate was stationed for four days in the Fan Zone along the beach. Swiss fans flocked to Durban in big numbers. Many of our compatriots stopped at the Mobile Consulate in order to find out what the van with the Swiss cross and the Swiss flag flying high was all about. We distributed our telephone number to all of them. Thankfully most of them did not encounter any problems but were happy to know, that the Swiss Government had come up with this innovative idea to take care of them in case they needed it.

The problems we dealt with were a lost passport and a

*Continued/...*



*The Swiss Mobile Consulate in action.*

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### *Swiss Mobile Consulate (contd)*

Swiss person who urgently needed a certified copy of a passport in order to acquire his tickets. The afternoon before our departure we received a phone call from a Swiss citizen who had been arrested by the immigration office in Durban. We immediately went to the office to find out what had happened. It turned out that our compatriot had entered the country without following the proper immigration procedures and was therefore considered to be illegally in South Africa. We managed to avoid a night in prison for him and finally the problem could be solved.

After Durban we headed to Port Elizabeth where Switzerland played Chile. Our Mobile Consulate was stationed for three days in the Fan Fest, where all the matches are shown on a big screen. In order to get maximum visibility we parked the van in immediate proximity to the new stadium on the day of the match. An incredible number of fans passed us on the way to the stadium. The media showed a lot of interest as well. While writing this article it is actually our last day in Port Elizabeth. From here we will be travelling to Bloemfontein for the last Swiss match of the group stage.

*Marianne, Nadia, Marion*

### *SwissCham dinner with Jean-Daniel Gerber*

On the occasion of the visit of the Swiss Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, Jean-Daniel Gerber, SwissCham organized a dinner for its



members with the Secretary of State and his delegation, 130 people attended. In his speech he reported that over 100 Swiss companies had branches or production facilities in South Africa, providing over 35'000 jobs and playing a significant role in several sectors. In order to meet the growing importance of the South African market for the Swiss export economy, in 2004 the Swiss government had taken steps to deepen its economic relations with emerging markets such as South Africa.

At another SwissCham Luncheon the members had the opportunity to hear Kuseini Dlamini, CEO of Old Mutual giving a very interesting presentation.

### *Presentation of Swiss in Southern Africa*

**On the Agenda of the March 2010 or Spring Session of the Auslandschweizerrat (ASR) there was a presentation by your two delegates Rolf Schudel and Peter Muller on "The Swiss in South(ern) Africa. Particularly in view of the World Cup, South Africa was invited to present itself.**

Needless to say, it is a virtual impossibility to truly reflect a country as varied and diverse such as South Africa in a mere 20 minutes. The presentation was widely acclaimed at the ASR meeting, and as a result, copies were requested from as far afield as New Zealand and Morocco. The presentation itself was complemented by free tastings of South African wines, liqueurs, glazed fruits and biltong in the foyer of the World Postal Union. Swiss Review readers wishing to

obtain a free copy of the ASR Power Point Presentation can contact Peter Müller (sargro@bluewin.ch).

The Summer Session of the ASR will take place in St. Gallen on Friday 20th August 2010. This meeting will be extremely important because the possibility of getting an "Auslandschweizergesetz" will be debated. The main purpose is to promote and strengthen the political power of the Swiss Abroad, as well as the legitimacy of the Council (ASR).

For instance at present, your two delegates are elected by the 9 accredited Swiss Clubs in South Africa. This represents a Swiss Membership of approximately

800 persons, which is not even 10% of the almost 9000 Swiss registered in South Africa. Yet at the ASR in Switzerland, your two delegates represent and speak for ALL the Swiss registered in South and indeed Southern Africa (which includes Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana and Mauritius). Needless to say, this can hardly be seen to be legitimate, but it is better

than pure nomination, and it certainly helps to promote membership of local Swiss Clubs in order to promote "Swiss political clout".

While the proposed Law for the Swiss Abroad is merely a discussion theme both in a parliamentary commission as well as the ASR,

it would be helpful to your two delegates, to receive any views or ideas from readers of the Swiss Review. Please contact Peter Muller at sargro@bluewin.ch. As soon as there are more tangible proposals, we will obviously use the Swiss Review to acquaint you with these.

*Peter Müller*

### *Speaker of Swiss Parliament in South Africa*



**On June 28, 2010, Pascale Bruderer Wyss, President of the Swiss National Council (see Swiss Review April 2010), and her husband Urs Wyss, arrived for a one week private visit to South Africa.**

They started with a meeting at the Swiss Embassy, followed by a lunch at the Swiss Residence and a City Tour of Pretoria. It goes without saying that the World Cup constituted an important part of their programme: After the match Brazil - Chile at Ellis Park in Johannesburg they travelled to Cape Town to attend another fascinating

*Continued/..*

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*Speaker of Swiss Parliament in South Africa (contd)*

game of the Round of 16: Spain - Portugal. During the following days they discovered the beauties of the Garden Route and arrived in Port Elizabeth where they paid a visit to IMBEWU-Suisse, a remarkable NGO promoting education, sports and cultural exchanges in several townships of Nelson Mandela Bay.



**Delegates of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad for Southern Africa:**

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"The Courier", conference facilities.

During the World Cup our Swiss friends as well as Restaurant guests had a lot of fun and enjoyed "ein gemütliches Zusammensein" while watching the Swiss and other matches. Even the Vuvuzelas were part of the atmosphere. Our traditional Swiss National Day Celebration was held on Sunday 1st of August and our next big event will be held on the 13th Nov. with a "Folklore Evening" with Sepp Wolf and 50 artists. Our Clubs of Society: Afro Gugge, Amicale Suisse Romande, Boccia, Skittling Club. Associated Groups: Swiss Choir, Swiss Rifle Club, Swiss Golf, G.S.N.A. Senior Swiss Circle meets every 2nd Saturday of the month for

Lunch. Swiss Ladies meet every 4th Thursday of the month for lunch; Evi Frei 011 673 4640.

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The first few months of this year have been quite eventful. First up was our Kegelabend at the Swiss Club Johannesburg, where Edi and Trudi Walliser took top honours. The 1st prize were two 1st class tickets to the SWC Switzerland-Honduras Game in Boemfontein, sponsored by Swiss Life. As the Wallisers could not attend, the two tickets went to the Boshoff brothers, who were runners up. On 5th June there was the Fondue Evening attended by some 28 Fondue Gourmets. A wonderful evening was spent together with the traditional Bingo and a Quiz. The Bundesfeier will take place on 31st July at the Fountains. The Weihnachtsfeier will be held at the Church hall of the Johannesgemeinde on 27th November.

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**LAST 2010 ISSUE:**

**04.10: deadline 02/09/, distribution: 15/10/**



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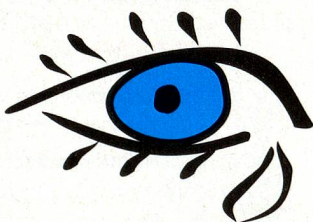
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