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# REGIONAL NEWS

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### Editorial

DEAR READERS

In my opinion, more attention should be paid to innovations from African countries, because they often arise under much more difficult conditions than in western countries. The South African company SodaWorld, which offers artists a platform in the Metaverse,

is currently making a name for itself because they managed to get a prestigious Swiss venture capital firm on board. More information in the article.

WARM REGARDS, GISELA PIERCEY



GISELA PIERCEY,  
EDITOR «SWISS REVIEW  
SOUTHERN AFRICA»

### Zimbabwe:

## New Swiss Ambassador Stéphane Rey arrives in Zimbabwe

The new Swiss Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi, Mr. Stéphane Rey, arrived in Harare on 4 September. Ambassador Rey succeeds Ambassador Niculin Jäger, who led the Swiss Mission from 2018 to 2022.

Prior to his arrival in Harare, Ambassador Rey was the Head of Peace Policy and Programmes at the State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs, where he oversaw all peacebuilding and mediation initiatives worldwide for Switzerland.

Previous roles in the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs included Deputy chief of mission at the Swiss Embassy in Tehran (Iran), head of the political affairs team at the Permanent mission of Switzerland to the United Nations in New York and deputy head of the UN Security Council and political affairs unit in Bern.



Stéphane Rey,  
Ambassador of  
Switzerland to  
Zimbabwe, Zambia  
and Malawi.  
© Embassy of  
Switzerland in  
Zimbabwe.

Prior to joining the Swiss diplomatic service, he was a delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Afghanistan and in Sierra Leone. He also served as a humanitarian policy officer at the UN Office for the coordination of humanitarian affairs (OCHA) in New York.

Stéphane Rey is also a member of the UN Secretary-General's Peace-

building Fund Advisory Group, after being re-appointed by António Guterres in August 2022.

A native of Fribourg, Switzerland, he holds an MA in History and Literature from Fribourg University and an MSc. in Social policy from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Ambassador Rey arrived with his wife, Sogol Jafar Zadeh Rey.

## South Africa: Africa's only Metaverse venue bags Swiss VC funding

Billed as Africa's first and only Metaverse venue, SodaWorld has secured initial global investment from a prestigious Swiss venture capital firm. The technology start-up enables artists to earn much-needed revenue from within the Metaverse.

SodaWorld is one of but a few international platforms to utilise the much-hyped Metaverse in a way that benefits creatives.

Soon after receiving investment from CV VC, SodaWorld was announced as one of only two global projects to be featured on the Venice virtual reality programme at Venice Biennale, an international cultural exhibition hosted annually in Italy. The event was announced as part of the official line-up of Venice Immersive 2022.

On 2 September, SodaWorld streamed a South African curated music experience live from the Soda Studios in Johannesburg. This music event was live streamed via the SodaWorld immersive VR technology and VRChat functionality enabling guests in Venice to experience a twin VR version of the event. Guests in Venice will be immersed in a range of different African flavours from traditional instruments and linguistics specialist rappers to future facing Afrotech DJs.

Liz Rothenthal, curator of Venice VR, says, "Featuring Soda as one of our two worlds where a live event will be held specially for Venice Immersive is a very exciting strong point of our overall selection. Soda is a vibrant hub of immersive creativity in South Africa, both IRL and online. Leading the way in exploring hybrid events, breaking grounds in what the metaverse is becoming, Soda is a totally unique and brilliant initiative



that we are extremely proud of bringing to our world-wide audience."

SodaWorld's unique functionality, recently launched via a beta version of the Sodaworld.tv platform, a Twitch and Netflix-style portal that enables artists to engage an online audience, is the basis for the investment from CV VC, whose mission is to expose the untapped potential of blockchain technology.

Olaf Hannemann, chief investment officer and co-founder of CV VC adds, "CV VC is a blockchain tech early-stage VC headquartered in the world's most mature blockchain hub, 'Crypto Valley', Switzerland. We invest in start-ups who demonstrate a capability to transform the way the world interacts and transacts using blockchain technology.

"The dynamic team at SodaWorld have shown an energy, determination, and industry expertise to do just that for artists and creators. Core to blockchain is its ability to build trust. The entertainment and performance sector need to rebuild trust especially from the creator's perspective. The SodaWorld platform can achieve this and more, new revenue streams for creators."

CV Labs Africa managing director Gideon Greaves says, "As the incubation business pillar of CV VC, we at CV Labs Africa are stoked to work with the team at SodaWorld who are build-

ing on blockchain to enable artists to monetise immersive fandom.

"Their enriching platform empowers African creators to connect with global audiences via the brave new world known as 'the metaverse' which in simple terms is an interactive and augmented digital reality world, accessible by fans anytime and anywhere and where fans can actually interact with artists and visa versa. The opportunities are endless. Africa is blessed. It has in its hands a facility, SodaWorld, which can facilitate creators access this Metaverse."

ARTICLE: VENTUREBURN

SodaWorld is one of but a few international platforms to utilise the much-hyped Metaverse in a way that benefits creatives.  
Photo: Supplied/  
Ventureburn

## ASO Matters

On 19th August I attended the Bi-Annual ASR Council Meeting, which this year was held in Lugano. For the first time since 2018, we were able to meet face to face and networking could resume.

The most important aspects that were discussed were the ever topical E-Voting, the banking accounts issue and a lot of time and effort was afforded to how we can further improve serving the Swiss Expats in the various regions represented by the ASR delegates. Further to our efforts started in 2017, we have started with our own Facebook page for the Southern African

Region, where we will share vital information with a much broader audience. We encourage you to partake in the discussion on that platform. <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100085059717532>

On 17th March 2023 the next Council Meeting will take place in Bern.

HANS-GEORG BOSCH, DELEGATE OF COUNCIL FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA [aso@hbosch.com](mailto:aso@hbosch.com)



## SWISS CLUB INFO

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■ On 30th July we held our National Day Celebrations at our usual venue, namely the Church Hall of the Johannegemeinde adjacent to the DSP. The event was well attended with a strong showing of Embassy and Regional Consular Centre staff. HE Ambassador *Dr. Nicolas Brühl* held a speech welcoming all. It was the first live 1. August Event since 2019. On this occasion we also welcomed Mr. *Andrej Sadek* and bid farewell to *Jeannette Bühner-Alfaia*, who has left the Consulate after her 4 year term came to an end. We wish both all the best for their new postings. Our new Secretary, *Caroline Silvester* has taken up her position now and all enquiries should be addressed to her. -  
[swissclub.alpina@gmail.com](mailto:swissclub.alpina@gmail.com)  
*Hans-Georg Bosch - President*

### SWISS COUNTRY CLUB

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### SWISS COUNTRY CLUB REST

«The Courier», T 011 805 3040  
*Devan Govender*, C 079 519 3563,  
Tue-Sat 11-21h30  
Rest./kitchen, 11-24h Bar, Sun 10-17h

■ Our Clubs of Society: Amicale Suisse Romande, Boccia, Skittling Club.  
Associated Groups: Swiss Choir, Swiss Rifle Club, Swiss Golf, Senior Swiss Circle meets every 2nd Saturday of the month for Lunch, Swiss Ladies meet every 4th Thursday of the month for lunch.

### SWISS RIFLE CLUB JOHANNESBURG

Contact: [info@srcjhb.co.za](mailto:info@srcjhb.co.za)  
Website <http://www.srcjhb.co.za/>

■ We shoot every 4th Sat of the month, from 9am. We normally shoot two different programs, with Swiss rifles, provided by the club. Visit our Facebook site or call *Daniel*: 082 569 9146

### PRO TICINO PRO GRISCHUN BOCCIA CLUB

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#### & SWISS RIFLE CLUB

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<http://www.swissclubnatal.org.za/>

■ JASS EVENTS: This is held on the second Friday of each month and will commence at 2 p.m. and is held at Rolf Klein Jass Stube, 3 Bona Terra Road, Assagay (directions on our website).

■ SPORT TARGET SHOOTING:  
Held on the 4th Saturday of each month (weather permitting) commencing at 08:30 a.m.- Nottingham Road (calendar available on our website).

\*For more up-to-date information regarding times/venues/directions, please visit our most informative website –  
[www.swissclubnatal.org.za](http://www.swissclubnatal.org.za)

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#### IMPRESSUM

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OSA – Delegate of the Council of the Swiss Abroad responsible for Southern Africa and representing Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe

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FOR ADDRESS CHANGES, PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICIAL SWISS REPRESENTATION IN YOUR COUNTRY AND DON'T EMAIL THE EDITOR OF SWISS REVIEW SOUTHERN AFRICA. THANK YOU.