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REGIONAL NEWS

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Editorial

DEAR READERS

Some people might be surprised that Namibia has decided to implement a visa requirement to visit the destination for countries such as Switzerland. The government is basing this decision on fairness, and it therefore applies to all countries that

request Namibians to have a visa, as well. I for one understand this completely as everyone should be treated equally and African countries often get the short end of the stick.

WARM REGARDS, GISELA PIERCEY



GISELA PIERCEY,
EDITOR «SWISS REVIEW
SOUTHERN AFRICA»

Zimbabwe:

Switzerland provides emergency aid to drought-stricken Southern Africa

In response to one of Southern Africa's most severe droughts in decades, Switzerland has committed CHF 4.7 million in emergency aid to Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi. This aid, delivered through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), aims to combat the acute hunger crisis affecting millions in the region.

The drought, driven by the El Niño climate phenomenon and exacerbated by climate change, has devastated Zimbabwe, most of Zambia, and southern Malawi. With almost no rain during the critical growing season and temperatures soaring five degrees above average, crops have failed across the region, leaving over 30 million people facing severe food and water shortages.



Man from rural Zimbabwe inspecting his failed crop in Mashonaland West Province.
© Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi, 2024.

A crisis of unprecedented scale

In Zimbabwe, 70 percent of the maize harvest, a staple food, has been lost. By the end of 2024, more than seven million people – over a third of the population – are expected to face food insecurity. Zambia is also severely affected, with drought impacting 84 of its 116 districts, including major grain-producing areas. Nearly one-third of Zambia's population will require humanitarian assistance by March 2025. In Malawi, drought in the south and flooding in the north have devastated agriculture, affecting nearly half of the country's maize-growing regions and two million farming households.

Switzerland's immediate and long term response

Switzerland's CHF 4.7 million aid package will provide immediate relief through cash distributions and food aid, coordinated with local governments and delivered by experienced international organisations.

Switzerland's commitment extends beyond emergency relief. For over two decades, it has supported sustainable development in the region, recently focusing on building resilient food systems and improving access to healthcare in Zimbabwe and Zambia. Through initiatives like the African Risk Capacity (ARC), Switzerland has

helped these countries secure nearly US\$ 27 million in drought insurance payouts to mitigate the crisis.

Promoting climate resilience

Swiss-funded projects are also supporting the transition to climate-resilient farming in the region. Initial reports indicate that farmers using sustainable practices have fared better in this drought, providing a model for future resilience.

As Southern Africa continues to battle this historic drought, Switzerland's aid is crucial in addressing immediate needs while laying the groundwork for long-term recovery and resilience.



Communities are facing acute water shortages in Southern Africa which has forced women to walk long distances in search of the precious liquid.
© Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi, 2024.

Namibia:

Swiss require a visa to visit Namibia from 2025

The current visa exemption granted by Namibia to citizens of 31 countries will end in spring 2025.

Originally expected to be implemented in October 2024, the requirement for a visa to enter Namibia for citizens of 31 countries, including Canada, USA, and United Kingdom, will finally be introduced on April 1, 2025.

Last May, Namibia announced its intention to introduce visa requirements for citizens of countries that require visas for Namibian nationals.

The 31 countries that do not apply visa waiver reciprocity to Namibian visitors, and are therefore affected by this measure, are as follows:

Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Belarus, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States and Uzbekistan.

According to the Namibian government, this decision aims to promote equal treatment between nations regarding visa regulations.

In an infographic published today, the Namibian Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security (MHAISS) reveals some details about this upcoming visa requirement. Namibia launched its e-Visa system in September 2023, and tourists can access it from: <https://eservices.mhaiss.gov.na/holidayvisa-services>.

The Cabinet has set the following visa fees:

- 1,600 N\$, approximately 88 US\$, for citizens of non-African Union countries;
- 1,200 N\$ (67 US\$) for nationals of African Union member states who meet the requirements to obtain a visa on arrival.

ASO Report

In July I attended the 100th Congress of the Auslandschweizer Organisation in Luzern. On Thursday, 11th July the bi-annual parliamentary session of the ASR took place in the cantonal government plenary hall in Luzern. A full report of the session will be sent to all Swiss Clubs in the SADEC region. On Friday 12th July, the Congress took place in the KKL in Luzern. The Excursion on Saturday took us with the "Stadt Luzern", a rare paddle steamer with a 3-cylinder steam engine (most Steamers in Switzerland have 2-cylinder engines), from Luzern to Brunnen, where we visited the Auslandschweizer Platz. There we were greeted by an ensemble of 6 Alphorns and 2 "Fahnenschwinger". The return to Luzern was then by either train or boat.

At the beginning of 2025, elections for the 140 members of the Auslandschweizer Rat will once again take place for the 2025-2029 period. Both Pierre-Yves Roten and myself have made ourselves available for re-election. Mr. Francois Schwalb, currently a member of the Junior Parliament of the ASO will stand for election as alternate ASR member for our region. The necessary information, CV's etc. will be distributed at the beginning of 2025. Election Co-Ordinator will once again be Gisela Piercey, the Editor of the local section of the Swiss Revue.

Yours sincerely, *Hans-Georg Bosch*, ASR member.

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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.

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■ We will celebrate the 75th anniversary in 2024, in the 200th year of the Swiss Shooting Sport Federation. We shoot at the Navy's KLAVER shooting range off Red Hill road above Simon's Town, near "Just Nuisance" grave. Occasionally we use the Atlantis 'Good

Hope' range of the SA Army. In May we hold our popular 'Piggy Shoot' at the WCSU range, also near Atlantis.

KWAZULU-NATAL

SWISS CLUB NATAL

Durban. Contact: PRESIDENT: Kurt Bacher, kurtbacher@mweb.co.za
<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

LIMPOPO

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IMPRESSUM

DELEGATES OF THE ORGANISATION OF THE SWISS ABROAD FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA

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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.

NEXT REGIONAL ISSUE DEADLINES

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01/25	06/01/2025	31/01/2025
02/25	15/04/2025	11/05/2025
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05/25	22/11/2025	19/12/2025