

REGIONAL NEWS

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Editorial

Dear readers,

Parliament's refusal to guarantee banking access to Swiss expatriates has placed the onus on banks to solve the longstanding problem. However, the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad remains confident that a solution can be found. OSA Director Ariane Rustichelli said efforts are underway to improve information for Swiss citizens living overseas who wish to hold an account in Switzerland. In addition, a cantonal bank is willing to offer its services to expatriates, she said. An update will follow soon.

Happy reading,

Gisela Piercey



GISELA PIERCEY,
EDITOR SWISS REVIEW
SOUTHERN AFRICA

Jungbuergerfeier in Johannesburg

On 17th February the Regional Consular Center for Southern Africa organized a reception for the young citizens turning 18 years old in 2018 and the new citizens that have been naturalized in 2017.

It was a unique opportunity for our young compatriots to participate at this symbolic event, that is traditionally organized in Switzerland by the city hall of the place of residence.

It took place at the Swiss

Country Club in Johannesburg, where the guests had the opportunity to discover the club house, the open garden and enjoyed the Swiss delicacies.

After the official presentation of the Consul Mr François Duvanel, the representatives of the Swiss Country Club Johannesburg and the Swiss Club Alpina Pretoria informed all, about the upcoming events and activities of the Club. For more information on the Swiss Country Club Johannesburg, please visit their internet site:

<http://www.swissclubjhb.co.za> and for the Swiss club Alpina Pretoria, e-mail to swissclub.pta@hbosch.com.

Reception in Durban

On 29th January, the Ambassador of Switzerland, Mrs Helene Budliger Artieda, invited the Swiss residents in the province of Kwazulu-Natal for a reception in Durban to introduce the new Honorary Consul in Durban, Mrs Carin Riederer, who is a Swiss citizen and a practicing attorney in the Berea area (www.eda.admin.ch/countries/south-africa/en/home/representations/)



Photo: F. Duvanel: Proud Swiss citizens

[consulate-durban.html](#)).

In a relaxed atmosphere, the guests had the opportunity to converse with each other and were pleased to have met Mrs Riederer. Also present were foreign consuls and Mr. Philipp Lanz, the President of the Swiss club Kwazulu-Natal (www.swissclubnatal.org.za). The delicious buffet included typical Swiss specialties that all guests enjoyed.

This was prepared by a Swiss Chef residing in Durban. Our compatriot Mr. Robert Trunz and a few different South African musicians complemented this successful evening with some musical highlights.



Ambassador Budliger Artieda (left) with Ms Riederer (photo F. Duvanel)

Switzerland Ambassador H.E. Mrs. Ruth Huber bids farewell to Zimbabwe and Malawi

Switzerland Ambassador to Zimbabwe and Malawi H.E. Mrs. Ruth Huber bid farewell to Zimbabwe on Thursday 22 February after paying a courtesy call to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development, Lieutenant General Sibusiso Moyo (Retired) and the President of Zimbabwe, H.E. Emmerson Mnangagwa.

Switzerland and Zimbabwe have been paying attention to enhancing cooperation in economic and development assistance after signing an International Cooperation Agreement on humanitarian aid and technical and financial cooperation in 2017.

President Emmerson Mnangagwa recently met with his Swiss counterpart President Alain Berset in Davos and the two leaders shared perspectives on various bilateral relations.

Ambassador Huber arrived in Harare in November 2015, following her deployment from Switzerland and will be returning to Berne for another position with Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).



Switzerland Ambassador to Zimbabwe and Malawi H.E. Mrs. Ruth Huber bids farewell to the President of Zimbabwe, H.E. Emmerson Mnangagwa.

Consular Day in Durban and Harare

At the beginning of 2018, the Regional Consular Center Southern Africa in Pretoria organized the already well-known consular days in Durban and Harare. Many compatriots took advantage of this offer and came to capture their biometric data, for their new Swiss passport or ID.

These two pictures present the mobile station. The camera and the lighting reflector stand are both linked with a computer. The little

white box with the turquoise pad, on the table, is the finger print and next to it is the signature scanner. The chair has to be measured at a certain distance, so that size of the picture is captured perfectly. The highly secured black box shows how this very sensitive and delicate material is transported. The 2019 consular days will be announced well in advance in a next edition of the Swiss Review



Photos: F. Duvanel

Auslandsschweizer Banken- problem: Lösung in Sicht

Der Nationalrat hat eine Motion abgelehnt, die Schweizer Grossbanken dazu verpflichten wollte, dass Auslandsschweizerinnen und Auslandsschweizer bei diesen ein Konto führen dürfen. Die Motion des Tessiner Ständerats Filippo Lombardi hat jedoch bereits als Druckmittel gewirkt: Ein Kompromiss mit den Banken scheint in Sichtweite.

Der parlamentarische Vorstoss von Filippo Lombardi wurde im letzten September im Ständerat angenommen. Die Motion zielte darauf ab, eine Lösung für eine der grossen Prioritäten der Schweizer Auslandsgemeinde zu finden: Diese möchte wie früher wieder einen diskriminierungsfreien Zugang zu den Dienstleistungen der Schweizer Banken erhalten.

Die Auslandsschweizerinnen und Auslandsschweizer fanden sich im Anschluss an die im letzten Jahrzehnt auf internationaler Ebene verabschiedeten Forderungen zur Bekämpfung der Steuerhinterziehung plötzlich zwischen Stuhl und Bank wieder. Denn auch die Schweizer Banken stellten nun strengere Anforderungen an die Beziehungen zu ihren Kunden aus dem Ausland. Opfer dieser Vorschriften wurden zahlreiche im Ausland lebende Schweizerinnen und Schweizer, denen Konten in der Schweiz gekündigt oder extrem hohe Kontoführungsgebühren aufgebürdet wurden. Mit der Motion verlangte Lombardi von der Landesregierung (Bundesrat),

dass Auslandsschweizerinnen und Auslandsschweizer zumindest Zugang zu den Dienstleistungen der "systemrelevanten Banken" haben sollten. Dies sind jene fünf Banken, die als zu wichtig eingeschätzt werden, um zu scheitern ("Too big to fail"). "Diese Banken verfügen implizit über eine Staatsgarantie, das heisst, sie können im Fall von schwerwiegenden finanziellen Schwierigkeiten auf die Hilfe des Staats zählen. Im Gegenzug sollten sie deshalb allen Auslandsschweizerinnen und Auslandsschweizern ermöglichen, Bankbeziehungen unter normalen Marktbedingungen zu pflegen", sagte Lombardi, als er seine Motion vorgestellt hatte. Der Ständerat der Christlichdemokratischen Volkspartei (CVP) ist auch Vizepräsident der Auslandsschweizer-Organisation (ASO).

"Gute Wirkung"

Nun wurde die Motion am 28. Februar im Nationalrat mit 132 gegen 48 Stimmen bei vier Enthaltungen abgelehnt. Für die fast 800'000 Auslandsschweizerinnen und Auslandsschweizer scheint dies allerdings keine schlechte Nachricht zu sein. Es sei eine "Good News", sagte Roland Rino Büchel, Nationalrat der Schweizerischen Volkspartei (SVP) und ehemaliges Mitglied des ASO-Vorstands. "Die Motion hatte bereits eine

Wirkung, sogar eine gute Wirkung."

In den letzten Monaten trafen sich die betroffenen Banken drei Mal mit Lombardi und anderen Vertretern der ASO. Und es konnte eine erste Einigung erzielt werden. Zuallererst werden die Banken den Auslandsschweizerinnen und Auslandsschweizern präzise und spezifische Informationen zukommen lassen über die Bedingungen, die für den Zugang zu ihren Finanzdienstleistungen gelten. Das heisst, auf der Ebene von Vorschriften, Abgaben, Steuern, usw.

Diese Informationen sollen auf den Websites des Eidgenössischen Departements für auswärtige Angelegenheiten (EDA), der Konsulate und der ASO publiziert werden. Die zuständige Kommission des Nationalrats hat eine Motion angenommen, die von der Regierung verlangt, sicherzustellen, dass die fünf systemrelevanten Banken dieses Abkommen einhalten.

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IMPRESSUM

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NEXT DEADLINES - 2018

Issue	Next Deadline	Distribution
SR 03/18	23/04/2018	28/05/2018
SR 04/18	27/08/2018	29/09/2018

FOR ADDRESS CHANGES, PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICIAL SWISS REPRESENTATION IN YOUR COUNTRY DIRECTLY.

Swiss Club info

SWISS CLUB IN JOHANNESBURG:

Swiss Society Helvetia, 31 Moerdyk Ave, Vorna Valley, Midrand, Chairman: Mario Valli, 082 451 8040; office: Max Waspe 083 412 0161, T 0118053039, www.swissclubjhb.co.za, Swiss Country Club Rest. «The Courier», Wolfgang Wollauz, T/F 0118053040, C 0825610063, Tue-Sat 11-21h30 Rest./kitchen, 11-24h Bar, Sun 10-17h, T/F 011 805 3040, C 082561 0063, www.dining-out.co.za «The Courier».

Please visit our website for information and updates on events at the club. 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. Swiss Rifle Club Johannesburg: 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: 082-5699146.

SWISS CLUB IN PRETORIA:

Swiss Society Alpina, Hans-Georg Bosch, President, T 0123478310, C 0825510222, swissclub.pta@hbosch.com, Biffy van Rooyen, Secretary bvrooyen@gmail.com Facebook group: Swiss Club Alpina.

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C 083 297 3803. SECRETARY/ASO Representative: Marcie Bischof, aso@swissclub.co.za, catering@swissclub.co.za. C 076 389 7824. To receive the “newsflash” contact the club at catering@swissclub.co.za or on 0214348405.

To receive the “newsflash” contact the club at catering@swissclub.co.za or on 0214348405. The Swiss club Cape Town is open for dinner every Thursday evening. Every 1st Thursday of the month is Pensioner's Lunch. Join the Swiss Jass players every LAST thursday of the month. There is much more happening at our club, meeting friends, host a party, club events etc. For more information, please send an email to: info@swissclub.co.za

SWISS CLUB NATAL:

President Philippe Lanz C 082 4932673, T 031 765 1625, p.lanz@absamail.co.za

JASS EVENINGS held second Friday of every month at the LAPA, Ethelbert Village, 5 Park Road, Malvern at 7pm on 13th April 2018. SPORT TARGET SHOOTING – held on the 4th Saturday of every month (weather permitting) at 0830 am commencing 21st April, 26th May, 23rd June, 21st July, 25th August, 22nd September, 27th October, 24th November, 22nd December 2018. CHEESE FONDUE EVENING at Augusta Estate, Gillitts on Saturday 14th July 2018. SWISS NATIONAL DAY – 29th July 2018. YEAR END FUNCTION – 9th December 2018 - 11am – Krantzklouf. PRIZE JASSEN -14th December 2018 – 6pm the Lapa, Ethelbert Village, 5 Park Road, Malvern. SWISS FILM EVENING and supper at Augusta Estate, Gillitts on Sat. 19th January 2019. AGM – 3rd March 2019. All further events/outings (for Apr, June, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov 2018 & Jan, Feb 2019) will be listed as soon as possible. IMPORTANT NOTICE : *For more up-to-date information regarding changes

of dates/times/venues/directions/maps etc., please visit our informative website – www.swissclubnatal.org.za

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