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Newsletter

June 2016



Embassy of Switzerland in Pakistan

Message of the Ambassador

Marc P. George



Through this second edition of the Newsletter, I want to highlight some of the activities of the Swiss Embassy in Islamabad, the Swiss Development Cooperation Office (SDC) in Islamabad as well as the Swiss Consulate General in Karachi; and to provide general information on bilateral relations between Pakistan and Switzerland.

I am pleased to share with you that the integration of the Embassy and SDC is underway and will be completed in 2017. Our integration means more efficient use of resources, improved coherence of messaging and a stronger Swiss Mission's presence and engagement in Pakistan.

The 725th National Day of Switzerland will be celebrated with our compatriots on August 1, 2016. Swiss nationals abroad not only represent our shared values on freedom, democracy and peace but also promote fruitful dialogue and exchange between the citizens of both countries.

In November, the Embassy will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Swiss Development Cooperation's work in Pakistan with an art exhibition highlighting the talent of young Pakistani artists.

It is an honor and privilege for me to represent Switzerland and safeguard its interests in Pakistan since I assumed my post in June 2014. I remain committed to further developing bilateral relations between both countries and wish to reiterate my dedication to working with the wonderful teams at the Embassy and SDC towards a peaceful and prosperous Pakistan.



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Embassy of Switzerland in Pakistan

Working of the Embassy: As the official representation of Switzerland, the embassy covers all matters concerning diplomatic relations between the two countries. It represents Swiss interests in the areas of political, economic and financial affairs, legal arrangements, science, education and culture.

Political Dialogue: Switzerland engages in regular political dialogue with Pakistan. The eighth round of political dialogue between both the countries was held in Bern on 28th November 2014. The next round of political dialogue is expected to be held in Pakistan in the Fall of 2016.

Bilateral Trade & Investments: 23 successfully managed Swiss companies are currently operating in Pakistan. Swiss based multinational companies have invested approximately USD 1.2 billion in various sectors including food processing, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, machinery, engineering and banking which have provided jobs for over 10,000 Pakistanis.

According to statistics, in 2015 Switzerland exports to Pakistan amounted to 311.33 million Swiss francs while imports stood at 105.4 million Swiss francs. Switzerland has been among the leading direct investors in Pakistan for many years and during the last decade, Swiss investments in Pakistan have exceeded USD 1.5 billion.

The Embassy also facilitates visits of business delegates from Switzerland to Pakistan by providing networking opportunities with relevant stakeholders in government and the private sector. Recently, delegates from the Global Message Services AG and Glass Tröche AG, visited Pakistan to explore market opportunities.

A trade seminar for Bühler "Invest in Wheat" was also hosted by the Embassy on 21st January 2016.

Visits to the Chambers of Commerce and Industry: Delegations from the Embassy visit the Chambers of Commerce & Industry located across the country at regular intervals to promote bilateral trade relations. During the first three months of the year, delegations of the Embassy visited the chambers of commerce located in Bahawalpur, Multan, Gujranwala and Islamabad to further promote bilateral trade relations and to keep abreast of socio-economic conditions in the region.

Consular Section: The consular section provides services to those who wish to register or un-register as a resident. It provides assistance for the issuance of new identity cards, passports or for the attestation and legalization of documents. It provides support in case of change in the civil status as well as supporting those who wish to apply for citizenship. Another important development is in connection with visas. The Consular section has incorporated biometric data since November 2, 2015 for all Schengen countries represented in Pakistan.



Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships: In 2012, the Swiss government included Pakistan as one of the countries to offer excellence scholarships in research for Masters, PhD, and Post-Doctoral programs at various public universities in Switzerland. In this regard, 26 bright Pakistani students have been selected for higher education in Switzerland.

Delegations from Switzerland: On April 20, 2016, the Head of the Global Cooperation for Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Pio Wennubst, visited Pakistan and met with government authorities in Islamabad and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The objective of the visit was to share common goals and experiences and to enhance development cooperation.

In September 2015, the co-chair of a working group on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Professor Thomas Stocker, visited Pakistan. A lecture was arranged by the embassy to share concerns and raise awareness on environmental issues and global challenges due to climate change with special focus on environmental impacts on Pakistan.

Glimpse into the Embassy's Small Projects: Since 2009, the Embassy of Switzerland, through small funds, has been supporting numerous human development and security projects. These interventions include areas such as education, health, due process of law, human rights, skills development and youth.

Youth Empowerment Project: Through this project, awareness sessions were conducted on vital topics, such as: basic human rights, gender discrimination, and conflict resolution. The Youth Empowerment Project directly impacts the lives of 560 students and more than 1000 teachers and parents.

Lighting a Million Lives: The project targeted community members who lacked access to electricity. The project provided 250 individuals an access to electricity via rechargeable solar energy.

Basic Education and Life Skills for Urban Working Children: Today at least 153 children have graduated from the learning centers equipped with education and life skills that will provide resources for a better future.

Legal Aid for Women in Jails: In the realm of human security, the Embassy of Switzerland supported the Legal Aid for Women in Jails' project. The project provided free legal assistance to women on a wide variety of cases including, domestic violence, bonded labour, harassment at the work place, forced detention and forced prostitution.





Embassy of Switzerland in Pakistan

Events hosted by the Embassy: The Embassy has, over the years, hosted a number of cultural events to represent Switzerland in Pakistan. In line with this tradition, the Francophonie Festival is celebrated between 16-22 March each year in collaboration with Francophone countries in Pakistan. The objective of these events is to share with the Pakistani people and Francophiles the diversity of Switzerland and the richness of French language and culture.

As a part of this celebration, the Embassy hosted two movie screening events. The Swiss movie "Le Petite Chambre" and a documentary "Nomad's Land - sur les traces de Nicolas Bouvier" was hosted in collaboration with the Greek Embassy at the residence of the Swiss Ambassador. An interactive Q&A session via Skype was arranged between the Swiss producer Gael Metroz and the audience.

Both events were well attended by the representatives from international organizations, as well as students and teachers of the institutions active in promoting French language in Pakistan.

In October 2015, the Embassy hosted a Sculpture Exhibition to promote young Pakistani artists – an event was attended by over 1000 guests; and in November, the Embassy organized the 'Swiss Watch Fair' in collaboration with Swiss watch dealers in Lahore. The proceeds of the event went to charity organizations.

Human Right Documentary Screening

In December 2015, the Embassy hosted a Human Rights Screening in collaboration with UNIC. "Sabogal", is a 3D animated movie highlighting human rights violations and corruption in Colombia and is co-directed and written by the Swiss-Colombian filmmaker, Juan Jose Lozano.

With an objective to promote human rights, the Embassy hosted the Human Rights Documentary Screening on May 20, 2016, entitled "Sahar Batool Inssaf Maangti Hai,- Justice Demanded" in collaboration with the Nomad Gallery. The documentary highlighted the plight of minorities with special focus on Hazara community in Balochistan.

Upcoming Events:

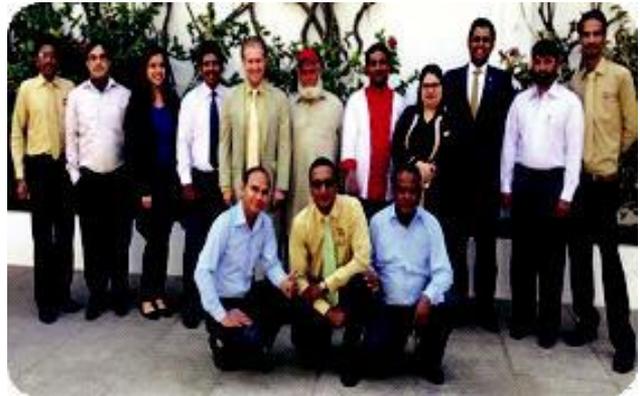
Celebration of Swiss National Day: The 725th Swiss National Day will be celebrated in Pakistan on the founding of the Swiss Confederation. The event will be hosted at the residence of the Swiss Ambassador on Monday 1st August 2016 with the 336 Swiss Nationals currently residing in Pakistan.

Celebration of 50 Years of SDC in Pakistan: The Embassy will celebrate 50 years of SDC in Pakistan in November 2016. The SDC Jubilee will be a unique opportunity for the public to learn about the contributions of the Swiss Development Cooperation to Pakistan.

Human Right Documentary Screening

In November, the Embassy will participate for the second time in the Human Rights Film Festival, which will be held under the auspices of UN Representation in Islamabad.

Consulate General of Switzerland in Karachi



The Consulate General:

The Consulate General in Karachi focuses on the promotion of mutually beneficial relations between Switzerland and the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan in the fields of trade, culture and tourism.

Pakistan-Switzerland Friendship Exhibition:

Starting from 29 May 2015, Pakistan-Switzerland Friendship Exhibition was held for 100 days and nights at the Karachi International Airport. 5000,000 people witnessed the event which was the first of its kind in the country.

Establishment of Pak- Swiss Facilitation Desks:

In March 2016, the Consulate General initiated discussions with the Punjab of Investment & Trade (PBIT) and Sindh Board of Investment (SBI) to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Swiss Business Council. Through the MoUs 'Pak-Swiss Facilitation Desks (PSFDs) have been established in each province.

The Consulate General collaborated with Nestlé Pakistan and the Archroma Pakistan for Denim Art exhibition for the launch of the coffee brand, Dolce Gusto. Both events were held at the Mohatta Palace, Karachi.

Business Development:

In March 2016 the Consulate General facilitated contact between Bahria Town (Pakistan) and ETH-Future Cities Laboratories - Singapore (Switzerland) for technical collaboration on urban planning and the environmental sustainability of Bahria Town Karachi project.

Education: The Consul General delivered lectures on local democracy, vocational training, and entrepreneurship to students of 15 leading public and private universities, including the Lahore School of Management Sciences (LUMS). The Consulate General facilitated the Textile Institute of Pakistan (Karachi) and the STF (Zürich) in the signing of a MoU for joint research and student / faculty exchange.

Arrival of the New Consul General: The new Consul General, Mr. Philippe Creviosier, will assume his duties in Karachi in September 2016.



Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in Pakistan

SDC Commitment in Pakistan:

The SDC's long-term commitment in Pakistan aims at reducing poverty, fighting discrimination, supporting disadvantaged groups and empowering people. SDC's current focus is on the underprivileged areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The two pillars of these activities are:

- Improving the living conditions of the rural population by enhancing livelihoods and strengthening resilience among the population.
- Empowering people by promoting good governance and conflict resolution at the local level and protecting the rights of vulnerable groups.

50 Years of SDC 2016 marks the 50th anniversary of Swiss-Pakistan development cooperation. It is an important occasion for the SDC to reflect on the commitment of Switzerland to Pakistan in the areas of water governance, local state building and humanitarian assistance through the new Country Strategy 2017-2020.

Programmes and Projects:

The SDC focuses on alleviating poverty, empowering people by improving good governance and livelihoods and supporting disadvantaged groups. The SDC has also provided extensive humanitarian assistance in the form of emergency relief, reconstruction/rehabilitation and prevention/preparedness activities in respect to natural disasters.

Glimpses into SDC Projects

Livelihoods Programme, Hindukush

Aim: The programme aims to empower communities, reduce poverty, and to enhance food security.

Total SDC Budget: CHF 22.04 million

Time Frame: January 2008 to December 2016

Geographic Focus: Chitral, Lower Dir, Swat, Karak, DI Khan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Bajaur Mohmand & FR DI Khan in the Federal Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

Water for Livelihoods

Aim: Efficient water management and protection of regional water resources, mainly for agriculture use and human consumption.

Total SDC Budget: CHF 10.47 million

Time Frame: August 2011 to December 2017

Geographic Focus: Karak, D.I. Khan, Chitral, Tank, Lower Dir in KP, FR DI Khan in FATA

Strengthening Rule of Law in Malakand Project

Aims: Support to the establishment of the rule of law and improved justice services through strengthening rule of law institutions and empowering communities.

SDC Budget: CHF 9 million

Time Frame: September 2013 to November 2018

Geographic Focus: Bannu Buner, Chitral D.I. Khan, Kohat, Lower Dir, Malakand, Shangla, Swat, Upper Dir

Water and Energy Security through Micro-hydel

Aim: To deliver much needed energy to more than 2'200 households in Chitral. An efficient use of energy and protection of the environment and the villages against natural disasters

SDC Budget 2nd Phase: CHF 3.98 million

Time Frame 2nd Phase: Oct 2015-Oct 2018

Geographic Focus: Laspur and Yarkhun valleys, Chitral in KP

Reconstruction of Flood Affected Schools

Aim: Rehabilitation and reconstruction of disaster resilient schools in flood affected areas.

SDC Budget: CHF 3.3 million

Time Frame: July 2012 to June 2016

Geographic Focus: Swat, Nowshehra & Charsadda in KP

Improving Food Security and Disaster Risk Reduction

Aim: To enhance resilience of local communities to flood disasters and improve food security through Cash for Work Programmes.

SDC Total Budget: CHF 2,250,000

Geographic Focus: Chail Valley, Upper Swat in KP Bajaur and Mohamand Agency in FATA

Citizen Actions for Peace and Development Project

Aim: To increase trust between the population and local government of the FATA and the Provincially Administered Tribal Area (PATA).

SDC Budget: CHF 5.5 million

Time Frame: August 2012 to September 2018

Geographic Focus: Bajaur, Mohamand, Khyber and Kurram

Useful Links

- **Embassy Website:**

www.eda.admin.ch/islamabad

- **Links to the Consular Section**

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/pakistan/en/home/vi-sa/entry-residency/visa.html>

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/pakistan/en/home/services.html>

- **Links to SDC**

<https://www.fdfa.admin.ch/pakistan>

www.sdc-pakistan.org

- **Swiss Business Council:**

<http://www.swissbusinesscouncil.com.pk>

- **Switzerland Global Enterprise:**

<http://www.s-ge.com/en>

- **Information for Swiss Abroad:**

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home.html>

- **Magazine for Swiss Abroad:**

<http://www.revue.ch/en/editions/2016/02/>