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## Message from the Ambassador

Dear Swiss citizens and friends of Switzerland,

Welcome to the second edition of the Newsletter of the Embassy of Switzerland. As in the previous year, this publication offers us an opportunity to share with you some of the highlights of our activities and to stay connected with our fellow citizens and friends in Oman.

In 2024, we had the pleasure of celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Swiss Embassy in Muscat. The occasion was marked in style: a Swiss Gala Event in December brought together friends and partners, while a unique cultural evening at the Royal Opera House of Musical Arts showcased the concert “Desert Bridges.” Swiss and Omani musicians performed together, blending the sounds of Alphorn and Hackbrett with Omani traditional instruments in a beautiful cultural fusion that reflected the spirit of our bilateral relations.

This year, 2025, has so far been marked by the theme of sustainability. In February, coral scientists from the Transnational Red Sea Center at EPFL took part in Oman Climate Week, exchanging knowledge on marine resilience in the face of climate change. A few weeks later, Switzerland was present with a Swiss Pavilion during Oman Sustainability Week, featuring 17 Swiss companies and various side events that underlined our commitment to sustainable development and technology.

Our team has seen changes: Deputy Head of Mission Sabina Läderach concluded her five-year tenure and has handed over to Vanessa Di Giorgi, who joined us at the beginning of August. At the Swiss Residence, our long-serving janitor and cook, Rasheed Manzil, will be retiring in September. He will be succeeded by Pradeep Nilantha. I thank both Sabina and Rasheed for their excellent service and wish Vanessa and Nilantha a great start.

Stay in touch with us through [Instagram](#), [X](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

Warm regards,  
Thomas Oertle



H.E. Dr. Thomas Oertle  
Ambassador of Switzerland to Oman and Yemen

# ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS



## Swiss National Day

A remarkable evening as we celebrated three significant milestones: Swiss National Day, 50 years of diplomatic relations between Switzerland and Oman, and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Embassy of Switzerland in Oman. The event was brought to life by an inspiring performance from talented Swiss musicians, creating an unforgettable atmosphere filled with music, joy, and shared friendship. Watch event highlights [here](#).



## 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Embassy

Celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Embassy of Switzerland in Oman, marking a decade of strong diplomatic ties, friendship, and collaboration. The milestone was honored with the dedicated Embassy team, reflecting on the achievements of the past ten years and looking ahead to continued partnership and mutual respect between Switzerland and Oman.



## Desert Bridges Concert

A cultural bridge between Switzerland and Oman: to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Embassy and the longstanding cultural ties between the two countries, the Embassy, in partnership with the Royal Opera House Muscat, brought together Swiss and Omani musicians in a one-of-a-kind ensemble. This unique blend of jazz, traditional instruments and musical heritage from both cultures culminated in an extraordinary performance by the “Desert Bridges” Ensemble on 12 December 2024 at the Royal Opera House of Musical Arts.



## Community Outreach

Together with the Royal Opera House Muscat we engaged in a community outreach with the Swiss-Omani Desert Bridges ensemble, where they hosted an Open Doors concert at the Social Welfare Home in Al Rustaq. A truly heartfelt and meaningful event filled with emotions. We were delighted to bring joy and entertainment to everyone who attended.



## Master Classes

As part of the Royal Opera House Muscat's Educational and Community Outreach program, a series of inspiring masterclasses was held in collaboration with the talented Swiss musicians of Desert Bridges, who were brought to Oman by the Embassy of Switzerland. Aimed at fostering musical learning and cultural exchange, these sessions offered Omani music students valuable access to new perspectives and international expertise.



# SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS



## Oman Sustainability Week 2025

The Embassy hosted a successful pavilion at the Oman Sustainability Week 2025 Exhibition, that took place at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Center. Seventeen Swiss companies from diverse sectors - including renewable energy technology, sustainable infrastructure, construction, environmental technology, carbon storage, sustainable financing, cybersecurity and artificial intelligence - were represented at the pavilion. A high-level delegation, including the Delegate of the Swiss Federal Council for the Agenda 2030 and representatives from the Swiss Federal Office of Energy, Swissmem, the Swiss Export Risk Insurance (SERV), the Swiss Business Hub Middle East, the Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Science and Technology (Empa), and the Oman Switzerland Friendship Association (OSFA), attended the event and took part in various conferences and talks. Watch the exhibition highlights [here](#).

## Sustainable Development Workshop

As part of Oman Sustainability Week 2025, a joint workshop convened key stakeholders from Switzerland and Oman, including the Swiss Delegate for the Agenda 2030 and representatives from the Directorate of Sustainable Development at the Ministry of Economy. The workshop served as a valuable platform to exchange ideas, share best practices, and discuss strategies for advancing and effectively monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Experts from both countries contributed their knowledge and experience, fostering a collaborative environment focused on addressing shared challenges and opportunities in sustainable development. This meaningful and productive dialogue highlighted the strong commitment of both nations to international cooperation and the collective effort needed to achieve our global sustainability targets.



## Mural Artwork

In celebration of Oman Sustainability Week, the Embassy of Switzerland proudly presented a breathtaking mural by the Swiss artist duo Nevercrew at SOHAR Port & Freezone. The artwork, portraying a fragile glass whale sheltering a miniature marine environment, reflects the delicate balance between human activity and nature. Through imagery tied to water and green hydrogen, the mural also points to the vital role of alternative energy in creating a sustainable tomorrow and serves as a powerful visual reminder of our shared responsibility to protect the environment. To watch a video on the making of this project, click [here](#).



# KEY VISITS AND CONFERENCES



## The 8<sup>th</sup> Indian Ocean Conference in Oman

The conference was marked by the visit of H.E. Wolfgang Amadeus Brühlhart, Swiss Special Envoy for MENA, who held constructive talks with H.E. Sheikh Khalifa Al Harthy, Under Secretary for Diplomatic Affairs at the Omani Foreign Ministry, as well as with delegations from Iran, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Yemen, China, and others.



## Oman Climate Week

A deep dive into the fascinating world of research on coral protection marked the visit of Dr. Guilhem Banc-Prandi of the Transnational Red Sea Center, where he shared insights on the uniqueness of Red Sea corals, the role of Swiss innovative technologies, and Oman's potential in preserving marine biodiversity for future generations.



## Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation Visit

H.E. Patrizia Danzi, representative of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, paid an official visit to Oman, where she was welcomed by H.E. Khalifa Al Harthy, Under Secretary for Diplomatic Affairs. The visit strengthened cooperation between Switzerland, the ILO Arab States, and the Social Protection Fund, supporting efforts to establish comprehensive social protection for all workers, including migrant workers.



## Vice-President of the ICRC Visit

The visit of Prof. Gilles Carbonnier, Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, to Oman was marked by a memorable evening hosted by H.E. Dr. Thomas Oertle, Ambassador of Switzerland to Oman and Yemen, and Mr. Abdullah Said, ICRC Head of Mission to Oman. The gathering featured meaningful conversations, inspiring company, and a shared commitment to making a positive difference.



## Head of the Swiss Business Hub Visit

H.E. Angelica Schempp, Consul General and Head of Swiss Business Hub Middle East, visited Muscat to meet key Omani officials and business leaders, including H.E. Ebtisam Al Farougia, Undersecretary, and H.E. Pankaj Khimji, Advisor of Foreign Trade & International Cooperation, at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Investment Promotion. The meetings explored new opportunities for collaboration in business, technology, and sustainability between Switzerland and Oman.



# CULTURAL ENGAGEMENTS



## Omani Women's Day

On Omani Women's Day, the Swiss Embassy had the honor of welcoming two remarkable young Omanis as "Ambassadors for a Day." This initiative, held in collaboration with the UK Embassy and other women-led missions in Muscat, brought together 20 participants to showcase embassies' engagement in Oman.

The guests explored Switzerland's initiatives and took part in a Youth Assembly focused on the SDGs and project proposals aligned with Oman's Vision 2040, followed by a speed mentoring session with women diplomats.



## BOOK LAUNCH: "HERRINNEN DES MONDES" AT MUSCAT INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR



We were honored to co-host, alongside the German Embassy in Muscat, the launch of the German translation of the acclaimed novel **سيدات القمر** (Celestial Bodies) by Omani author Dr. Jokha Alharthi. This highly anticipated translation by Dr. Claudia Ott, a distinguished German literary translator, published by Swiss publisher Dörlemann Verlag with the support of the German-Omani Society and the Oman-Switzerland Friendship Association, makes this Man Booker Prize-winning work accessible to German-speaking readers for the first time. The event, held at the Muscat International Book Fair, was a wonderful celebration of literary and cultural exchange, highlighting the fusion of Omani literature with the German-speaking world. Attendees had the unique opportunity to obtain signed copies and join in honoring Dr. Alharthi's outstanding contribution to contemporary literature. This collaboration underscores the strong cultural ties between Oman, Switzerland, and Germany, fostering deeper mutual understanding through the power of storytelling.



# CONSULAR AFFAIRS

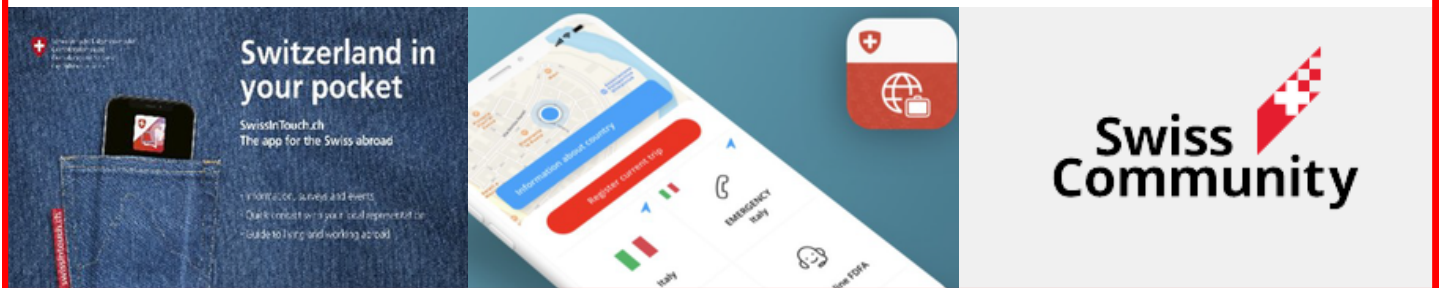
## Consular Services in Saudi Arabia

All consular matters, including civil status, legalization, issuance of passports and ID cards, certified documents, and long-term visas (over 90 days) for Swiss nationals or residents in Oman or Yemen, are managed by our consular department at the Embassy of Switzerland in Saudi Arabia. Residents of Yemen requiring a Schengen visa for travel to Switzerland (less than 90 days) must apply at the Embassy of Switzerland in Saudi Arabia. Contact details for the Embassy of Switzerland in Saudi Arabia can be found on the last page of the newsletter.

In November 2024, consular staff from Riyadh will visit Muscat for consular days and passport applications. Further details regarding the procedures will be communicated to you soon by the Embassy in Riyadh.

## Useful Apps for Swiss Abroad

Discover essential applications and services tailored for Swiss nationals abroad. [SwissInTouch](#) provides a comprehensive platform for accessing vital information from official representations and federal offices. [Travel Admin App](#) ensures safe and informed travel preparations, offering valuable support even in crisis situations like the recent pandemic. Meanwhile, the [Organisation of the Swiss Abroad](#) has represented the overall interest of Swiss nationals abroad since 1916, offering online resources, personal advice, and publishing the 'Swiss Review' magazine. Explore these invaluable tools further by clicking on the respective photos.



# MEET THE TEAM



## Farewell to Sabina Läderach

After five years of dedicated service, our Deputy Head of Mission Sabina Läderach has left Oman for her next posting on Humanitarian Diplomacy at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in Berne. Her outstanding work in political reporting and her loyal commitment made her a highly respected and reliable member of our team. If Swiss citizens were in trouble, she handled even the most delicate situations with empathy, professionalism, and integrity, always acting in the spirit of Swiss values. We thank Sabina for her excellent contribution and wish her all the best for her future endeavours. She will be missed here in Oman.

## Swiss Embassy Team 2025

- Thomas Oertle, Ambassador
- Vanessa Di Giorgi, Deputy Head of Mission
- Louloi Adi, Finance, Personnel & Administration Officer
- Sondos Omar, Trade & Diplomatic Affairs Officer
- Maher Al Maamari, Driver and Public Relations Officer
- Abdul Rasheed Sadique Manzil, Housekeeper & Cook
- Ryan Cerato, Academic Intern



# OMAN-SWITZERLAND FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION



## **About OSFA**

The Oman Switzerland Friendship Association (OSFA) was established in 2016, with a vision to implement sustainable programs that will improve mutual knowledge and understanding between the Sultanate of Oman and Switzerland. Over the years, it has created opportunities for its members to exchange ideas, learn from experiences and create friendships, subsequently encouraging the social and economic development of both countries.

## **OSFA Objectives and Activities**

OSFA aims to promote exchanges and organize activities related to key sectors such as:

- Economy & Trade
- Education & Culture
- Science & Technology
- Sport
- ICT
- Tourism
- Youth
- Health

OSFA activities are centred around strengthening ties between Oman and Switzerland, achieved through:

- Bi-Annual Business Forum (hosted in rotation between Switzerland and Oman);
- Exclusive networking opportunities for members, often in partnership with the respective Embassies;
- Professional exchanges and training between practitioners of both countries;
- Other initiatives that are in line with the objectives.

## **Membership Benefits**

Joining OSFA provides unique benefits:

- Access to a vast network of high-profile individuals with valuable connections in Oman and Switzerland;
- Connect with prominent businessmen and women;
- Opportunity to expand your network and explore new avenues for growth and commerce.

## **Become A Member**

- Memberships run on an annual basis, from January to December.
- OSFA membership application form can be found on their website [www.omanswiss.org](http://www.omanswiss.org)

**Individual Membership – 100 OMR**

**Corporate Membership – 500 OMR**

## **Contact OSFA**

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