

Swiss News

of the Embassy of Switzerland in the Republic of Korea

November 2011

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A word from the Ambassador

Dear Readers

This beautiful Korean autumn is welcoming several important contacts between Swiss and Korean high ranking government officials. Already we had the visit of Swiss State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Peter Maurer at the end of September. In his talks with his counterparts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade both sides agreed to entertain a political dialogue and further enhance the contacts and the cooperation between our two countries..



On November 14th/15th it is the turn of Swiss State Secretary for Economic Affairs, Mrs. Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch to visit Korea. She will be accompanied by a Business Delegation and seek in particular to promote further the already excellent trade relations between Switzerland and Korea.

To strengthen these economic exchanges, an important delegation of businessmen and representatives of the Canton de Vaud including personalities in science and research fields, visited Korea in October. The program, which included also an "Innovative Day Seminar", was organized by the Swiss Business Hub.

But also culture from Switzerland was very present these months in Korea. During the first week of October we saw the first important participation ever of Swiss Films at the very prominent Busan International Film Festival (BIFF) as well as the extraordinary performances of the world famous Béjart Ballet Lausanne in the Daejeon Culture & Arts Center. Swiss Design was shown with good success in the travelling exhibition "Criss+Cross. Design from Switzerland" in Seoul and Busan.

Preparations are already advanced for the Swiss Pavilion which will be open at the Yeosu Expo 2012 from 12 May 2011 on. Switzerland will already ahead of the Expo during the months of February to May organize a special program here in Seoul, called the "Swiss weeks", presenting Swiss Art & Culture, Design, Sustainability, Innovation and more. More details later.

I wish you a pleasant reading of this latest edition of our Swiss News.

Thomas Kupfer
Ambassador of Switzerland



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Embassy of Switzerland in the Republic of Korea

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Official Visit of State Secretary Peter Maurer to the Republic of Korea



Mr. Peter Maurer, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, paid an official visit to the Republic of Korea from September 26th to 27th. He agreed with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) to entertain a political dialogue and further intensify the contacts and political co-operation. In 2012/2013 both countries will celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations and see many special highlights such as the Nuclear Security Summit and the World Exposition in Yeosu.

▶ State Secretary Peter Maurer
with Deputy Foreign Minister Kim Jae-shin

A particularly promising field in which Korea and Switzerland can extend cooperation is multilateral issues (United Nations, Green Economy, Nuclear Security, Human Security etc.) where we are like-minded and share many common interests. On the occasion of this visit, State Secretary Maurer also had in-depth talks about the Korean peninsula with MOFAT and with the Ministry of Unification. He also visited the newly established Global Green Growth Institute to discuss possibilities for co-operation. The end of his stay was a special visit to our NNSC Delegation and to the DMZ.



State Secretary Peter Maurer at Panmunjom ▶

Upcoming Official Visit of State Secretary for Economic Affairs, Mrs. Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch to the Republic of Korea

The State Secretary for Economic Affairs, Mrs. Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch, will pay an official visit to the Republic of Korea from November 14th to 15th. The visit will be an excellent occasion to take stock of the current situation and the prospects of our bilateral economic relations 5 years after the entry into force of our EFTA/Swiss-Korea Free Trade Agreement. State Secretary Ineichen-Fleisch will be accompanied by a Business Delegation with representatives from business associations (OSEC, Economiesuisse, Swiss-Asian Chamber of Commerce) and representatives from Swiss companies. Additionally, a new Memorandum of Understanding to further intensify co-operation between OSEC and KOTRA will be signed, this in the presence of Ms Ruth Metzler, President of the Board of Directors of OSEC and former Justice Minister. SKBC and the Embassy will also organize a special event on the evening of November 14th, where Deputy Minister for Trade Choi Seok-Young and State Secretary Ineichen-Fleisch will address before the Swiss business community in Korea.



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UN - Undersecretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, Ms Valerie Amos at Swiss Embassy



► From left: Ahn Hyeon-Ju, Economic Assistant; An Kyong-Sook, Ambassador Assistant, USG Valerie Amos, Fiorella Kupfer Montefiori, Gina Menghini, Academic Intern

Ms Valerie Amos, UN-Undersecretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, one of the highest UN-officials, met with representatives from 15 embassies on October 24th at the Swiss Residence to discuss the results from her humanitarian mission to North Korea. She described the situation as critical, some 6 million North Koreans, particularly children, pregnant and breast-feeding women urgently need help. "When we're looking at humanitarian issues, one of the core principles is not to view it from political perspective but to help people most in need. That is the point I make to every donor" Ms Valerie Amos told the diplomats.

Swiss Government delivers in 2011 to this most vulnerable population of DPRK an emergency assistance through the SDC Office in Pyongyang of 800 tons of milk powder and support to the WFP (UN- World Food Program) amounting of 5 Mio Swiss Francs.

Visit of Canton Vaud Business Delegation to Korea



► The Swiss delegation from the Canton of Vaud led by Mr. Lionel Eperon (4th f.l. front row), General Director of the Department of Economy of the Canton of Vaud, at the Samsung Digital City in Suwon

From October 12th to 15th a delegation of businessmen and representatives of Canton of Vaud and economy related institutions visited Korea. The four-days-program included an "Innovation Day Seminar" where over 100 participants, industrial tours and company attended. The program was prepared by the Swiss Business Hub Korea in collaboration with the KCCI (Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry), EUCCK (European Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Korea) and the KBIA (Korea Biotechnology Industry Association). The objectives of the delegation were to introduce investment or location promotion to the Canton of Vaud, to arrange business opportunities for companies from Canton of Vaud and to extend economic and technological relationships between this region of Switzerland and Korea especially in fields of Medtech and ICT. It was the first time that a delegation of such large scale made its way from Switzerland to the land of the morning calm and hopefully it will encourage other Swiss companies and regions to take interest in the Korean market.

Swiss films at the Busan International Film Festival



► The Swiss film delegation with the Festival Director, Mr. Yong-Kwan Lee (4th f.l. front row), Ambassador Thomas Kupfer (2nd f.l.) and Counsellor Raoul Imbach (left)

The XVI Busan International Film Festival (BIFF) saw the first important Swiss participation in years. SwissFilms (umbrella institution for the promotion of the Swiss film production) presented in this year's BIFF 7 Swiss Films, documentary and co-productions: Mangrove by Frederic Chofat, Manipulation by Pascal Verdosci with Klaus Maria Brandauer, Summer Games by Rolando Colla, Here.. or there? of Siu Pham, That Summer by Philippe Garrell, The double Steps of Isaki Lacusta and Carte Blanche by Heidi Specogna. Mrs. Maria Stergiou from SwissFilms came to Busan accompanied by some film directors, actors, producers and promoters. The Swiss selection received very good comments from both the public and specialists of the Festival. The Swiss Embassy hosted a luncheon to help promote the Swiss films to the distributors, the organizers and the specialists of the BIFF. After this very positive experience SwissFilms hopes to be back next year with more films.

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Travelling exhibition 'Criss+Cross. Design from Switzerland'



▶ Korea University Museum, Seoul

The exhibition 'Criss+Cross. Design from Switzerland' is a travelling exhibition of the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia in association with the Korea University, Design Center Busan and Embassy of Switzerland. The exhibition was supported by Swiss Cultural Fund Korea, Switzerland Tourism and the publisher Ahn graphics. The exhibition was successfully shown this past September in the art museum of the Korea University in Seoul and then in October in the Busan Design Center. The exhibition gave way to the publication of the Korean/English Design Book "Criss+Cross. Design from Switzerland" published by Anh Graphics. It is now available in bookstores around the country.

Ambassador Thomas Kupfer at the opening at the Design Center Busan ▶



Béjart Ballet Lausanne



Contemporary dance lovers were able to enjoy two extraordinary performances of the world famous Béjart Ballet Lausanne at the Daejeon Culture & Arts Center on October 10 -11th 2011. The Ballet performed 'Ce que me dit l'Amour (what loves tells me)' music of Gustav Mahler, 'Cantate 51' music of Johann Sebastian Bach and one of Maurice Béjart masterpieces of choreography 'The Bolero' music of Maurice Ravel.

Maurice Béjart passed away in 2007 but he left behind him the legacy of his incredible talent. To this day the Ballet continues under the direction of Gil Roman with success to honor his vision of what contemporary dance should strive to be.

This ballet was sponsored by the Embassy of Switzerland and the Swiss Cultural Fund Korea.

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Days of German Language



For the first time in Korea the Embassies of German speaking countries together with the Goethe-Institute organized a series of cultural events to celebrate the "Days of the German language". Switzerland was well represented with the Swiss-Korean Journalist and writer Mrs. Hoo-nam Seelmann for a presentation of her new historical novel "Lautloses Weinen: Der Untergang des koreanischen Königshauses" during a lecture evening at the Goethe Institute on October 27th. She was followed on November 1st by the Swiss poet and 2009 Swiss Book Price Laureate, Ilma Rakusa for an evening of Poetry at the Goethe Institute together with a well-known Korean poet Kwang-kyu Kim. More cultural activities be related to German language will take place until November 26th.

Events Calendar

20.10.- 26.11.2011	Tage der deutschen Sprache / Days of German Language with the German and Austrian Embassy, Goethe-Institute, DAAD and German School For more information: http://www.goethe.de/ins/kr/seo/ver/ko8306670v.htm
10.11.2011 19:00	Reading of the Swiss Writer Ilma Rakusa in Seoul For more information: http://seoulartspace.or.kr
14.&15.11.2011	Official Visit of State Secretary for Economic Affairs, Mrs.Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch with Business Delegation
24.11.2011	Inauguration Event of the University of St. Gallen's HSG Alumni and Friends Chapter in Seoul Venue: Restaurant Gastro Tong (25-2 Tong Ui-Dong, Jongno-Gu, Seoul, Tel.02-730-4162)
25.-27.11.2011	Junior Ambassador Festival - Feel Switzerland " Handmade Swiss Chocolate Class " Venue: Caffé bene at Galleria (664-6, Shinsa-dong, Gangnam-gu, Seoul) For more information and registration: http://www.juniorambassador.org/
26.11.2011	Special Lindenbaum Festival Concert at Songeun Art Space
27.11.2011	Samichlaus for the children of the Swiss Community
02.-04.12.2011	Swiss Participation to the European Christmas Market organized by Seongbuk Global Village Center For more information: http://global.seoul.go.kr/seongbuk/
03.12.2011	SKBC Christmas Dinner

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