



Ambassador Philipp Stalder

Content

Dear Fellow Citizens, Dear Friends of Switzerland,

I am happy to present you a compilation of information about Swiss related events in Ghana, Benin and Togo from July to December 2019. The Embassy's activities have covered many fields, related to politics, Switzerland's economic cooperation & development, business & trade, consular issues and cultural events. Despite busy times at the end of the year, I hope that you find a moment to have a look at it and let me warmly thank you for your continuing interest and support.

With much pleasure, I can also inform you that starting this month, the Swiss Embassy will increase its communication channels and open its own Facebook account: Embassy of [Switzerland in Ghana, Benin and Togo](#). Following us on [Facebook](#) will allow you to be always updated about Swiss-Ghanaian relations and the various activities of our Embassy.

On behalf of my team, let me wish you and your families a Merry Christmas, a peaceful holiday season and all the best for a successful year 2020!

Philipp Stalder,
Ambassador of Switzerland to Ghana, Benin and Togo.

Chers Compatriotes, Chers Amis de la Suisse,

C'est avec plaisir que je vous présente un résumé condensé des événements suisses qui se sont déroulés au Ghana, Bénin et Togo durant la période de juillet à décembre 2019.

Les activités de l'Ambassade englobent plusieurs domaines allant de la politique à la coopération économique et de développement de la Suisse, du commerce et de l'industrie, des affaires consulaires ou des événements culturels. En cette période effervescente de fin d'année, j'espère que vous

trouverez un peu de temps à y consacrer. D'ores et déjà je vous remercie chaleureusement pour votre intérêt et constant support.

D'autre part, je vous annonce avec grande satisfaction que l'Ambassade va augmenter dès ce mois ses voies de communication, avec l'ouverture de son compte Facebook: [Embassy of Switzerland in Ghana, Benin and Togo](#). Nous suivre sur [Facebook](#) vous permettra de vous tenir

à jour sur les relations entre la Suisse et le Ghana et diverses activités en cours. Je m'associe à tout le personnel pour vous souhaiter, ainsi qu'à vos familles, un Joyeux Noël, de paisibles Fêtes et mes meilleurs vœux pour une année 2020 fructueuse!

Philipp Stalder,
L'Ambassadeur de Suisse au Ghana, Bénin et Togo.

Politics

Swiss National Day Celebrated in Accra

This year's Swiss National Day was celebrated on the 14th of August, at the Swiss Residence. The event was well attended by Heads and members of other diplomatic missions, government officials, program partners, representatives of Swiss businesses and a section of Swiss citizens living in Ghana. Ghana's Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr. Alan Kyeremanteng, was the special guest of honor.

Renowned Swiss graffiti artist Pirmin Breu boosted the Swiss National day with a live-act spray art as a side attraction. His artwork can be seen at the Swiss Residence and is meant to express the healthy and strong relationship between Ghana and Switzerland.

[In Ambassador Philipp Stalder's speech to the guests, published by pulse.com.gh](#), he drew



Guest of honour: Ambassador Stalder, interacting with the Minister of Trade and Industry, Alan Kyeremanteng.

parallels between the rich diversity of Switzerland's and Ghana's society and further recounted the levels of cooperation between both countries.

Remise des Lettres de Créances au Chef de l'Etat du Bénin

Le 26 novembre 2019, l'Ambassadeur de Suisse Philipp Stalder a remis ses Lettres de Créances au Président Patrice Talon à sa résidence officielle à Cotonou. Le cérémonial de remise des Lettres a été suivi d'un long entretien avec le Chef de l'Etat du Bénin, auquel la Directrice du Bureau de la Coopération suisse, Mme Valérie Liechti, ainsi que son adjoint, M. Björn Schranz, ont pris part.

Les deux parties se sont félicité mutuellement des très bonnes relations bilatérales. L'Ambassadeur a attiré l'attention sur les priorités de la Coopération suisse au développement, qui se concentrent plus particulièrement dans les domaines formation/



Visite à Cotonou: L'Ambassadeur de Suisse Philipp Stalder avec le Président du Bénin, Patrice Talon.

apprentissage professionnel, gouvernance et décentralisation ainsi que sur le développement rural. Dans ce contexte, le nouvel Ambassadeur de Suisse a mentionné devant la presse qu'il

s'engage volontiers à apporter sa contribution à l'amélioration de l'image et des connaissances générales sur le Bénin auprès de la population suisse.

Klimawandel - vertiefte Gespräche zwischen der Schweiz und Ghana

Um ihre Verpflichtungen im Rahmen der Pariser Klimakonvention bis 2030 zu erfüllen, unternimmt die Schweiz mannigfaltige Massnahmen im Inland und führt daneben mit vereinzelt Staaten wie Ghana Expertengespräche über den allfälligen Zukauf von CO₂-Zertifikaten. In diesem Rahmen fand am 23. Oktober in Genf auch ein Treffen von Umweltminister Prof. Kwabena Frimpong Boateng mit Vertretern des Bundes unter Leitung von BAFU-Direktor Marc Chardonnens statt. Vor der Reise in die Schweiz führte die Botschaft mit dem Leiter der ghanaischen Umweltbehörde ein Gespräch über die Prioritäten der beiden Länder im Umweltschutzbereich sowie im Kampf gegen Klimawandel.



Expertenaustausch: Umweltminister Kwabena Frimpong Boateng im Austausch mit BAFU-Direktor Marc Chardonnens.

Official visit of Ambassador to Kumasi

The first official visit outside Accra brought Ambassador Philipp Stalder to Kumasi. On 18 October 2019, the Swiss Head of Mission was received by the Mayor of Kumasi, Osei Assibey Antwi, in his office, the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly.

Kumasi is the second largest city in Ghana and the centre of the Ashanti Kingdom. Between 2009 and 2019, the annual population growth was constantly between 4.6 per cent and 5.44 per cent. Therefore, today, 3.206 million people live in the Kumasi Area. Ambassador Stalder and Osei Assibey Antwi discussed the infrastructural challenges of this growth, but also the opportunities of investment, which the mayor attributed to a considerable extent to the prestigious Kwame Nkrumah University Science and Technology (KNUST) in Kumasi.

Philipp Stalder also met with Professor Kwasi Obiri-Danso, Vice Chancellor of the university, which is in exchange with the Lausanne EPFL via a bilateral cooperation project.

The protocol furthermore included a visit to the



Friendly exchange between Mayor and Ambassador: Osei Assibey Antwi and Philipp Stalder.

Kejetia Market construction site. The Kejetia Market in the centre of Kumasi is one of the largest open-air markets in West Africa. An estimated 40,000 salespeople sell their goods there every day in around 11,000 shops. The market is bursting and is frequently plagued by fires. The new construction should now guarantee safety and have a calming effect on traffic, but at the same maintain the character of the regional trade tradition.

Switzerland launches three new courses at KAIPTC



At the Swiss courses, around 100 participants from over 20 ECOWAS member countries enhanced their skills for executing peace support operations. The two weeks' trainings were prepared and conducted by the Swiss military officers stationed at the KAIPTC together with support from KAIPTC staff and facilitators.

As there was a change at the position of the KAIPTC Commandant in late summer, the new head of the Centre, Maj Gen Francis Ofori, also paid a courtesy meeting to Ambassador Stalder at the Swiss Residence on October 29. Both sides exchanged friendly notes, discussed about the prospects of future collaboration and referred to the official visit which a delegation from KAIPTC brought to Berne earlier in autumn for meetings with representatives from the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport.

Between August and October 2019, Switzerland launched three training courses at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC): the basic course on assistance and protection against chemical weapons, the training course on intelligence support for peace operations and the training course on the protection of civilians in armed conflict.

Economic & Development Cooperation

Switzerland and Ghana sign Decentralized Budget Agreement



Proven partnership: The Swiss Ambassador and the Head of Cooperation with his delegation at the signing ceremony.

On October 30, Ambassador Stalder met with Ghana's Finance Minister Ken Ofori Attah and Minister for Local Government and Rural Development Hajia Alima Mahama. They signed Switzerland's Decentralized Budget Support Agreement on the provision of decentralized budget support for 18 million Swiss Francs for the years 2019 to 2021.

All 260 districts in Ghana will benefit from

performance-based grants to strengthen public financial management and invest in basic social and economic infrastructure.

In his remarks, Ambassador Stalder called the new decentralized budget support a testimony of Switzerland's strong commitment to the partnership between the two countries. He highlighted that "decentralization is a powerful instrument for development" and stressed that the support is expected to "bring governance closer to the needs of the citizens and ultimately contribute to local economic development and the reduction of disparities".

Switzerland has been providing decentralized budget support through the District Development Facility since 2013. Over this period, more than 6'480 small-scale infrastructure projects ranging from basic school blocks, markets, health, and water and sanitation projects were financed and contributed to the local economic development and the reduction of disparities.

Switzerland supports student competition on green buildings

Between July 18 and August 27, Switzerland together with the International Finance Cooperation (IFC) organized the first student competition on green buildings under the Excellence in Design for Greater Efficiencies (EDGE) program in a bid to raise awareness and create a better understanding about the benefits of green buildings.



Awarding innovative architecture: Matthias Feldmann, Deputy Head of the Swiss Mission with the winners of the competition.

The EDGE program teamed up with the architectural firm, Orthner Orthner & Associates and the Central University to run the competition for architecture students. Twenty students participated in the competition. In line with the objective of the competition, they designed green buildings that featured green and, in particular, reduced embodied materials, energy and water use by 20 per cent relative to conventional buildings. The winner of the competition is David Gifat Ampiw, together with the second and third placed competitors, Olufemi Abodurin and Cheryl Omani-Baah.

Switzerland has been partnering with the IFC to support the EDGE green building program since 2016 with a total contribution of USD 10.5 million in a total of six countries worldwide, including Ghana. The EDGE program works with the public and private sector to introduce energy-efficient and environmentally-friendly building standards. The Swiss company, SGS, is one of the certification partners of the EDGE program.

Public Sector Leadership Awards held with Swiss Support

On 25.09.2019, the Embassy of Switzerland supported IMANI Ghana, with the holding of the [2019 Inspirational Public Sector Leadership Awards](#). The awards were to recognize public institutions in Ghana that were using innovation to drive efficiency.

Ambassador Philipp Stalder commended IMANI Ghana for the laudable initiative to recognize the efforts of Ghanaian innovators and related Switzerland's experience, where innovation has been one of the key drivers of economic prosperity and growth. He shared his conviction, that the same would be true for Ghana.



Innovation as driver of prosperity: Ambassador Stalder delivering his opening address.

Strengthening the management of public finances

On August 9, 2019 the Government of Ghana launched the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) Assessment Report for the year 2018. The PEFA report provides a snapshot of the strengths and weaknesses of Ghana's public financial management (PFM) system. Switzerland, together with the World Bank and the European Union, facilitated the assessment. The assessment will be used to inform the future reforms of Ghana's public financial management.

In his welcome remarks as the outgoing Co-Chair of the PFM Sector Working Group, Mr. Matthias Feldmann, Deputy Head of Mission and Head of Cooperation at the Swiss Embassy congratulated the Government for successfully completing a fourth PEFA assessment. He assured the audience of Switzerland's continued commitment to support PFM reforms in Ghana. Sound public financial management is a cornerstone of Ghana beyond Aid. The PEFA program was initiated in 2001. It



Examining public expenditures: Matthias Feldmann, Head of Cooperation at the launch of the report.

is a global program that provides a framework for assessing and reporting on the strengths and weaknesses of PFM using quantitative indicators to measure performance. Switzerland was a founding member of the PEFA and among the nine international development partners that currently support the program.

Switzerland supports the establishment of sector skills bodies in Ghana

On September 12, the Council for Vocational Education and Training (COTVET) in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation and with support from the Ghana Skills Development Initiative (GSDI III) inaugurated the sector skills bodies in the agriculture, construction, hospitality and tourism sector.

The bodies provide recommendations on curriculum development and consist of representatives from the private and public sectors including key technical and vocational education (TVET) institutions. Ambassador Stalder drew parallels to the Swiss system and expressed his appreciation that Ghana will develop its own system. He welcomed the increased role of the private sector in the reformed Ghanaian TVET system and hoped that its involvement would ensure that labour market demands are effectively addressed.

Switzerland supports GSDI as part of its broader flagship program the Ghana Private Sector Competitiveness Program. GSDI is implemented



In support of vocational training: Ambassador Philipp Stalder at the inauguration of the Sector Skills Bodies.

by GIZ in cooperation with COTVET and other stakeholders. The program seeks to improve the quality of TVET and supports the provision of demand-driven training in the informal and agricultural sector.

Switzerland's engagement in quality infrastructure in Ghana

Together with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Switzerland launched the Global Quality Standards Program (GQSP) on September 24.

GQSP seeks to further strengthen the quality and standards compliance capacity of national quality institutions and thus to strengthen market access for SMEs in the cashew, oil palm and cocoa value chains.

The program is succeeding the second phase of the Trade Capacity Building (TCB II) project, which ended in 2018.

Switzerland has been supporting Ghana for more than 10 years to build up the quality infrastructure. This long term engagement contributed to



The second phase of the project has started: Ambassador Stalder at the launch of GQSP.

strengthen the capacity of key institutions such as the Ghana Standards Authority and the Food and Drugs Authority to provide services to SMEs and led to the international accreditation of the Quality Control Company of the Cocobod.

30 years of clean water supply for Mafi-Kumase

On 30th November 2019 the Ambassador Philipp Stalder travelled with a small delegation to Mafi-Kumase in the Volta region to celebrate the 30 years anniversary of a unique water supply project, realised in a joint cooperation between the community of Mafi-Kumase, the Council of Elgg in the Canton of Zurich and Caritas Switzerland.

Three decades ago, the drinking water in Mafi-Kumase was a source of guinea worm, and people were badly affected by bilharzia infections. As a result, much needed teachers, nurses, and public servants refused to stay and work in Mafi-Kumase.

Mr. Kolly Dorcoo left Mafi-Kumase in 1962 to study engineering in Zurich. Together with his Swiss working colleague Martin Wegelin they came up with the idea to install a natural, sand based water filter system to improve the water quality in Mafi-Kumase.

In the beginning, prophecies of doom predicted the failure of the ambitious project within a couple of years. However, the guinea worm disappeared



A unique success: Ambassador Philipp Stalder congratulates the community of Mafi-Kumase.

from Mafi-Kumase within months. Thirty years later, the Mafi-Kumase water project still provides the community with the most valuable resource: clean drinking water. As a consequence of clean water, the quality of education and other public services have increased over the years. [Michael Yaw Gyato, Deputy Minister, Sanitation and Water Resources, expressed his recognition for the people of Mafi-Kumasi and their self-help project.](#)

Switzerland's support for Organic Agriculture



Organic farming is profitable: A farmer harvesting cocoa.

In the second week of November 2019, a delegation of the [Global Programme Food Security \(GPFS\)](#) of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has been visiting Ghana. Since 2013, the GPFS financed a research project implemented by the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture ([FiBL](#)) with support from the University

of Ghana. [The ProEcoAfrica pioneer research project](#) compared and analysed productivity and profitability of organic and conventional smallholder farms under tropical conditions in Ghana and Kenya. The results show that Ghanaian farmers adopting organic management practices showed to have both significant higher yields of crops and up higher gross margins at farm level. However, these positive effects of organic practices only manifest when farmers possess broad organic management knowledge, have access to markets, and can rely on stable governance systems.

The delegation also attended the [5th West African Organic Conference](#) that highlighted the potential of organic agriculture in contributing to income growth, enhancement of systems resilience and mitigation of climate change, food sovereignty and trade.

Business & Trade

Swiss Business Lunch 2/2019



Strengthening the network: Ambassador Stalder interacting with a guest.

On 9 October, Ambassador Philipp Stalder hosted the second Swiss Business Lunch. More than 30 founders, CEO and representatives of Swiss

businesses operating in Ghana attended the event. In his address to the guests, Ambassador Stalder underlined the interest the Embassy takes in the activities of Swiss companies in Ghana, and the readiness to support them within the given mandate of the Swiss representations abroad.

Besides the Swiss cuisine and informal networking opportunities, the renowned legal scholar, Professor Henry Kwasi Prempeh spoke about the framework of the Ghanaian economy. Professor Prempeh who is the Executive Director of the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) pointed to the particularly tight relationship between the political and the economic sphere from 1957 since today. Furthermore, he emphasised the importance of political reforms in view of a successful implementation of the “Ghana Beyond Aid”-Agenda.

Sourcing 80 per cent sustainable Cocoa until 2025



Meeting with Cocobod on future of Ghana's cocoa sector: Joseph Boahen Aidoo with Ambassador Stalder.

On November 20, the head of Cocobod, Joseph Boahen Aidoo, received Ambassador Philipp Stalder for an exchange on various topics of common interest between Ghana and Switzerland. Deforestation, galamsey and the low living income of smallholder cocoa farmers were presented as major challenges in the sector.

During the discussion, the dialogue between the [Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa \(SPSC\)](#) and Cocobod on tackling existing challenges in the sector and on piloting new approaches was positively mentioned. The SPSC is bringing together the Swiss stakeholders across the chocolate industry, research, civil society, and the [Swiss Government](#) with a clear commitment to source 80 per cent sustainable cocoa until 2025.

Koa opens new factory in Assin Akrofuom



Innovating cocoa production: The Team of Taste Cocoa/ Koa in Assin Akrofuom.

On August 30, the Deputy Head of the Swiss Mission, Matthias Feldmann, attended the official inauguration of the cocoa fruit juice factory of the Swiss company, Taste Cocoa / Koa, in Assin Akrofuom together with high level government officials and other dignitaries. Taste Cocoa is a young Swiss company founded in 2018. The

company is the first in West Africa to process the pulp of the fresh cocoa fruit into cocoa juice and export it to international markets where it is used either as a final or as an intermediate product. The factory in Assin Akrofuom operates according to sustainable and resource-efficient principles by using solar energy for power.

Currently the company employs 30 people in Ghana and works together with 800 small holder farmers from the Assin Akrofuom area, who are earning up to 30 per cent in additional income through selling their pulp instead of letting it go to waste.

In December, [the Swiss newspaper NZZ published an article](#) about the innovative company.

In addition to private investments, the project was supported with a co-financing grant from Switzerland's [REPIC program](#) which supports innovative private sector initiatives in the areas of renewable energy and resource efficiency.

Culture & Education

Die göttliche Ordnung auf den Kopf stellen



Ernsthaft und doch witzig: Das Filmplakat des Schweizer Erfolgsfilms die göttliche Ordnung.

In zweiten Dezemberwoche wird alljährlich der Verabschiedung der internationalen Menschenrechtskonvention am 10. Dezember 1948 in Genf gedenkt. Die Schweizer Botschaft in Akkra legte in der diesjährigen Aktionswoche den Fokus auf Frauenrechte und der Gleichstellung von Mann und Frau lud am 12. Dezember 2019 zu einer Filmvorführung der Schweizer Produktion «Die göttliche Ordnung» im Goethe Institut in Ghana.

In der international prämierten Komödie erzählt die Regisseurin Petra Volpe die Geschichte der Schweizer Hausfrau Nora, die mit ihrem Mann Hans und ihren beiden Söhnen ein ruhiges Leben auf dem Dorf führt. Der soziale Wandel, der seit dem Mai 1968 durch das Land geht, ist an ihr bisher vorübergegangen. Doch plötzlich entdeckt sie ihr politisches Interesse und beginnt, sich für das Frauenwahlrecht einzusetzen, über das die Männer im Februar 1971 abstimmen.

Anders als die Schweizerinnen waren die Ghanaerinnen bereits seit 1960 wahl- und stimmberechtigt. Heute liegt der Anteil der Parlamentarierinnen jedoch bei lediglich 13 Prozent.

Vor gut besetzten Rängen beantwortete die ehemalige Vizepräsidentin des Internationalen Strafgerichtshof in Den Haag, Prof. Akwa Kuenyehia, Fragen zu den Gründen für diesen Tiefstand. Die renommierte Juristin plädierte für eine Frauenquote in politischen Gremien, um Frauen die Teilnahme am politischen Geschehen zu ermöglichen.

Black and Swiss: The emergence of a new generation



Home in two places: Panellists share their experience on living between Ghana and Switzerland.

“Where are you from?” seems a fairly simple question to answer. However, the definition of

the own identity is not for everybody it is straight forward. There is an emerging generation of people who combine more than one culture.

On the evening of November 27th, the Swiss Embassy in Accra welcomed around 250 guests at the Alliance Française to the movie screening of Bounty. The documentary of the Swiss-Rwandan filmmaker Shyaka Kagame explores this hybrid culture of a young generation of Swiss with African heritage. Bacary (Senegal) and Jeffrey (Ghana) identify as Swiss, whereas, in contrast, Rili (Nigeria) claims his African roots. Winta (Eritrea) considers herself culturally mixed while for her daughter Ayan, skin colour does not matter.

Bounty premiered in 2017 and screened already in various places across Europe and Africa.

However, the screening in Accra was special, insofar as parts of the movie were filmed in Accra, following the journey of Jeffrey Provencal, who moved five years ago from Zurich to Accra to start a business in the recycling sector. After the screening of the movie, the three Swiss-Ghanaians Shelly Ohene-Nyako, the movie protagonist Jeffrey Provencal and Kolly Dorcoo shared with

the audience their very personal perspective on identity and belonging.

Ambassador Philipp Stalder emphasised in his address to the audience the importance of continuously weaving the social fabric according to the lived reality of the society.

Students from University of Lausanne discover Cape Coast



From Lausanne to Accra: Swiss students meet the Ambassador at his residence.

The University of Lausanne organized in November 2019 a field camp of one week in Ghana. Eleven students from Lausanne, representing the Master of Tourism Studies, and the Master in Geography, orientation Development and Environment, collaborated with three students from the University of Cape Coast's Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management.

Divided into three groups, the students studied the effects of root tourism, street food tourism and nature-based tourism on local development and local populations in Cape Coast and nearby Kakum Park. The research trip ended with a visit to the Swiss Residence in Accra where the students and their tutors where the group was received by the Ambassador and his spouse for coffee and cake.

Ambassador Stalder endorses Punctuality Campaign



On 12.09.2019, Ambassador Philipp Stalder joined a number of prominent Ghanaians and dignitaries to endorse the [punctuality campaign, led by Punctuality Ghana Foundation](#).

At a short ceremony at the Swiss Residence in Accra, Mr. Stalder noted that Swiss people have a strict attitude towards punctuality, which is one of the important factors for the high quality of Swiss public infrastructure.

Mr. Stalder is the 5th Ambassador and the 27th high profile personality to endorse the campaign which began two years ago.

Une directrice genevoise et un comédien béninois au Togo



Veulent évoquer la tolérance: Silvia Barreiros et Julien Mabilia Bissila sur la scène de théâtre à Lomé.

Le 22 novembre 2019, l'Institut Français du Togo a accueilli la pièce suisse-béninoise *Zokwezo* de Silvia Barreiros et Julien Mabilia Bissila. *Zokwezo*, s'inscrit dans le contexte d'un régime totalitaire imaginaire. C'est l'histoire de deux destins, ceux

d'un homme et d'une femme, qui se croisent.

Zokwezo constitue une réponse à ceux qui cultivent une nostalgie de l'époque où les femmes restaient à la maison, et où les homosexuels vivaient cachés.

Silvia Barreiros, directrice de la Compagnie Apsara Genève, rencontre Nicolas de Dravo Houénou, comédien béninois, au Festival International de Théâtre de Béjaïa en 2013. Suite à cette rencontre, elle a l'idée de s'inspirer du film *Une journée particulière* d'Ettore Scola.

Selon elle, situer cette création en Afrique et attribuer les rôles de Boullass (Gabriele dans le film de Scola) et celui du gardien à des comédiens africains, donne une toute nouvelle lecture à ce monument du cinéma.

Visa & Consular Section

Opening hours of the embassy during the holidays

The Embassy of Switzerland in Accra will be closed on December 25th and 26th, 2019 and on January 1st and 2nd, 2020. For emergencies concerning only Swiss citizens please call +41 800 247 365 or +41 58 465 33 33, or check our [website](#).

The Visa Section will be closed from December 20th, 2019 to January 3rd, 2020. We will resume on January 6th, 2020.

Swiss Visa: VFS Global launches Joint Visa Application Center



Processing Swiss visa since August: Operators at the VFS Global Visa Application Center in Accra.

A new Visa Application Centre was launched in Accra, with an official opening on August 17, 2019, providing travelers visa services for 12 countries, which includes Switzerland and Liechtenstein. Concerning the procedure for visas for Switzerland

and Liechtenstein (Belgium as well as Latvia, which Switzerland represents for visa matters in Accra) you will find all information on the following [webpage](#). Furthermore, the VFS Global Centre is equipped with a Foreigner Identification Management System (FIMS) to accept applications for Ghana ID cards for expatriates residing in the country. For this service, you will find all information on the following [webpage](#).

The VFS Global visa application Centre and the FIMS Service are located under the same roof at the following address close to Marina Mall: VFS Global, 1st floor, Atlantic Towers, Behind Marina Mall, Airport City, Accra. Working Hours: 08:00 to 14.00 (for submission), 13:00 to 16:00 (for Collection of passport). Working Days: Monday to Friday (excluding Public Holiday). Contact nos.: 00233 30 274 6221, E-Mail: info.chgh@vfshelpline.com

Geänderte Reisehinweise für Ghana



Das Eidgenössische Departement für auswärtige Angelegenheiten (EDA) hat im November 2019 die regionalen Risiken für Reisen nach Ghana angepasst. Im Grenzgebiet zu Burkina Faso besteht ein zunehmendes Risiko von Attentaten und Entführungen. Daher rät das EDA von touristischen und anderen nicht dringenden Reisen in die Regionen Upper West und Upper East ab. Zudem weist das EDA auf die Gefahr von Entführungen und Lösegeldpressungen in ganz Ghana hin. Weitere Informationen und Hinweise finden Sie auf der [Webseite des Eda](#).

Regional Consular Centre (RCC) note

The Swiss Embassy in Accra provide consular services for Swiss nationals in Ghana, Togo and Benin, fulfilling many of the functions of a municipal administrative authority in Switzerland. It is important that your records and contact details with the RCC are up to date so please forward any changes by [post](#) or by [e-mail](#).

New registration and login process for Itineris



To make your travel data more secure, Itineris introduced a new login and registration process from 29 August 2019. Users trying to register or log in on itineris will be automatically redirected to a new page on the FDFA website. If you already have an itineris account or if you wish to register click [here](#). Once this new registration process is complete, click on [“Login”](#) (top left corner).

The Embassy of Switzerland in Ghana strongly recommends its fellow citizens to register with [Itineris](#), which allows entering dates of your leisure or business trips. It helps the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs to locate and contact you more rapidly if a serious crisis occurs abroad and to warn you if the security situation in a region suddenly deteriorates drastically. Please install the app on your Smartphone free of charge.

Varia

«Die Diplomatie war immer mein Traumberuf»



Im Gespräch mit Journalist Hansjörg Enz: Philipp Stalder über seine Karriere in der Welt der internationalen Diplomatie.

Botschafter sein klingt für viele Menschen nach glamourösen Banketten, unablässigem Händeschütteln mit Präsidenten und Ministern

und Dienstautos mit roten Diplomatenschildern. In der Sendung «Zur Person» des Schweizer Lokalsender Tele D gibt Botschafter Philipp Stalder einen Blick hinter die Kulissen seines Berufs und erzählt, wie der Alltag eines Missionschefs in Wirklichkeit aussieht und weshalb die Diplomatie für ihn zwar nicht glamourös, aber dennoch – oder vielleicht gerade deswegen - sein Traumberuf ist. Das Interview ist online auf der [Website von Tele D](#) abrufbar.

Botschafter Philipp Stalder hat auch Schülerinnen und Schülern seiner ehemaligen [Kantonsschule Frauenfeld](#) Einblicke in den Diplomatenberuf gewährt und ein [Gespräch mit dem Tagblatt der Ostschweiz](#) geführt.

Music, food and rest: Swiss musician opens event space in Accra



Waiting in the wings: The Ehrensperger family working on opening the doors to Beda's.

This story starts with a small boy who grew up in the Canton of Aargau and whose love for rhythm kept him constantly glued to his drums. But the story could also begin from somewhere

between Capecoast and Axim, with a little girl facing the wind from the opposite direction. Beda Ehrensperger's enormous love for drumming saw him travel to Ghana to under-study drum master Kofi Missiso at the Arts Center Accra after studying music in Zurich. After one year in Ghana the drum led Beda to meet Mefia. Together, they made a family, bought a beautiful home in Switzerland and and lived happily until a life changing decision was made. The one of giving up the life they had built in Switzerland to relocate to Ghana, to start up a musical family project at Old Ashongman in Accra.

A huge complex comprising of an event stage space with music recording studios, a bar and restaurant, and guest rooms. A facility near completion, meant to welcome and host visitors from all over the world. The complex will be named Beda's, and will be ready to open its doors in the beginning of 2020.

Calendar

El Anatsui-exhibition at Kunstmuseum Bern



One of the sculptures that will be exhibited in Bern: Gravity and Space, 2010, by El Anatsui.

In collaboration with Haus der Kunst in Munich, the [Kunstmuseum Bern](#) is mounting a large-scale exhibition of the work of Ghanaian artist El Anatsui. He is arguably Africa's most renowned contemporary artist and famous for his large sculptures of recycled screw-tops that decorate whole walls like magnificent tapestries. These works, oscillating between textile art, sculpture and wall painting, upend traditional disciplinary categories. At the same time, the former metal sealing rings of liquor bottles reflect the (post-) colonial relationship between Europe, Africa and the New World. The exhibition focuses on the monumentality of El Anatsui's work and reveals how it developed out of his life-long passion for drawing, his wooden sculptures carved with chainsaws, and the ceramics he produced in the early years of his artistic career. The exhibition opens the doors on March 13, 2020 and lasts until June 21.

Neues «Schoggifestival» in Zürich



Was steckt in der Schweizer Schokolade? Anja Glover und Andrea Hüssler wollen diese Frage an ihrem Festival beantworten.

Am 3. und 4. April 2020 findet im Zürcher Kraftwerk das erste «[Schoggifestival ehrundredlich](#)» statt. Die Organisatorinnen Anja Glover und Andrea Hüssler wollen mit dem Projekt den Geschichten jener Menschen eine Plattform bieten, die den Kakao für die berühmte Schweizer Schokolade herstellen. Den Festivalgründerinnen ist es ein Anliegen, Genuss mit verantwortungsvollem Handeln zu verbinden. Ein besonderes Augenmerk soll dabei auf Ghana gelegt werden. Rund 60 Prozent der Schweizer Schokolade wird mit Kakao aus Ghana zubereitet.

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