



Embassy of Switzerland in Pakistan

Message of the Ambassador

Dear readers, in this 3rd edition of the Newsletter, I would like to highlight the key activities of the Embassy and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) as well as the Consulate General in Karachi.

To mark the 50th anniversary of its cooperation (1966-2016) with Pakistan the Embassy of Switzerland, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) initiated an art project; "We the peoples, we the arts". The objective of the event was to promote Sustainable Development Goal #2 of the United Nations: Zero Hunger. The project will continue for the next three years to empower young artists and engage them as agents of change.

Since the 1st of January 2017, Embassy and the SDC office are working towards integration with the merger of finances, human resources and communications. This integration will bring more coherence and consolidate the work of Switzerland in Pakistan. The Swiss cooperation in Pakistan will close by 2019, in accordance with the decision passed by the Swiss Federal Council.

On 25 November, Pakistan and Switzerland completed their 9th round of political dialogue. The parties reviewed bilateral relations and discussed future areas of cooperation. Both sides identified opportunities for further strengthening mutual cooperation. The dialogue ended on a positive note with the Government of Pakistan appreciating the efforts of the Swiss Confederation for its extensive development assistance to Pakistan. Both countries also agreed to enhance collaboration with the United Nations and in other multilateral forums.

Since 2012, Switzerland has been offering "Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships" to the young and brilliant Pakistani students to support quality education, research and innovation. In 2016, two scholarships were granted to Pakistani students.

The Swiss Embassy remains committed to promoting bilateral ties and cooperation between Pakistan and Switzerland. The Embassy facilitates Swiss business delegates regularly, and facilitates opportunities for Swiss businesses to explore trade and business opportunities in Pakistan.

I am confident that it will be another excellent year for the relations between Pakistan and Switzerland, especially in the areas of development, trade and investment, education and arts.



Mr. Marc P. George

Ambassador of Switzerland
to Pakistan

Embassy of Switzerland in Pakistan in Brief

The Embassy: As the representation of the Swiss Government and its agencies in Pakistan, the Embassy covers all matters concerning to diplomatic relations between the two countries. It also serves Swiss interests in the areas of political, economic and financial affairs, legal arrangements as well as science education and culture.

Celebration of Swiss National Day: The Embassy organized a festive event for the Swiss community on the 725th Swiss National Day. 140 Swiss nationals along with their families and Pakistani friends attended the event.

Book Launch "Keeping History Alive- Safeguarding Cultural Heritage of Afghanistan": Ambassador Marc George hosted a reception at his residence on October 14, 2016, to launch the UNESCO publication "Keeping History Alive - Safeguarding Cultural Heritage in Post-Conflict Afghanistan". Members from civil society, culture enthusiasts and media personnel attended the event. The Ambassador welcomed guests and spoke of the importance of showcasing the history of a neighbouring country and the common ground that can be reached through a shared cultural history. The Ambassador of Afghanistan, Dr. Omar Zakhilwal and the Programme Manager from UNESCO, Ms. Sara Noshadi gave brief presentations on the cultural heritage of Afghanistan. The book launch was accompanied by an exhibition displaying pictorial views of monuments and historical sites in Afghanistan. The project was supported and co-financed by the SDC - Kabul.



Small Projects Supported by the Embassy

The Embassy of Switzerland through its small project fund has over the years been supported projects in the development as well as in the human rights fields. With the goal to provide support to the NGOs with few financial resources but strong impact at the community level; the small projects focus on supporting initiatives around education, health, women rights, due process of law, skills development and youth.

Empowering the Kalasha Community: The Embassy of Switzerland collaborated with a local partner and UNESCO to enhance the capacity of Kalash communities in Rumbur and Birir valleys to document, map and safeguard their cultural heritage. The ongoing project aims to engage the Kalash people and concerned government partners through a community-based Inventorying (CBI) project.

The information gathered will be used for the future proposals for livelihood and income generation initiatives for the local community as well as to prepare requests to the Secretariat of the UNESCO 2003 Convention for its future funding support Kalash.

Child Marriage Awareness Workshops: The Embassy in partnership with a local NGO sponsored a project to sensitize communities on child marriage. The aim of the project was to reach out to relevant, individuals and to educate them on the risks of early marriage. The project in nine selected districts, informed 900 people through workshops by presenting case studies. The project selected approximately 100 people (including police officers, marriage registrars, clerics religious leaders, community heads and parents of out-of-school children) to participate in the awareness/training workshops. To ensure sustainability, ten task force members were identified from each district to monitor early child marriages within the community.

Compassionate Footprint: Recognizing the importance of peace education, the Embassy collaborated with a local NGO on the "Compassionate Footprint" project. Fifteen schools were selected from rural and urban areas of Karachi and students were encouraged to debate issues like quality education for all, security medical facilities, clean food and water and respect for the law. Schools (privileged and underprivileged) were asked to work together to plant tree saplings in each other's schools and were asked to monitor the growth of their partner's tree to protect the environment and promote peaceful co-existence.

Creative Culture and Education Art Workshop: The Embassy collaborated with the local NGO to promote art education for moderate and underprivileged communities by supporting talents of potential artists and craftspeople from rural areas. The project targeted children of rural and impoverished areas in Faisalabad with an aim to provide new methods of teaching and to learn both to educators and children. The data collected in this project is being used for research, which will be sent to the local government and donors, highlighting the importance of art education in learning.



Human Rights through Cinematography: Fostering respect for Human Rights is the cornerstone of the Switzerland's foreign policy. The Embassy participated in the second Human Rights through Cinematography festival (15 November – 10 December 2016). The festival endeavours to raise awareness on Human Rights by showcasing the best of international cinematography. Human rights activists, students, the international community and civil society participated in the events. Last year, the festival's outreach was more extensive - more than 20 selected documentaries/films were screened in Gujrat, Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Quetta with students and human rights activists engaged in interactive sessions with the directors of the selected movies. The movies featured migration, democracy, forced marriages, domestic violence, and freedom of press, honour killings, decent work and women's empowerment among other human rights issues.

The Embassy presented two movies at the official residence on 25th November 2016 "Lebanon Wins the World Cup" and "Kabul Cards". The director of the first film, Mr. Allen Seif, joined the audience through a Skype video conference, while Ms. Sakina Sadaf, the producer of the second documentary came from Kabul to participate in Q&A session and engage with the audience.

The third movie "Sonita" was presented on 9th December 2016. After the screening, an expert panel interacted and responded to audience questions and stressed on the need for such events to bring Human Rights issues to the forefront.

Activities of the Commercial Section

Visit of the Swiss Ambassador to the Swiss companies based in Lahore: Ambassador Marc George met with the management of the Swiss companies during his periodic visit to Lahore in September at the offices of Nestlé, Sika, ABB, and Buhler.

Visit of Mr. Beat Ineichen, Senior Consultant (South Asia & Oceania), Switzerland Global Enterprise, to Islamabad: Mr. Beat Ineichen visited Islamabad from 7-8 December 2016 on a fact-finding mission to further promote the Swiss exports to Pakistan. During his stay in Islamabad, the commercial section of the Embassy organised a meeting with the Ambassador of Afghanistan. The section also arranged visits to Kwick High Tech Solutions, Plumgrid, Panasian Group of Companies, Commercial Section of the Royal Danish Embassy, Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Planning & Development, and Fauji Foundation.



Donating Laptops to Students: The Embassy donated seven used laptops to a local charity run by the Swiss-Pakistani national. Laptops were purchased from the unutilized portion of the fund, contributed by the authorized local agents of Swiss watches in Pakistan for organizing the second edition of the Swiss Watch Fair in Lahore.

The commercial section of the Embassy hosted a networking luncheon at the official residence of the Ambassador for the local trade officers of the embassies of the developed countries. The officers from the embassies of Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, and the UK attended the lunch. The objective of the luncheon was to establish a forum for discussing matters of mutual interest.

Activities of the Consular Section

Consular services of all kinds are provided by the local Swiss representation:

- Registration/deregistration at the Swiss representation
- Applications for identity cards and passports
- Civil status affairs (births, marriages, divorces etc.)
- Notification of change of address
- Attestation/ legalization of documents
- Naturalization
- Visas

The Consulate General Karachi

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.

Switzerland-Pakistan Celebrations Week: Last year the Consulate General celebrated the 725th National Day of the Swiss Confederation and 69th Independence Day of Pakistan, through its official Facebook page (/Swiss Consulate Karachi). Main objective of this unique activity was to bring people of both the countries closer using Social Media. The celebrations started at midnight of 31st July and ended at the same time on 14th August; 19'000 people were virtually engaged for 14 days; 77 people from 12 Pakistani cities won prizes.

Best Practices Initiative: The Consulate General hosted a networking luncheon meeting with the Representatives of the International Labor Organization (ILO) and few CEOs of Swiss companies in Karachi, the Overseas Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Swiss Business Council. Focus of the interaction was to promote social protection of employers and employees in multinational as well as local companies in Pakistan.

Business Development: To meet CEO of Jamailah AG (emerging organic foods SME company from Switzerland), the Consulate General hosted a networking reception, which was attended by a selective group of potential Pakistani business partners.

Arrival of the New Consul General: Mr. Philippe Crevoisier assumed his duties as the new Consul General in Karachi as of 1st September 2016.



SDC Commitment in Pakistan

The SDC's long-term commitment in Pakistan aims at reducing poverty, improving living conditions, promoting good governance, fighting discrimination, supporting disadvantaged groups and empowering people. SDC's principal focus is in the deprived areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The SDC is currently in the process of developing new 4-years Country Strategy (2017-20) for Pakistan. The overall goal of the new Strategy is to contribute to the reduction of conflict causes in KP and FATA, through the strengthening of state and society resilience and to a better respect for human rights, in particular of the most disadvantaged group. The SDC focuses on local state-building and water governance in its areas of interventions. Gender, disaster risks reduction, good governance and conflict sensitive programme management are integrated as transversal themes in SDC's projects and programmes.

50 Years of SDC: 2016 marked the 50 years of Swiss-Pakistan development cooperation. It was a momentous 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.



In connection with the 50 years, an art competition project, 'We the Peoples, We the Arts' was launched together with the Swiss Embassy to promote 'Zero Hunger' theme of the Sustainable Development Goals in Pakistan through artwork created by young artists.

The opening exhibition and award ceremony was hosted at the Swiss Residence on 18th November 2016, followed by the exhibitions at Satrang Gallery in Serena Hotel, and then at Nishtar Hall in Peshawar.

A jury comprising Swiss and international art experts, the Embassy of Switzerland and the United Nations selected a winner for each category. All entries were judged using the same criteria: creativity, composition, theme and technique.

Around 1200 persons from all walks of life attended the award ceremony hosted at the Ambassador's Residence. The Swiss companies - Nestlé, Syngenta, Novartis, sponsored this art competition. A high-quality catalogue, showcasing the qualifying art pieces, was produced.

Fast Facts of the Project:

5 leading art schools participated in the competition

64 art pieces submitted in total

23 qualified in the first round

3 won the final prize

Further information about the project can be found below

Webpage: <http://bit.ly/1shaGWA>

Photos: www.flickr.com/photos/unitednationspakistan/albums/2157676893471145

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 preparation/preparedness activities in respect to natural disasters.

Glimpses into SDC Projects

Livelihoods Programme, Hindukush

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

Budget: CHF 22.04 millions

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

Water for Livelihoods

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

Budget: CHF 10.47 million

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

Strengthening Rule of Law in Malakand Project

Aim: To facilitate access to justice for the people of Malakand Division by strengthening the capacities of the police, prosecution and judiciary and increasing the number of effective alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

Budget: CHF 9 million

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 and efficient use of energy and protection of the environment and the villages against natural disasters.

Budget 2nd Phase: CHF 3.98 million

Geographic Focus: Laspur and Yarkhun valleys, Chitral 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".

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).

Budget: CHF 5.5 million

Geographic Focus: Bajaur, Mohamand, Khyber and Kurram

Building Capacity of the Climate Change Centre on Adaptation to Climate Change

Aim: To address capacity gaps by addressing components of competence building and training of 3 PhD students, refurbishment of the Centre and launching of new agro-climatic zones.

Budget: CHF 1.2 million

Geographic Focus: Peshawar (KP)

Inventorying & Documentation of the collection at Taxila Museum

Aim: To protect and promote the Taxila Museum and its collection, to enhance SDC's role in promoting a society for peace and development.

Budget: CHF. 1.2 million

Geographic Focus: Taxila (Punjab/KP)



Useful Links

- **Embassy Website**
<https://www.fdfa.admin.ch/pakistan>
- **Links to the Consular Section**
<https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/pakistan/en/home/visa/entry-residency/visa.html>
<https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/pakistan/en/home/services.html>
- **Links to SDC**
www.sdcpakistan.org
www.facebook.com/swisscooperationpakistan/
- **Swiss Business Council**
<http://www.swissbusinesscouncil.com.pk>
- **Magazine for Swiss Abroad**
<http://www.revue.ch/en>