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Embassy of Switzerland to Ghana,
Benin and Togo

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Contents

[Politics & Bilateral Relations](#)

[Togo & Benin](#)

[Development Cooperation](#)

[Business & Economy](#)

[Science & Culture](#)

[Consular Services](#)

[Embassy](#)

[Facts & Figures](#)

[Keep in touch](#)



Liebe Leserin, lieber Leser & Freunde in Ghana, Togo und Benin

Das einzige Beständige in unserem Beruf und Leben ist der stete Wandel. Unsere Konsulin, Frau Teresa Chejleva Nkundwa, wurde Anfang Juli versetzt. Per Monatsende beende auch ich meinen von unzähligen schönen Momenten geprägten Aufenthalt in Ghana, um mich für die kommenden Jahre in der Heimat mit meiner Frau Susana und unseren drei Töchtern niederzulassen. Anfang August werden meine Nachfolgerin, Botschafterin Simone Giger, sowie die neue stellvertretende Missionschefin, Frau Simone Haerberli, mit ihren Familien in Akkra eintreffen. Seit ein paar Wochen ist bereits unsere neue Betriebsleiterin, Frau Tatjana Hediger, und ihre Stellvertreterin, Frau Gloria Giugno, auf unserer Botschaft tätig.

Somit wird der grösste Teil der versetzbaren Botschaftsangestellten in diesem Sommer ersetzt. Als Mitglied der Schweizer Kolonie in Ghana, Togo und Benin können Sie weiterhin auf die bewährten Dienstleistungen der Botschaft, unseren Newsletter und Mitteilungen auf unseren social media Kanälen ([Facebook.com/SwissEmbassyAccra](https://www.facebook.com/SwissEmbassyAccra) & [Twitter twitter.com/SwissEmbAccra](https://twitter.com/SwissEmbAccra)) zählen. Erstmals seit 2019 ist es uns zudem eine grosse Freude, auf meiner Residenz den Schweizer Nationalfeiertag mit einem Empfang feierlich zu begehen. Alle auf der Botschaft registrierten Schweizerinnen und Schweizer haben für den Anlass, der ein paar Tage vor dem 1. August stattfindet, eine persönliche Einladung erhalten.

Gerne danke ich an dieser Stelle all den MitbürgerInnen und einheimischen Freunden ganz herzlich, die mich in den vergangenen knapp 3 ½ Jahren unterstützt haben, meine Aufgaben zu erfüllen und die drei Länder, Ghana, Togo und Benin mit ihren grossartigen Menschen und seiner reichen Kultur zu entdecken. Ich verbinde damit auch den Dank an mein Botschaftsteam für die Unterstützung. Mögen sich die bilateralen Beziehungen der Schweiz mit den Staaten am Golf von Guinea weiterhin freundschaftlich und eng fortentwickeln, zum Wohle aller Menschen, die ein Recht auf ein würdevolles Leben in einer freien und demokratischen Gesellschaft haben.

Philipp Stalder
Botschafter



Chère lectrices, cher lecteurs & amis au Ghana, au Togo et au Bénin

La seule constante dans notre métier et notre vie est le changement permanent. Notre cheffe de chancellerie, Madame Teresa Chejleva Nkundwa, a été transférée début juillet. À la fin du mois, je mettrai moi aussi un terme à mon séjour au Ghana, marqué par d'innombrables bons moments, pour m'installer pour les années à venir dans mon pays avec mon épouse Susana et nos trois filles. Début août, mon successeur, l'ambassadrice Simone Giger, ainsi que la nouvelle cheffe de mission adjointe, Mme Simone Haeberli, arriveront à Accra avec leurs familles. Depuis quelques semaines déjà, notre nouvelle cheffe de chancellerie Mme Tatjana Hediger, ainsi que son adjointe Mme Gloria Giugno, travaillent à notre ambassade.

Ainsi, la majeure partie du personnel transférable de l'ambassade sera remplacée cet été. En tant que membre de la communauté suisse au Ghana, Togo et Bénin, vous pouvez continuer à compter sur les services habituels de l'ambassade, notre newsletter et les communications dans les médias sociaux ([Facebook.com/SwissEmbassyAccra](https://www.facebook.com/SwissEmbassyAccra) & twitter.com/SwissEmbAccra).

Pour la première fois depuis 2019, c'est un grand plaisir pour nous de célébrer la fête nationale suisse avec une réception à ma résidence. Tous les Suisses inscrits à l'ambassade recevront une invitation personnelle pour l'événement, qui a lieu quelques jours avant le 1er août

C'est avec plaisir que je remercie ici chaleureusement toutes les concitoyens et tous mes chers amis locaux qui m'ont aidé à accomplir mes tâches et à découvrir ces trois magnifiques pays que sont le Ghana, le Togo et le Bénin, avec leurs habitants formidables et leurs riches cultures, au cours de ces 3 années et demie. J'associe à ces remerciements les membres de mon équipe d'ambassade pour leur soutien. Puissent les relations bilatérales de la Suisse avec les pays du Golfe de Guinée continuer à se développer de manière amicale et étroite, pour le bien de toutes les personnes qui ont droit à une vie digne dans une société libre et démocratique.

Philipp Stalder
Ambassadeur

Where can I get news on Switzerland?

[Swissinfo.ch](https://www.swissinfo.ch) is providing news on Switzerland in ten different languages and here you can find an overview of the [media landscape in Switzerland](#).

Additionally, you may be interested in a number of publications or newsletters provided by the various Federal Departments. Check out [Publications of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs \(FDFA\)](#) or "[Spectra - Prevention and Health Promotion](#)", a monthly newsletter provided by the [Federal Office of Public Health \(FOPH\)](#).

Dear readers, dear friends in Ghana, Togo and Benin

The only constant in our job and life is constant change. Our Consul, Mrs. Teresa Chejleva Nkundwa, was transferred at the beginning of July. At the end of the month, I too will equally finish my mission in Ghana, which was characterized by countless beautiful moments. I will settle down in Switzerland with my wife Susana and our three daughters for the coming years. At the beginning of August, my successor, Ambassador Simone Giger, and the new Deputy Head of Mission, Ms. Simone Haerberli, will arrive in Accra with their families. Our new Consul, Ms. Tatjana Hediger, and her deputy, Ms. Gloria Giugno, have been working at our embassy for a few weeks.

Thus, the majority of the Embassy's transferable employees will be replaced this summer. As a member of the Swiss community in Ghana, Togo and Benin, you can continue to count on the Embassy's proven services, our newsletter and communications on our social media channels [Facebook.com/SwissEmbassyAccra](https://www.facebook.com/SwissEmbassyAccra) & Twitter twitter.com/SwissEmbAccra.

For the first time since 2019, it is a great pleasure for us to celebrate the Swiss National Day with a reception at my residence. All Swiss citizens registered with the Embassy will receive a personal invitation to the event.

At this point, I would like to thank all fellow citizens and dear local friends who have supported me in the past almost 3 ½ years to fulfill my tasks and to discover these three wonderful countries, Ghana, Togo and Benin; with their great people and wealth of culture and history. I would also like to warmly thank my team at the Embassy for their support. May Switzerland's bilateral relations with the states at the Gulf of Guinea continue to develop in a friendly and close manner, for the benefit of all who desire a dignified life in a free and democratic society.

Are you looking for a potential business partner in Switzerland to export your goods?

You can search online for buyers and suppliers in Switzerland for a variety of products on [WerliefertWas.ch](https://www.werliefertwas.ch) and [Kompass.ch](https://www.kompass.ch). Or inform yourself [online](#) on the biggest Supermarket chains in Switzerland. Find additional information [here](#).

Politics & Bilateral Relations

Swiss-Ghanaian partnership stronger than ever

Looking back to the past three years, the Embassy can proudly state that despite the challenges COVID-19 brought to the world, the friendship and partnership between Switzerland and Ghana is stronger than ever. During my tenure, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo travelled for a historic two days' State Visit to Switzerland in early 2020. The then President of the Swiss Confederation, Federal Councillor Simonetta Sommaruga, as the host of our government visited Ghana in her capacity as Minister of Environment (among other responsibilities) just 16 months later, in July 2021. Apart from frequent high-level talks & visits, we see also promising developments in the area of business & investment. This year, the first two concrete projects are ready for its implementation phase under the new bilateral climate protection agreement signed in November 2020. Furthermore, the Swiss private sector continues to believe in the potential of the Ghanaian economy. The expansion of Nestlé's Infant Cereals Plant impressively testifies to this. The expanded factory in Tema was commissioned by the President of the Republic on 8th June 2022. For many years, development cooperation has also been an important pillar of Swiss-Ghanaian relations. Last summer, the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) launched a new Ghana Cooperation Programm (2021-2024). In 2023, we will commemorate the 20th anniversary of SECO's engagement. We should not forget our shared democratic values & the importance of the rule of law. Ghana plays an important role in the region and it was very reassuring to see the country play a constructive leadership role as the immediate past chair of ECOWAS. ■



Officials of Nestlé, the President of the Republic and other guests at the commissioning

Foundation for Climate Protection and Carbon Offset KliK

In June 2022, a delegation from the Zürich based KliK Foundation visited Accra within the framework of the bilateral agreement, signed in November 2020 under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. The goal was to present their financial support opportunities in the field of climate action in Ghana to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) and several other strategic governmental and private partners & key stakeholders. The Swiss experts explained the procurement process of the Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes (ITMOs) under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement (see [link](#)), presented the first programme opportunities and discussed processes to support climate protection initiatives in Ghana. Ambassador Stalder hosted a reception at the residence in honour of the delegation and participated in several information sessions to disseminate the KliK Foundation's message to a wide audience.

The KliK Foundation is a private organisation, mandated to offset emissions from the Swiss transport sector and tasked with fulfilling an official role under Swiss climate legislation by financing the deployment of climate-friendly technologies and innovations in Switzerland and abroad. It supports and organises international climate protection programmes to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from development to implementation, in accordance with the carbon market requirements in Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. Interested programme developers as well as companies that develop and implement climate friendly technologies and innovations suitable for the creation of ITMOs can register and submit their programme ideas on the website www.ghana.klik.ch ■



At the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI).

Switzerland elected to UN Security Council

For the period 2023-2024, Switzerland - for the first time in its history - will be one of 15 countries sitting on the United Nations Security Council. It will have one of the ten non-permanent seats for two years. On 9 June, Switzerland received 187 votes at the 193-member General Assembly of the United Nations. Before the vote, Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis said the seat *"brought credibility to Switzerland because it can show what it is doing for peace and stability"*. The Embassy in Accra is thrilled to work closely together with Ghana - already elected to the UNSC for the fourth time in its history - on bi- and multilateral issues for the period 2022-2023. Both countries' ambition is to focus on advancing an effective multilateral system, promoting peace & stability and the respect for international law. Switzerland as well as Ghana are recognized bridge-builders in multilateral affairs. ■



The ballot boxes ready in New York for the election of five non-permanent members to the Security Council

Prevention of Violent Extremism

Through collaboration of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) and the Algiers-based African Centre for the Study & Research on Terrorism, a Senior Level Regional Course for the Prevention of Violent Extremism was held in Accra in early July. Senior level first responders attended the four-day course with participants coming from all ECOWAS countries. Ambassador Stalder joined the National Security Minister, [Hon. Albert Kan-Dapaah](#) to open the course.

Background: In April 2016, the FDFA adopted a Foreign Policy Action Plan on Preventing Violent Extremism and made it one of its priorities. The innovative approach does not consist in treating the symptoms or the consequences of violent extremism. Its goal is to address the causes of violent extremism which can be political, social or economic.

With the support of Switzerland, similar events as the one in Accra will also be held in Lomé, Cotonou and other capitals of the region. ■



Group photo of all participants together with the Minister of National Security

Official visit to Upper East Region & commissioning of a Swiss Red Cross project

In late April, Ambassador Stalder toured the Upper East Region where the [Swiss Red Cross \(SRC\)](#) is closely linked to projects in the area of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) as well as disaster prevention and management. Together with the Paramount Chief of Manyoro Traditional Area, the Secretary General of the [Ghana Red Cross Society](#) and the SRC Country Director, Mr. Walter Berier, the Ambassador commissioned a new health facility under the SRC's Maternal and New Born Child Health (MNCH) and WASH projects. The two projects are intervening to ensure mothers have access to sanitation facilities at delivery.

In Bolgatanga, the capital of the Upper East Region, the Swiss envoy also had the pleasure to be received by the Regional Minister, [Hon Stephen Yakubu](#), for a courtesy visit. ■



Amb. Stalder at the SRC Regional Office

Touring to Volta Region & Eastern Region

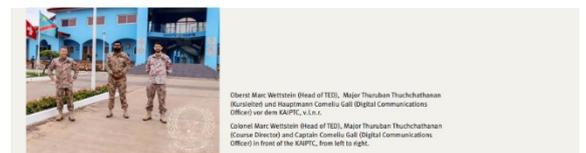
At the end of February, a team from the Embassy undertook a working visit to these two out of the 16 regions in Ghana. The road trip started at Astiekpoe village on the banks of the Volta River, some 120 km away from Accra. There, Ambassador Stalder could view ongoing works on a sanitation facility being built as part of a health center project. Tour operator and philanthropist, Cindy Nordermeer from the Dutch-Ghanaian charity organization [Stepping Stones for Africa](#) explained to us the benefits of this small scale project funded by the Embassy. Community elders assembled to receive the delegation and expressed their gratitude for the support. The health center will serve people from 3 to 4 adjoining communities and considerably raise the quality of life for these farmers and fishermen. ■



Amb. Stalder with Cindy Nordermeer and a community leader at the project site

Peace and Security

Switzerland and Ghana share a common perspective on global peace and security. Both countries are active contributors to peace and security around the world. One of the ways Ghana actively does this is through the [Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center \(KA IPTC\)](#), a renowned Centre of Excellence with a mandate to train military, police, and civilian personnel for multidimensional peacekeeping and peace support operations focused on the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region, but also with a wider impact on the continent of Africa and beyond. The Swiss Armed Forces are currently supporting the KA IPTC with three officers, engaged as Head of TED (Training, Evaluation and Development), Course Director and Digital Communications Officer, respectively. The Head of TED with his team is responsible for overseeing the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all ongoing courses, as well as the development of new programmes. Switzerland's activities at the Center was featured in the latest edition of [Swiss Peace Supporter Revue 2022](#).



15 Jahre Partnerschaft mit dem Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Ghana

15-year partnership with the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Ghana

Deutsch
Text und Fotos Oberst Marc Wettstein, Head of TED, KA IPTC in Ghana
Vergangenes Jahr konnte die Schweiz auf die 15-jährige Partnerschaft mit dem Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KA IPTC) in Ghana zurückblicken. Dies wurde im Oktober 2021 mit dem Besuch einer offiziellen Delegation der Schweizer Armee unter Leitung von Brigadier Markus Mäder, Chef Internationale Beziehungen/Verteidigung im Armeestab, gewürdigt.
[Switzerland's work at the KA IPTC is featured in Swiss Peace Support Magazine](#)

English
Text and photos Colonel Marc Wettstein, Head of TED, KA IPTC in Ghana
In 2021, Switzerland marked 15 years of partnership with Ghana's Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KA IPTC). This anniversary was marked by a visit of an official delegation of the Swiss Armed Forces headed by Brigadier General Mäder, Director of International Relations Defence in the Armed Forces Staff in October 2021.
[Switzerland's work at the KA IPTC is featured in Swiss Peace Support Magazine](#)

The [Swiss Peace Supporter Revue](#) is a quarterly joint publication of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport, and the Federal Department of Finance. Read the full article [here](#). ■

Project support

Development projects if executed well can make a difference. This became more evident when Ambassador Stalder visited the **Municipal Assembly Unity Basic School** in Ho as well as the **Islamic Junior High School** in Donkorkrom in the Afram Plains North District during his road trip. The infrastructure of both schools were partly funded by Switzerland under the DPAT programme (District Performance Assessment Tool). The one storey structure in Ho comes with a Headteachers' office, a staff common room and a computer science



Amb. Stalder, engaging with pupils at Donkorkrom



Amb. Stalder, interacting with a pupil in the new classroom block

lab. It was refreshing to see that the current school stands in sharp contrast to the other dilapidated structures students and teachers were working in. Ambassador Stalder, a teacher by profession himself, engaged with the headmistress, teachers, pupils and got a sense of the comfort the new school block; equipped with white boards, desks and ceiling fans brought. In the town of Donkorkrom which is only accessible by crossing the Volta Lake by ferry, the Swiss envoy was accompanied by the District Chief Executive, [Mr. Isaac Ofori-Koree](#). ■

Official visit to the Western Region

In February, Ambassador Stalder paid a visit to the Western Region and its capital, the twin city of Sekondi-Takoradi. During his discussion with the Regional Minister, [Hon. Kwabena Okyere Darko-Mensah](#), the potential of the Western Region for Swiss investors and the region's tourism potential were mentioned. He also stopped at the beautiful [Bisa Aberwa Museum](#) where visitors can learn more about Ghanaian & African history thanks to the 2'200 artifacts and sculptural representations of wood, clay, cement, paintings and photographs. The museum, which is believed to be one of the largest private collections representing African history is definitely worthwhile to visit. It was inaugurated in July 2019. ■



Amb. Stalder, with the Western Regional Minister

Swiss-funded course on counter kidnapping

Under the auspices of the United Nations Office for Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the Swiss Federal Office of Police (Fedpol) led a three-week [training course](#) for participants from Ghana, Togo, Benin, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger in Accra. Run in concert with the UK National Crime Agency, the course was held at KAIPTC in early May and aimed to build capacities in law enforcement agencies of the region in the area of hostage negotiation.

Background: There has been a growing concern of counter-terrorism officials over the limited capacities of several countries, especially fragile and conflict-affected States, to enable their respective criminal justice, law enforcement institutions and security services to effectively prevent, manage and investigate kidnap cases using modern, proven methods, technologies and techniques. Responding to these concerns, (UNOCT launched the United Nations Manual of Guidance for Countering Kidnapping and Extortion in 2021 to contribute to the multilateral efforts to have a more secure and prosperous world safe from terrorism. ■



Mr. Tim Segessemann, Attaché at the Embassy, speaking at the event

<https://ghana.un.org/en/179108-training-enhance-experts-capacities-and-capabilities-manage-investigate-and-negotiate>

Togo & Benin

Official meetings in Togo

Ambassador Stalder was on an official mission to Togo in February. He met with the Honorary Consul of Switzerland, [Mrs. Myrna Tabchoury](#), in the new premises of the Swiss Consulate in Lomé - followed by a visit to the museum of the famous Togolese painter [Jean Koumy](#). Interactions with the Togolese Government led to a fruitful discussion with the Minister of Investment Promotion, [HE Rose Kayi Mivedor](#), on investment possibilities. On the critical theme of security & stability, he paid also a visit to the Minister of Security and Civil Protection, [H.E. Gal Yark Damehame](#). Last but not least, it was our keen interest to meet with the Swiss community for the first time since the pandemic. It was a great opportunity for the Embassy and our new Head of the Visa Section, Mr. Lionel Rochat, to exchange with compatriots. Ambassador Stalder thanked all guests for their contributions and reassured them of the readiness of the Embassy team to assist Swiss citizens living in Togo in the best possible way. ■



Amb. Stalder, with Togolese Minister of security & civil protection, H.E. Gal Yark Damehame.

Business Trip to Benin

In March, Ambassador Stalder visited Benin for a high-level meeting with the Foreign Minister to sign a bilateral agreement allowing accompanying persons of diplomatic staff to work in their respective host countries. Joined by the Head of the Swiss Cooperation Office in Cotonou, Elisabeth Pitteloud, the visit also allowed for an exchange with Benin's Minister of the Interior and Public Security to discuss the new [Cooperation Programme 2022-25](#) (in French) for Benin. It focuses on the areas of governance, rural economic development as well as basic and vocational education. ■



Ambassador Stalder, with the Beninese Foreign Minister

Meetings at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in Parliament

A l'occasion de son voyage de service, l'ambassadeur Stalder a pu s'entretenir longuement avec le ministre des Affaires étrangères Aurélien Agbenonci sur différents sujets relatifs aux relations bilatérales entre la Suisse et le Bénin. Cette rencontre a permis la signature officielle par le Ministre et l'Ambassadeur d'un accord qui facilitera désormais le travail rémunéré pour les personnes accompagnantes du BucO à Cotonou.

Un détour par la capitale Porto-Novo, où se trouve l'Assemblée nationale, lui a également permis de mieux cerner les priorités du Parlement, dont les 83 députés seront élus par le peuple le 8 janvier 2023, lors d'un entretien avec le président du Parlement, Loui Vlavonou. ■



Ambassador Stalder, with Mr. Loui Vlavonou and Mme. Elisabeth Pitteloud Alansar, Head of the Swiss Cooperation Office in Cotonou

Webinar on Investment Opportunities in Togo

Together with Minister for Investment Promotion, [HE Rose Kayi Mivedor](#), Ambassador Stalder hosted a hybrid online event in Togo's capital of Lomé, featuring the business activities of Swiss-based companies MSC Cargo, Gozem, and Bamboo Capital Partners in Togo. They all shared their experiences in the Togolese market with some 25 Swiss companies interested in branching out. Throughout all presentations, it became evident that Togo has implemented considerable structural reforms over the past ten years to improve the business environment. This enabled the country to rise to 7th place within the sub-Saharan Africa group in the World Bank's Doing Business ranking. The successful exchange was jointly organized by the Swiss-African Business Circle (SABC), Managing Director Michael Rheinegger, and our Honorary Consul in Lomé, Myrna Tabchoury. SABC (<https://sabc.ch>) is the leading independent association promoting business contacts and links between Switzerland and Africa. ■



The webinar in session

Exposition d'œuvres béninoises restituées par la France à Cotonou

Les Béninois ont pu voir et admirer, pour la première fois, les 26 trésors royaux restitués en novembre dernier par la France, à l'occasion d'une exposition intitulée "Art du Bénin d'hier et d'aujourd'hui", organisée jusqu'au 22 mai au palais présidentiel à Cotonou. Un espace muséal de plus de 2000 m² a été aménagé au palais présidentiel pour accueillir l'événement. Le président Patrice Talon, qui a officiellement inauguré l'exposition, a présenté les 26 trésors nationaux à la ministre de la Culture française Roselyne Bachelot, en déplacement à Cotonou. Les Béninois auront attendu 129 ans avant de voir de leurs propres yeux ces trésors volés par les forces coloniales françaises. Ces trésors avaient été pillés en 1892 par la France pendant la colonisation dans le palais d'Abomey, capitale du Royaume du Dahomey, au centre-sud du Bénin actuel. Ils étaient autrefois exposés au musée du quai Branly à Paris. Après plus de deux ans de négociations entre Paris et Cotonou, ils ont donc finalement pu être restitués. Lors de leur visite de l'exposition, l'ambassadeur Philipp Stalder et la responsable de notre bureau de coordination DDC se sont montrés profondément impressionnés - non seulement par les trésors artistiques restitués, mais aussi par l'excellente exposition d'artistes béninois contemporains que l'on pouvait admirer en parallèle au palais présidentiel. ■

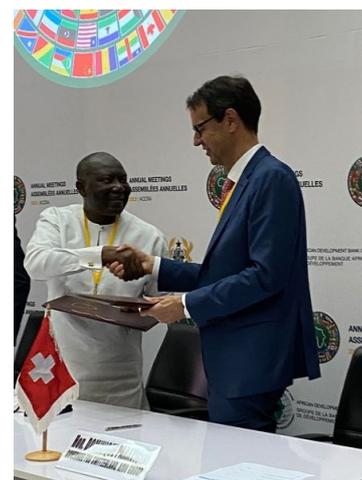


Quelques œuvres d'art présentées à l'exposition

Development Cooperation

Switzerland supports renewable energy agenda

The Government of Switzerland through the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO together with the African Development Bank signed a cooperation agreement with the Government of Ghana to support the development of solar energy in Ghana. The signing ceremony took place within the frame of the 2022 African Development Bank Annual Meeting held in Ghana. The main topic of the conference was "Achieving Climate Resilience and a Just Energy Transition for Africa". Under the agreement, a minimum of 12,000 units of solar PV net – metered systems and 35 mini grids will be installed. Private households, public institution, such as health centers and schools, as well as SMEs will benefit from cleaner, more affordable and more reliable electricity service. ■



Governor for AfDB, Amb. Dominique Paravicini, together with Minister of Finance, Hon. Ken Ofori-Atta

Two missions from SECO

After COVID-19 imposed a two-year mission free period, the Economic Section of the Swiss Embassy welcomed in March two missions from SECO headquarters in relation with our economic cooperation and development activities in Ghana. The first visit was on the preparation of the second phase of the Ghana Private Sector Competitiveness Program, which is a programmatic approach addressing sustainability issues (such as access to finance, regulatory affairs or skills for example) in the cashew and palm oil value chains.



The team on a field visit to a project area



Having an engagement at the Energy Commission

In addition, future collaboration possibilities in the cocoa value chain were explored. The second mission came from SECO's Infrastructure Finance unit and mainly monitored projects in relation with the development activities in the area of renewable energy and urban planning. During both missions, different partners and stakeholders from the Government of Ghana, the private sector as well as other relevant donors were met for discussions. The outcome was very fruitful and helped SECO to move the Ghana Cooperation Program 21-24 forward. ■

Supporting education infrastructure

After months of hardwork, the Embassy was happy to see one of its partners, the [NGO Van Moorhouse Foundation \(VMF\)](#) complete the rehabilitation of the **Asikam Presbyterian Primary School** computer laboratory. VMF is an NGO that strives to enhance people's lives by providing daily necessities to the vulnerable and to promote literacy and improve educational standards in impoverished communities. Thanks to the small project funded by the Swiss Embassy, the school in Asikam, situated northeast of Kibi in the Eastern Region received new computers with internet connectivity and lesson materials. A team from the Embassy visited the project twice and commissioned the new computer lab in June. ■



Parents and residents experiencing the new computer lab

Local Government Service

Switzerland through SECO has contributed CHF 18 million over the last 3 years to support decentralization in Ghana. During a courtesy call to the Embassy, the Head of the Local Government Service, Nana Ato Arthur, presented a copy of the National Decentralisation Policy and Strategy (2020 -2024) to the Acting Head of Cooperation. ■



Acting Head of Cooperation, Anne Schick, receiving a copy of the document

Local government standards

Switzerland supported Ghana's Agenda to promote better social accountability mechanisms at the district and community level. Ambassador Stalder and Minister of Local Government, Decentralization and Rural Development, [Hon. Daniel Botwe](#), signed an agreement to support the Institute of Local Government Studies on capacity building for local government officials. From the SECO-funded pilot project, some 560 staff of the Local Government Service across all the 16 Regional Coordinating Councils and 40 out of the 261 District Assemblies will benefit from this pilot project. Forty District Chief Executives (mayors) and 400 Assembly members (councillors) will learn to use new curricula to transform the organizational culture of the Local Government Service to operate as high performing corporate bodies. ■



Amb. Stalder, signing the agreement with Hon. Dan Botwe

Research on fluoride contamination in Northern Ghana

The [Swiss Development Cooperation \(SDC\)](#) is the agency for international cooperation of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). Recently, SDC has funded a study about fluoride contamination of groundwater resources in Ghana. The research finding by the Ghanaian Center for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the [Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology \(EAWAG\)](#) has revealed that about 920'000 persons in Northern Ghana are exposed to fluoride contaminated water. At a workshop, held at the CSIR in early May, the study was introduced in the presence of a researcher from EAWAG and the Swiss Embassy. ■



The workshop ongoing at the Water Research Institute, CSIR.

Business & Economy

Swiss Business Lunch

The Embassy treated the Swiss private sector in Ghana to yet another engaging Swiss Business Lunch on 9 March 2022. The gathering, comprised of over 12 Swiss business representatives, had a lively discussion after an insightful presentation on “The nuances and solutions of doing business in Ghana”. In the presentation by the Management Consultant, Chartered Accountant, and one-time independent Presidential Candidate of Ghana, [Mr. Marriske Kofi Gane](#), he advised companies to proactively carry out periodic tax health checks to ensure that they remain in compliance with all tax regulations. In a brief delivery by the Head of the German Desk Timo Hofmann, he presented access to finance solutions offered by the German Investment Bank and their local partners Access Bank Ghana Limited. It is worth noting that these packages are also accessible to the Swiss business community in Ghana. ■



Mr. Marriske Kofi Gane, addressing guests at the Swiss Business Lunch

Chocolate & Cocoa - International Cocoa Initiative

For the majority of people, when we think of chocolate the first word that springs to mind is Switzerland. The chocolate industry employs over 4'500 people, further underscoring the importance of chocolate for Swiss industry. Ghana and Ivory Coast, both countries accounting for almost two-third of the world's cocoa production, have historically been the suppliers of Swiss chocolatiers. At the same time, non-profit organizations like the Geneva-based International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) want to help to improve the lives of children and adults in cocoa growing areas in West Africa. For an exchange of views on how to tackle the existing risks of child labour and other challenges in the cocoa business, the [ICI-Executive Director Matthias Lange](#) and his team visited Ambassador Philipp Stalder in his office. At the meeting, the efforts of the multi-stakeholder initiative for more sustainability in the cocoa value chain (Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa) were also mentioned. Its members have committed to base all cocoa and cocoa products imported into Switzerland on sustainable production and to ensure traceability in the long-term. An intermediate target is set to achieve 80% by 2025. ■



Ambassador Stalder, with Mr. Mathias Lange

Visit to West African Mills Company

On the invitation of [Managing Director Frank Bednar](#), the Ambassador visited the West African Mills Company (WAMCO), a premium cocoa processing company in Takoradi which partly belongs to a Swiss shareholder group. During the tour to the factory in early spring, the Swiss envoy could familiarize with the operations of the company and see some of the major equipment coming from Buehler AG Switzerland. According to Mr. Bednar, WAMCO has plans to revamp, repair and rehabilitate its existing machinery to modernize its production units of cocoa liquor and cocoa butter extraction. WAMCO is also looking for opportunities to cooperate with Swiss universities and institutions in the field of food processing quality management. ■



Ambassador Stalder, on a tour of the factory

Science & Culture

Ashesi University and ETH Zurich.

Early this year, Ashesi and **ETH Zurich** welcomed the pioneering class for the joint **Master's Program in Mechatronic Engineering**. The 26 students, selected from Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, will be trained in automation, production and robotics. The joint programme is generously supported by the **Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO** and several private Swiss donors and foundations. Industry partners **ABB**, **Barry Callebaut AG**, **Bühler AG**, **HPW AG**, **LafargeHolcim**, **Nestlé**, and **Tetra Pak** are offering internships for students in the program across their businesses in various African countries. Ahead of the start of classes, representatives from Ashesi and ETH Zurich visited the Swiss Ambassador to Ghana, Benin, and Togo, and his team, to discuss the partnership's progress and plans for the years ahead.



Earn two degrees from Ashesi and ETH Zurich, with career opportunities provided by industrial partners in Africa. Learn more: <https://ashesi/mechatronic>



Applications are open on Ashesi University's [website](#) until the end of August for a program starting in early 2023. ■

Week of the Francophonie - Embassy screens "BOUNTY"

With nearly two million French speakers, Switzerland has been a full member of the International Organization of La Francophonie since 1996. Every year, the French-speaking world celebrates the International Day of the Francophonie on 20 March and also in Ghana, many events have been organized by various embassies for this purpose.

To celebrate our multilingual and multicultural diversity with four languages officially spoken in Switzerland (German, French, Italian, Romansh), our Embassy screened Shyaka Kagame's documentary film "**Bounty**". The film offers both an insightful and humorous look at the lives of the first generation in the African diaspora born in Switzerland. At the Alliance Française in Accra, a lot of guests gathered & enjoyed some food & drinks offered by the Embassy. ■



The Embassy screened a movie at the Alliance Française

The HEMU International Jazz Orchestra in Accra

After what was especially a trying time for artists and cultural exchange over the last two years, we were glad to host a variety of cultural events again in 2022! **The HEMU International Jazz Orchestra**, a group of classical and jazz music students under the leadership of Thomas Dobler and world-class bass player Etienne Mbappé at Lausanne's **Haute Ecole de Musique**, visited Ghana for two weeks. During their visit, they visited several music schools in Ghana for a programme of cultural exchange and played three **concerts** featuring Ghana's **Ayekoo Drummers** in Accra. Following the visit, the Ayekoo Drummers accompanied the students back to Switzerland for a joint concert at the renowned Cully Jazz Festival. The Embassy proudly hosted the musicians at the Ambassador's Residence for a cocktail reception on their arrival in Accra and hosted one of the concerts at Accra's Ghana Club. ■



Dr. Henshell and other Foundation representatives, with Amb. Stalder

MASI Lugano presents the largest retrospective ever devoted to the photographer James Barnor

“James Barnor: Accra/London – A Retrospective” presents a selection of over 200 works from Barnor’s vast personal archive, including numerous previously unpublished images. Throughout his lengthy career, spanning six decades and two continents, Barnor has been an extraordinary visual witness to the social and political changes of his time – from the independence of Ghana to the African diaspora and the lives of London’s African community. Although he has influenced generations of photographers in Africa and around the world, his work has only recently been rediscovered and valued. Whether family photos, commissioned portraits or commercial assignments, Barnor’s exceptional ability to convey official and personal histories in the terms of an intimate dialogue, encounters based on a human connection, shines through. It unfolds in the historic rooms of the Palazzo Reali as a chronological journey through the key periods in Barnor’s life and work - from the early days in Accra, with his "Ever Young" studio, to his years in London. The exhibition at the Art Museum of Southern Switzerland (MASILugano) is still open to the public until 31 July 2022.

A link to the museum: <https://www.masilugano.ch/en/james-barnor-accralondon-a-retrospective> ■



James Barnor, Sick-Hagemeyer shop assistant with bottles, taken as a colour guide, Accra, 1971

Hin und Weg

Wer in der deutschsprachigen Schweiz kennt nicht das SRF-Sendeformat «Hin und Weg», das bi-nationale Paare in ihrem Alltag portraitiert und Liebesgeschichten aus der ganzen Welt, unter anderem auch aus Ghana, erzählt! In der aktuellen Staffel lernen die ZuschauerInnen Beda Ehrensberger und Mefia Mensah kennen und wie sich das schweizerisch-ghanaische Ehepaar vor 17 Jahren in Akkra kennenlernte. Botschafter Philipp Stalder war es eine Freude, die Thurgauer Connection zu Starmoderatorin Mona Vetsch spielen zu lassen und das während der Dreharbeiten in Ghana zu Gast weilende Team des Schweizer Fernsehens auf die Schweizer Residenz einzuladen. Zu dem geselligen Abend waren neben Beda und Mefia Ehrensberger als weitere Gäste prominente Vertreter der ghanaischen Unterhaltungsbranche sowie die bekannte Genfer Musikerin Danitsa eingeladen.



Filming the TV series at the Swiss Residence

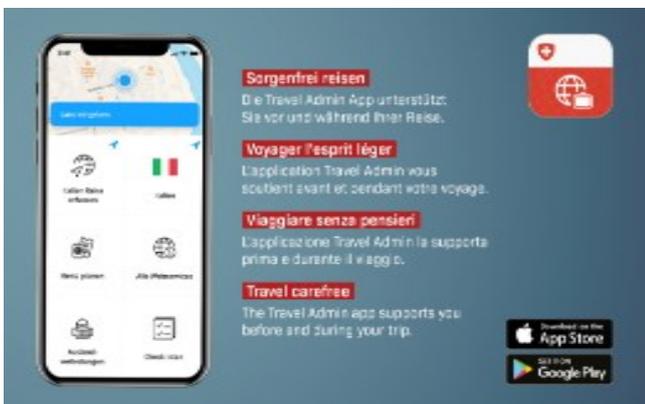
Die ab dem 3. Juni ausgestrahlte Staffel «Hin und Weg» kann auch auf «Play SRF» und dem You Tube-Kanal von SRF DOK nachgeschaut werden. ■

Do you receive the Swiss official electoral material?

Are you a Swiss citizen living in Ghana, Benin or Togo and allowed to vote? The official electoral material can be sent directly by mail to your address. In order to request the polling material, please fill out the form [Application to exercise political rights](#) and send it to the Embassy of Switzerland in Accra.

Learn more on your voting rights on [ch.ch](#) and download the Voting App Votelfo in the [App Store](#) or the [Google Play Store](#).

Itineris – Plan well, travel well.



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. ■

Foreigners Identification Card

Have you registered for your Foreigners Identification Card? You should, if you are:

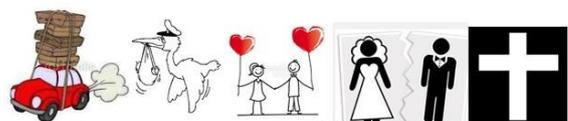
- a foreign national permanently resident in the country
- a foreign national who is cumulatively resident in the country for at least ninety (90) days in any calendar year.
- All foreigners six years +

A scratch card can be bought at any Cal Bank Branch to begin the process. Find more information here: <https://fims.org.gh/faq/#toggle-id-15>. ■



Keep your data updated

Regular contact between yourself and our Embassy can be very useful to both parties. To ensure that you can be contacted quickly, it is important that your contact information (address, phone number and email) is always up to date.



Reporting a change of address will also enable you to continuously receive the documentation on your right to vote by correspondence (if you are registered in the electoral roll), as well as the "Swiss Review" published by the Organization of the Swiss Abroad (OSA). This magazine is distributed free of charge to Swiss citizens registered abroad. ■

At the same time, according to the Ordinance on Civil Status (OCS), it is your obligation to report any changes in your civil status to this Embassy. Therefore, kindly inform us about any changes in your civil status: marriage, birth of a child, divorce or death of a relative, by e-mail or through a personal visit at the Embassy (with a prior appointment via email) from Monday to Friday between 8-11 AM. We will be happy to advise you on the required documents. ■

Online Desk for Swiss Abroad

Would you like to contact the Swiss representation responsible for you conveniently and at any time? Use the online desk for Swiss citizens living abroad. The online desk is available to you for all questions relating to your long-term stay abroad.

[Scan QR code for more information.](#)

Online counter: secure, simple and fast. ■



Embassy News

Swiss National Day celebration

We are excited to celebrate Switzerland's birthday (1st August) with dignitaries, VIPs, official guests and the Swiss community in Ghana with a reception held at the Residence of the Ambassador.

This year, we are even more excited since it will be the first Swiss National Day event since 2019. Due to the change of personnel at the Head of Mission level and Ambassador's Stalder timely departure from Ghana, the reception will be organized in the last week of July. Attendance of the event is strictly by personal invitation. ■



Security in focus

In May, the Embassy was happy to host our Regional Security Advisor for a routine visit. Our experienced colleague who is based in Dakar sensitized the staff on possible security threats which could emerge and how to react under such circumstances. Our security expert also held various training exercises and enriched us with best practices and recommendations how to best handle a situation of crisis or emergency. ■



Embassy staff at one of the training exercises.

Art in Recycling

Who is this member of the Swiss Government (Federal Council) consisting of seven persons with a yearly rotating president? Yes, it's our Foreign Minister and President of the Swiss Confederation in 2022, Federal Councilor Ignazio Cassis. On the occasion of a waste management workshop at our Embassy, this piece of art - beautifully made of recycling material - was presented by the artist, Mr. Obed Addo. The portrait of our Foreign Minister will decorate the Embassy's conference from now on. ■



The portrait being presented to Ambassador Stalder

Personnel changes

We wish our new colleagues a pleasant & successful stay in Accra and wish all the best of luck to those transferable and non-transferable staff leaving us.



Mme. Simone Haerberli

We will welcome a new Head of Cooperation and Deputy Head of Mission soon. **Mme. Simone Haerberli** will take up this post in early August, arriving from Bern. She replaces **Mr. Heinz Kaufmann** who has since left Accra. ■

Consular Officer, **Mrs. Ruth Zümbuhl** will be leaving Accra after a year. She will be replaced by **Mrs. Gloria Giugno**, who arrived from Stuttgart. ■



Mme. Gloria Giugno



Mrs. Tatjana Hediger

Head of Chancery **Mrs. Teresa Chejlava Nkundwa** has left with her family for a new post in Montreal after almost three years in Accra. We welcomed **Mrs. Tatjana Hediger** to replace her. Tatjana arrived from Harare with her family. ■



Mrs. Teresa Chejlava Nkundwa



Mr. Roland Moser

Consular Officer **Roland Moser** has also completed his four-year stay in Accra and is taking up a next posting in New Delhi. He will be replaced by **Mrs. Le Nguyet Schmid**, who arrived from Dubai in July. ■



Mme. Le Nguyet Schmid



Col. Peter Maurer

Our colleague **Major Thuruban Thuchchathanan** arrived in May and has since integrated at the KAIPTC. He replaces **Col. Peter Maurer**, who has since taken up a new post in Switzerland. Thuruban is a Course Director at the KAIPTC and will be responsible for delivering the Protection of Civilians Course at the Center. ■



Maj. Thuruban Thuchchathanan



Mr. Daniel Antwi

At the Embassy, we were glad to welcome our new Facilities Manager **Mr. Daniel Antwi**, who took up the job in June 2022. ■

In June 2021, I started my journey from Switzerland to Accra. Uncertain how this cultural and also climatic difference would affect me, I embarked on the adventure. I quickly realized that Ghanaians are very welcoming and you get used to the climate. Then I started my one-year training at the consular section of the embassy. I was allowed to enter biometric data for passports, process civil status cases and answer all kinds of inquiries and much more. So it could also be that you received an email from me or met me in person at the counter. My training year has now come to an end and my journey to the next destination will soon begin. As the first posting of my career, I am sure that Accra will never be forgotten. ■



Ms. Michèle Schatzmann



Mr. Tim Segesseemann

Kakra kakra akoko benum nsuo – little by little, as the proverb goes, will the chicken drink water.

While that might be true for my attempts at learning some Twi, the past 16 months as a diplomat in training with the Embassy in Accra have felt more akin to drinking from a fire hose – and that was wonderful!

Indeed, I would be hard pressed to imagine a better place for anyone wanting to learn about diplomacy “on the job” than Ghana, Benin and Togo. Arriving in January 2021 meant discovering Accra in the midst of the second wave of the Covid pandemic – certainly a challenge, but one should never underestimate the welcoming spirit of Ghanaians!

As the pace picked up, I met with a host of civil society organisations and start-ups, selecting and managing projects to support through our small project grant budget line. I was privileged to travel to Togo for a mission early on, which I also used to connect with local organisations, for instance supporting a human rights defence NGO working on a digital awareness campaign in Lomé.

Over the ensuing months, to pick just a few highlights, I would host a TV panel discussion at the Embassy which was streamed to an academic conference in Switzerland, participate in organising the visit of Federal Councillor Simonetta Sommaruga, launch and maintain the Embassy’s Twitter presence, screen a Swiss film to celebrate *Francophonie* week and discover the various parts of Ghana visiting projects of our international cooperation – all the while keeping up the day-to-day business of political reporting and representation.

I was particularly fortunate to also include a three-week stint in Benin in my time here, where I familiarised myself with the workings of our Cooperation Office in Cotonou and took the bumpy road to the deep north for a week, surveying projects funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. All in all what you might call a rather well-rounded experience!

This being my first stay in Africa, the past months no doubt held countless new experiences and encounters. At the same time, I believe it’s perhaps more important to focus on what we have in common. Constantly, I like remind myself therefore of a foundational truth both Switzerland and Ghana proudly share: Both countries are characterized by a diversity of cultures, languages and religions; both define themselves through how they have managed to derive unity, strength and peace from it.

All this work would however be just that – work – if weren’t for the people we do it with, and the people we do it for. Thanks to them, working for Switzerland and the Swiss people here was a joy!

In my time in Ghana, I was truly fortunate that I could count on a supportive team of colleagues and benefitted immensely from the encouragement and trust of our Ambassador, Philipp Stalder. I am thankful to all of “Team Switzerland” in Ghana, Benin and Togo – lest I forget to also thank our Honorary Consul Myrna Tabchoury in Lomé and Elisabeth Pitteloud and her team in Cotonou.

Goodbyes are never easy, but I guess I had better get used to it in this profession. Whatever future assignments and postings lie ahead, they will have a hard time living up to this!

Me da mo nyinaa ase! ■

Facts & Figures

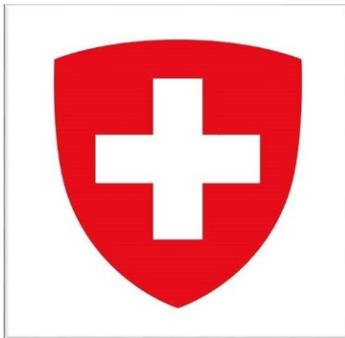
+ WHAT IS SWISS NEUTRALITY?	
 <p>Neutrality is a successful instrument of Swiss foreign and security policy. It is based on the law of neutrality and neutrality policy as well as on Switzerland's history and traditions.</p>	
A LEGAL FRAMEWORK  <p>Switzerland's permanent neutrality is anchored in international law. The law of neutrality sets out the rights and obligations of neutral states. It is enshrined in the Hague Conventions of 1907 and is part of customary international law.</p>	A POLICY <p>The policy of neutrality aims to uphold Switzerland's credibility and independence as a neutral state, in accordance with specific circumstances. Switzerland plays a special role internationally by mediating and building bridges.</p>
AN IDENTITY <p>Neutrality is an integral part of the identity of Switzerland and its citizens. It does not impede Switzerland from freely expressing political opinions and working for the respect and defence of its fundamental values such as democracy, the rule of law and human rights.</p>	A HUMANITARIAN TRADITION  <p>Based on its long-standing tradition of good offices and humanitarian aid, Switzerland accords its neutrality a peace-related and humanitarian orientation.</p>

Swiss Neutrality

"The law of neutrality" is clearly defined in international treaties (especially in the Hague Conventions of 1907), which oblige the neutral state not to militarily favor belligerent parties in a war between states. In this regard, the law of neutrality contains specific obligations, especially with regard to war material and the use of territory. "Switzerland's neutrality policy" is the instrument that guarantees the credibility of Swiss neutrality within the international community. The way in which this policy is expressed is not governed by an international treaty, but is left to Switzerland's own discretion. It is defined on a case-by-case basis according to the concrete circumstances. ■

Keep in touch

Follow & Like us on Facebook – and Twitter!



Do you belong to the more than 4'000 friends who follow us on Facebook since we launched our social media channel in December 2019?

If this is not yet the case and if you want to get regular news and updates on Switzerland and the Embassy's activities, click on the icon to the right and like the Embassy's Facebook account or follow the link below: [Facebook.com/SwissEmbassyAccra](https://www.facebook.com/SwissEmbassyAccra)

Since July, you can also find us on Twitter! Follow our new account @SwissEmbAccra to stay up to date with our Embassy at twitter.com/SwissEmbAccra. ■

Useful links



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Switzerland Tourism: www.MySwitzerland.com



Auslandschweizer-Organisation
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Organizzazione degli Svizzeri all'estero
Organisaziun dals Svizzers a l'ester

Organisation of the Swiss Abroad: www.aso.ch

Please regularly check our webpage for news and events: <https://www.eda.admin.ch/accra>

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