

PRESS RELEASE

“Let’s make Vietnam a research nation”

In June 1894, exactly 120 years ago, Dr. Alexandre Yersin, the Swiss Doctor who also became French citizen and ultimately lived and died mainly as Vietnamese in his heart, discovered the bacillus causing the plague, humanity’s biggest scourge ever. This discovery was one of the biggest liberations of the human species in history.

Dr. Yersin was a brilliant scientist in his field, but he was much more. He was the untiring discoverer, inventor and creator of things and ideas that did not exist before. He was eminently humanist, by questing to attenuate concretely and practically the suffering in human life. **Few individuals have lived such a life of useful creativity put in service of others, by living at the same time such a tremendously satisfying, rewarding and thus happy life.**

To stress this fascinating human curiosity and inventiveness demonstrated by Yersin, which is lingering in all of us, to wake it up in us, to encourage young Vietnamese to study and enjoy the subjects of scientific discovery and innovation, the Swiss Embassy has joined forces with the Swiss filmmaker Stephan Kleeb and the sponsoring companies Roche Pharmaceuticals and Titoni Watches by mandating him to make a Documentary Film on Yersin’s life of permanent research.

The Film is a metaphor of a “life well lived”, it is an inspiration for children, youngsters and their parents, to learn that hard work and perseverance bring the sweetest fruits, that no satisfaction is greater than the one of having done a great effort and having – sometimes after some failures – achieved a goal.

To remind us of the scientific and social achievements of Yersin, but even more, to stress the importance of scientific research as prerequisite of any country’s success, the Hanoi National University has been chosen as venue for the world premiere of the movie: **“It is not a life that doesn’t move”**.

In the presence of the **Swiss State Secretary of Education, Science and Innovation Mr. Mauro Dell’Ambrogio and of Swiss and Vietnamese scientists** as well as of **hundreds of students of natural sciences**, the film’s world premiere will take place in Hanoi on June 12th in the amphitheater Nguyen Van Dao, and the following day the second projection of the film will take place in the amphitheater 1, University of Natural Sciences of the National University of Ho Chi Minh City under similar participation as in Hanoi.

Before the projection of the film, four eminent Vietnamese scientists (Prof. Nguyen Tran Hien, Director of the National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology, Prof. Le Gia Vinh, Vice President of Vietnam Medical Association, Prof. Dao Ngoc Hao, President of the Vietnam Veterinary Association and Prof. Nguyen Lan Dung, President of the Vietnam Biology Society), which are standing out in disciplines – which were also Yersin’s, namely bacteriology, general medicine, veterinary medicine and botanic sciences - will introduce the public into the universe of their scientific fields and their most fascinating and challenging aspects.

The Swiss Embassy and Hanoi National University are looking forward to an event which will celebrate human creativity, duty but also the joy of life emanating from the two latter.

1862 (Sept. 22 nd)	Birth of Dr. Alexander Yersin in Aubonne, near Lausanne, Switzerland
1883	Obtains the High School diploma from the Academy of Lausanne
1888	Doctor of Medicine at the University of Paris
1889	Receives French citizenship
1894	Discovers in Hong Kong the bacillus causing the plague
1895	Director of Pasteur Institute in Nha Trang
1897	Introduces successfully the rubber tree in Vietnam
1902	First Director of the School of Medicine of Hanoi
1917	Introduces successfully the cinchona tree in Vietnam
1939	Saves countless villagers from a deadly storm
1943 (March 1 st)	Death and burial of Dr. Yersin in Nha Trang

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