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Newsletter

Embassy of Belgium in Kenya

January 2019

A word from the Ambassador



Dear Belgians, Dear Friends,

2018 has been a challenging year in terms of human resources at the embassy. No less than five collaborators left us and were replaced by new faces. Our dear friend Ivan Korsak, the Trade Commissioner, left also our premises for new endeavors in Senegal. We wish him all the best. Most importantly, the embassy can count on a new Consul, Ms. Ilse Lauwen, who will do her utmost to improve our services to you.

Last fall has been incredibly busy. Together with our colleagues from Brussels, the embassy took part in the Finexpo mission. Representatives from the Belgian Foreign ministry and the Finance ministry came to Kenya to screen the many projects undertaken by Belgian companies and financed by Belgium through state to state loans or interest rates stabilization agreements. Kenya is actually the main destination for these projects which are very diverse and relate to sectors such as water sanitation and distribution, energy production, health or firefighting.



King's Day Celebrations

Our Ambassador Mr. Nicolas Nihon and his wife Mrs. Pornprom Petklai Nihon, hosted on 15 November 2018 a reception at the newly renovated residence to celebrate King's Day. The reception was well attended by a great number of guests, including members of the Belgian community.

[Click here](#) to view some photos of the King's Day celebrations in Nairobi.



Besides the King's day, we hosted at the residence of Belgium the 3rd edition of the Human Rights Awards in Kenya. I participated also in the political dialogue EU-Seychelles in Victoria and travelled to Antananarivo to take part in the evaluation sessions of the Belgian non-governmental cooperation in Madagascar. My visit to Tulear allowed me to see how useful and innovative this cooperation can be between Belgian universities and NGOs and local education institutions. November 2018 witnessed also the restart of the formal dialogue between the EU and Kenya, a key regional actor with which the European countries share many interests.

Since the 1st of January, Belgium sits at the table of the UN Security Council. Our embassy will therefore devote more attention to Somalia, which I hope to visit again soon. We will also observe with interest the developments in Eritrea. A new wind is definitely blowing on the Horn of Africa.

2019 started on a particularly sad note in Kenya. We remain nevertheless hopeful. I wish to every one of you a happy and productive new year.

Best regards,
Nicolas Nihon

2018 Human Rights Defenders Awards Ceremony

On 30 November 2018, our Embassy organized, in collaboration with the National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders - Kenya, the "Human Rights Defenders Awards" ceremony. More than 200 guests enjoyed the ceremony that took place at the residence.

For the third consecutive year, a prize was awarded in three different categories: the Human Rights Defender of the Year, the Upcoming Human Rights Defender of the Year and the Munir Mazrui Lifetime achievement. The winners, who received an award for their outstanding human rights work while facing many challenges on a daily basis, were chosen by an independent selection panel of prominent Kenyans, chaired by Dr. Willy Mutunga, the previous Chief Justice in Kenya.

An important aim of the awards is to improve the safety and protection of Human Rights Defenders as they benefit from the visibility and international recognition.

Our Ambassador Nicolas Nihon gave an inspiring opening speech in which he highlighted that Belgium is a strong believer of human rights, and whereby respect for human rights is seen as one of the cornerstones of a democratic society.

During the award ceremony, a human rights matatu was unveiled, with as Belgian wink two smurfs on the sides, as well as the Spirou human rights exhibition that explains the 30 different articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, while using Belgian cartoon characters.

[Click here to view some photos of the event.](#)



St Nicolas Party

On Saturday 1 December, St Nicolas and his colorful Piets brought a visit to Kenya, and passed by our consul's residence. And he brought wonderful news: this year all the children had been good! St Nicolas took time to talk to all the kids and their parents, and each and everyone got a small present. Thank you St Nicolas, and see you next year!



Did you know...?

Consular News

Federal Elections 2019 - deadline reminder

In May 2019, all Belgians will have to go to the election polls. Every Belgian registered at our Embassy is bound by the voting. The ballot papers need to be returned to our Embassy, **latest by 31 January 2019**. More information is available in [Dutch](#) and [French](#).

Travel advice

Belgian visitors to Kenya are advised to register their trip on [Travellers online!](#) Our [Travel advice](#) is updated regularly but it is a good practice to follow the international and local news.

Embassy opening hours

The opening hours for the different consular services and closure dates of the embassy can be found on our website kenya.diplomatie.belgium.be

Vlamingen in de Wereld (VIW)

De stichting Vlamingen in de Wereld (VIW) zorgt voor uitgeweken landgenoten, biedt informatie en stimuleert onderlinge contacten. VIW doet dit met diverse initiatieven die het leven van de migrerende landgenoten vereenvoudigen, zoals beperking van administratieve rompslomp bij een verhuizing en vlotte afhandeling van dossiers rond pensioen of sociale zekerheid, voldoende faciliteiten voor onderwijs van het Nederlands en meer. VIW steunt op een netwerk van meer dan 80 vertegenwoordigers, wellicht ook in uw regio. De vertegenwoordigers zijn wereldwijd de belangrijkste antennes van de stichting, de ogen en oren die VIW 'dragen' in het buitenland. Als uitgeweken landgenoot bent u welkom bij de VIW gemeenschap én een VIW-vertegenwoordiger in uw regio. [Klik hier](#) voor de lijst van VIW-vertegenwoordigers. Misschien mogen zij u verwelkomen op één van hun toekomstige activiteiten.

Geregeld informeren wij u via onze online media. Bezoek onze website viw.be, onze [facebookpagina](#) of schrijf je in op onze gratis elektronische nieuwsbrief via viw.be. Maandelijks ontvangt u boeiende informatie en leest u portretten van landgenoten in het buitenland. Ontvangt u liever informatie op papier of wenst u gebruik te maken van de VIW-dienstverlening? Voor een beperkt bedrag is uw gezin een heel jaar lid van onze organisatie. Alle vragen via info@viw.be

For the first time ever in history, Belgium won the hockey World Cup title. The final was a rather closed match as the Belgian team faced three-time champions, the Netherlands. The Dutch were extremely keen to win their first title since 1998, but the Red Lions beat them to the punch.

The World Cup title is the first gold medal ever for the Red Lions at a major tournament. In recent years, the Belgian team always came in second. At the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Argentina prevented Belgium from taking Olympic gold. During the 2017 European Cup, they were the runners-up behind the Netherlands. But now our hockey team has well and truly taken revenge with the World Cup title.

[Click here](#) to read the full story.

Union Francophone des Belges à l'étranger a.s.b.l.

L'Union Francophone des Belges à l'Étranger (U.F.B.E.) défend en Belgique les intérêts de tous les Belges expatriés. L'U.F.B.E. aide ses membres à résoudre toutes sortes de problèmes qu'ils peuvent rencontrer avant leur départ, pendant l'expatriation et lorsqu'ils reviennent. L'U.F.B.E. et les postes diplomatiques sont vraiment complémentaires.

- Assistance fiscale et de douane en Belgique et à l'étranger.
- Aide administrative : permis de conduire, immatriculation de véhicules, mariage, filiation, divorce, etc...
- Solutions aux problèmes sociaux : allocations familiales, chômage, pensions, assurance soins de santé, mutuelle, régime ex-OSSOM (ONSS dir VII outre-mer devenu SSON)
- Conseils pour les problèmes d'enseignement : équivalences, accès aux écoles francophones, allocations d'étude, etc...
- Pistes d'emploi, contrats de travail, etc...
- Conseils pour la nationalité, double nationalité, recouvrement de la nationalité belge, droit de vote, etc...
- Mise en contact avec d'autres Belges à l'étranger grâce à nos 80 délégués et aux 93 Attachés et Conseillers Economiques de l'AWEX.
- L'information la plus complète grâce au Journal des Belges à l'Étranger et notre site www.ufbe.be

et l'e-news.

Tous ces services sont gratuits pour les membres en règle de cotisation (info@ufbe.be).



Embassy of Belgium in Kenya

Limuru Road - PO Box 30461
00100 Nairobi - Kenya

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