

Friends of Belgium - Newsletter

News from the Embassy of Belgium in Nairobi on Belgian relations with Kenya, Somalia, Madagascar, the Seychelles, the Comores, Eritrea and UN institutions in Kenya.

A word from your Ambassador

Dear friends of Belgium,

The Westgate drama hit Kenya very hard. Belgium immediately condemned the atrocious attack and sent a message of solidarity to the Kenyan government. We must never be intimidated by terrorism. Belgium cooperates with Kenya to maintain the rule of law on land and at sea. Mid October, as a result of a carefully prepared operation, Belgian police arrested a Somali citizen at Brussels Airport who is responsible for a substantive number of piracy attacks on shipping in the Indian Ocean. Also, he was allegedly involved in the abduction of the Belgian vessel Pompei in 2009. Two pirates have already been condemned to a prison sentence by a Belgian tribunal for their role in the abduction of the Pompei.

round of the presidential elections taking place in a peaceful atmosphere. We sincerely hope that the second round of these elections will continue this month in the best possible conditions, allowing the 'Malgaches' to finally end the transition and to build a prosperous and peaceful country. I know that our vibrant Belgian community in the 'Grande Île' is looking forward to this.

The past months have been remarkably fruitful in terms of the economic and cultural intensification of relations with Kenya. A Belgian Trade Mission visited both Nairobi and Mombasa. On that occasion I was happy to conclude a contract with the Nairobi County Governor, HE Dr. Evans Kidero, on the overhaul of the Fire Fighting Services for Nairobi. As a number of sad events over the last years proved, there is an urgent need for better disaster management equipment to

strengthen the security of people in Nairobi.

We also strengthened our cultural ties by organising a Kenyan art exhibition and by bringing the renowned Belgian pianist Jef Neve to Kenya. Both events were an absolute success and we will continue engaging on this.

I conclude by encouraging you once more to follow our communication on our Embassy Facebook page and my Twitter account. While we try our best to reach all of you through SMS messages, you must know that social media allow you to keep in touch with events and our services in real time. Generally, I believe that as an Embassy we should be transparent and in touch with our clients and friends. Your feedback is appreciated.

I wish all of you a safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year's break.

Bart Ouvry



Ambassador Ouvry and Governor Kidero signing an agreement to support disaster management

In Madagascar, we have witnessed a first

Consular News

Alert - Following the arrest of a highly ranked Somali pirate in Belgium, the Embassy asks all Belgians in Kenya and Somalia to remain extra vigilant in the coming weeks and months in view of a kidnapping threat.

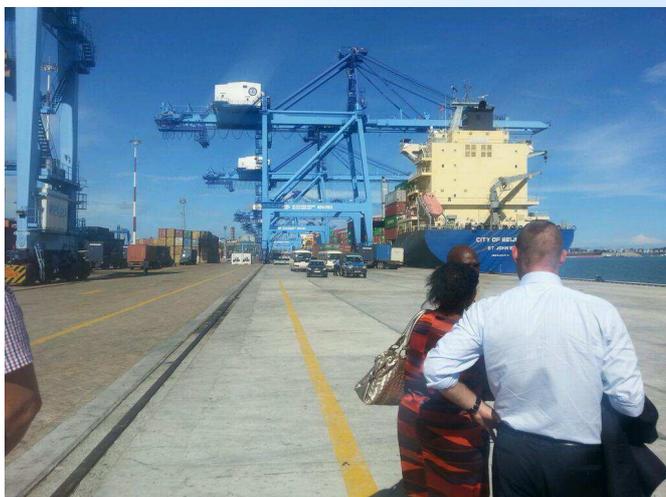
Online appointments for visa- No need to call our visa line anymore! Early 2014, the Embassy will install an online application system for visa appointments on its website that will be accessible 24 hours 7.

Registration - The Embassy would like to redraw the attention of all Belgians residing or staying in Kenya/Madagascar/Seychelles/Comores/Eritrea to the importance of registration at this Em-

(Continued on page 2)



In pictures



The Ambassador tweeted this picture during the trade mission's visit to Mombasa port. The contacts made by our Belgian companies are promising.



Guests of the King's Day are clearly enjoying the Labyrinth art exhibition. Here you see the US Ambassador discussing an art work.



Jef Neve in action @ the Michael Joseph Centre in Nairobi. What an artist! His three performances in Kenya were all followed by a standing ovation.

bassy or Honorary Consulate. In case of a long or permanent move to one of these countries, all Belgians are advised to deregister at their respective municipality in Belgium and register at the Embassy or Honorary Consulate. This will entitle you to benefit from the same services as provided by your municipal authorities in Belgium. Also, in case of a temporary stay which exceeds 3 months it is useful to register because it enables the Embassy and our Ministry in Belgium to react more efficiently in the event of a crisis. Moreover, you will also be updated on the activities and events related to the Embassy and the Belgian community.

You can come and visit the Embassy or alternatively, send an email to nairobi@diplobel.fed.be. We will then return a registration form. Tourists can also forward their contact details and that of their relatives in Belgium by a simple e-mail.

Federal elections 2014 - In order to be able to cast your vote for the Belgian federal elections in May 2014 please return the registration form duly filled out as soon as possible! Please follow the instructions given. If you are officially registered at the Embassy and didn't receive any correspondence about this, you are invited to contact the Embassy.

Diplomatic news

Trade mission - Early November, forty-two Belgian companies visited Kenya and Tanzania for a trade mission. The companies active in a broad range of sectors like Agro Food, Automotive, Building, Chemicals, Education, Equipment, Energy, ICT, Medical, Mining, Ports, Trading and Transport liaised with almost 450 local business people. In Nairobi, Belgian businessmen were briefed extensively on the Kenyan economy and investment opportunities. In Mombasa, they engaged in B2B and visited the port facilities.

members expressed their satisfaction. In 2014, a second mission will be organised.

Belgium supplies drinking water to Kenya runners' heartland - On Friday October 4, Kenya's Treasury was the scene of the signing of a project for supplying drinking water to the Iten-Tambach region by Belgian company ASPAC, in cooperation with the Rift Valley Water Services Board. The project is financed through a concessional loan of more than sixteen million euros by Belgium. Ambassador Ouvry initialed the agreement as witness, while Cabinet Secretary of the Treasury Henry Rotich signed for Kenya.

Furthermore, they participated in workshops with International Financial Institutions, among others the World Bank, African Development Bank and the EU. The mission had an intense working schedule but the delegation

ASPAC's project will ensure drinking water supply for the towns of Iten and Tambach in the Northern Rift Valley through environment-friendly technologies. (Continued on page 3)



ronment-friendly and innovative technologies such as the use of gravity, more resistant electro-fusion pipes and solar panels. Another distinctive feature of the project is that Iten-Tambach is the heartland of the runners Kenya is so rightly proud of: the project will bolster the potential of the region as a national and international training centre for athletes.

Eritrea & Madagascar - The Ambassador was in Eritrea last week for some field visits. In this very isolated African country, he visited the Bisha gold and copper mine and small scale agricultural projects supported by the EU. Earlier, the political attaché of this Embassy flew to Madagascar to meet his counterparts from EU Embassies and international organisations to discuss the

upcoming elections in the country. Furthermore, he met with Belgian NGO's PROTOS and Louvain Coopération and witnessed their excellent work outside the capital.



Did you know...

Did you know that

2014

will be the year we commemorate the 100th anniversary of the start of World War I?

In Kenya, there are 37 WWI cemeteries, e.g. the Mombasa Mbaraki Cemetery which has 196 war grave plots

<http://www.cwgc.org>

Belgian corner

Sinterklaas/Saint Nicolas- Although some controversy surrounded them this year, Sinterklaas or Saint Nicolas and his pal Piet will visit the Belgian Residence on Saturday December 7. All families registered at the Embassy have received an invitation from Sinterklaas - Saint Nicolas to celebrate this day this coming Saturday at the Residence for an afternoon full of presents, fun and laughter. For more information please contact natacha_andre@yahoo.fr

Labyrinth - November 15 is not only the day we celebrate King's Day but since a couple of years it is also the day that we celebrate the opening of an art exhibition at the Residence of the Belgian Ambassador in Nairobi. This year's 'Labyrinth' aimed at showcasing some of the best of the Kenyan art scene since its independence. With more than 130 artworks from 12 Kenyan artists, its aim was successfully fulfilled.

Special thanks to Alexandre bakery, Balteau Water Company, Better Globe Forestry, BM Security, CBA, Kenfreight Logistics

Group, Kofinac Coffee Growers, millers and marketers, Msambweni Beach House, Nas Cuisine, Perry Solai, Que Pasa restaurant, Rampeldesign, Red Lands Roses, SGS, Soulco, Thomas & Piron building company and the Windsor Golf Hotel and Country Club.

The Belgian Pianist - "J a w d r o p p i n g", " a s t o n i s h i n g", "enthralling", "simply awesome" and "brilliant" were only a few of the very positive reactions received after the concerts of the Belgian pianist in Nairobi and Mombasa in September. Certainly, the concerts of Jef Neve were unique, also for him as these concerts were his first in Sub-Sahara Africa.

The vibes experienced during the concert and the reactions received afterwards make the Embassy team hungry for more cultural events.

Safaricom Jazz Festival - The CEO of Safaricom was apparently so impressed by the performance of Jef Neve that he launched the idea of an international Safaricom Jazz Festival the same evening. Only a couple of months later, Safaricom is now really planning this festival on Sunday February 23 2014 at Ngong Race Course. The Embassy of Belgium is currently investigating if it can send another renowned jazz artist and will keep you up to date about it. Keep an eye on our Facebook page!



The Belgian Rugby team 7s leaves the pitch after another game during the international Safaricom Sevens tournament.



In focus - Jean-Michel Delmotte, UNICEF Somalia

What brought you to Somalia?

I am a UN official and during the last three years, I was country representative of UNICEF in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. In my first two months in Nairobi, I had the time to familiarise with the program of UNICEF in Somalia. Now, I live in Mogadishu, Somalia. Actually, 'living in Mogadishu' is maybe exaggerated since all expats are based in a secured area at the international airport from where we organise our humanitarian and development assistance to the country. Our work is thwarted by the difficulties of the Somali government to exercise their power in the whole of the country. Normally, my assignment is limited to two years.

What does your work as the country representative for UNICEF in Somalia entail?

There is a representative based in Nairobi while in Somalia, I manage the UNICEF team responsible for the execution of the programs in Central and South Somalia. More than 80 internationals and Somali experts are working in the field of health, nutrition, sanitation and the protection of children, like demobilization of child sol-

diers and forced labour. Our head office is in Mogadishu and we have two local offices in Galkayo and Baidoa. The programs are a mix of humanitarian aid focused on nutrition and water supply and development aid. In fact, since the establishment of the new government, we are cooperating with them to establish state institutions offering health, education and social protection services. The budget of UNICEF Somalia is 500 million dollars for the period 2011-2015. I am convinced this will allow us to really make a difference for the most vulnerable and their families.

You are one of the few countrymen living in Mogadishu? Can you tell us more about it?

Like most of the expats living in Mogadishu, my movement is restricted to the immediate, secured surroundings of the airport. As a consequence, there are only few opportunities for leisure and social life, mostly limited to colleagues and aid working partners. I work at least 10 hours a day but fortunately every four weeks I have a week off that I can spend with my family in Europe. We will spend Christmas holiday in Kenya and we are of



course planning a safari and some time to relax at the coast. For my three kids it will be the first time! My wife was already here when we were based in Rwanda in the nineties. However, it will be a discovery for all.

Do you have any advice for new countrymen moving to Kenya?

Moving abroad and starting from scratch is always a challenge and not only logistically. Personally I think that for children it is the most difficult because the more they grow up, the more their social network is important for them. Despite the efforts to keep this network alive and vivid, the experience might be traumatising for them. Therefore, it is important to stress the positive aspects of moving, like discovering a new country, new adventures and new friends. We also love to receive friends and family from Belgium to let them experience our new home.

Friends of Belgium

Friends of Belgium is a three-monthly publication of the Embassy of Belgium in Nairobi.

Limuru Road, Muthaiga
P.O. Box 30 461— 00100
Nairobi
Kenya
Tel.: +254 (20) 712 20 11

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Contact:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Embassy-of-Belgium-in-Nairobi/460174370660062?ref=hl>
- Embassy of Belgium and consular services: nairobi@diplobel.fed.be
- Defence Attaché: atd09@qet.be
- Website of the Embassy: <http://diplomatie.belgium.be/kenya/>
- Website for tourism in Belgium: <http://www.365.be>
- Foreign Investment Liaison in Brussels: Colette.vanstraelen@economie.fgov.be
- Trade Commissioner Ivan Korsak: nairobi@belemb.eu

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please send an email to nairobi@diplobel.fed.be mentioning « unsubscribe ». All comments and suggestions are very welcome on the same address. Our ambition is to improve this product taking into account your needs and expectations.

The Trade Commissioner also publishes a Economic Newsletter on a regular basis. If you wish to subscribe, please send an email to nairobi@belemb.eu

News from the Embassy

Embassy closed - The Embassy will be closed on December 12 and 13 and between Christmas & New Year. The staff wishes you a merry Christmas and happy New Year!

Embassy on social media - It is quite impressive: @BartOuvry has now more followers on Twitter

than the Embassy has likes on Facebook. On social media, we keep you up to date on the latest activities and crisismanagement of the Embassy. Don't worry if you are not on Facebook or Twitter, in case of crisis we use SMS and our sector contacts to inform you as soon as possible.

DSA Charity Ball - Building on the tremendous success of past events, the Diplomatic Spouses' Association will organise a Charity Dance Party at the Belgian Residence in Muthaiga on January 24, 2014. For tickets, please **c o n t a c t n a d i n e . d e s m e d t @ d i p l o b e l . f e d . b e** from December 16.