



## Friends of Belgium - Newsletter

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

### A word from your Ambassador

Dear Friends of Belgium,

It is an immense pleasure for me to communicate with you through this newsletter for the first time. I already know some of you, as I have the great privilege to come back here. It is not only a privilege because I served here some years ago and many aspects of the everyday life are therefore familiar, but most of all because my family and I have come to appreciate Kenya thoroughly.

For those who don't know us yet, we are a family of six. My husband is Stéphane and our four sons are called Robin (15), Sacha (13), Vadim (10) and Timo (7). Vadim and Timo were born in Nairobi during our first time here. We were happy to welcome so many of you at our residence earlier this week. Soon the renovations of this beautiful building will start and we will live elsewhere until these works are finished. The ones who missed out

on our welcome drink, we are very much looking forward to meeting you as soon as possible.

As you will read in the newsletter we have strongly improved the gender balance at the Embassy, as our new Consul, Hilde, is also a woman. You will have the opportunity to get to know more about her in this newsletter.

Together with Hilde and the Embassy team, I aim to further inform you in the best way possible about consular and diplomatic news and updates from the Belgian community via this newsletter.

Don't hesitate to call on us if we can be of any assistance.

Warm regards,

Roxane de Bilderling  
Ambassador designate



### Consular News

**New consul** — Hilde Van Inthoudt is the new Belgian consul. Hilde has a vast experience as a consul and arrived from Beijing with her husband. You can read more about her in our "In Focus". Welcome to the Embassy team Hilde *na karibu Kenya!*

**Validity passports** — Since June 15, the Consular Code stipulates that all new passports granted from that date will be valid for a period of 7 years instead of 5 years. Also, kindly note that only Belgians who are registered in a Belgian diplomatic mis-

sion can apply for a passport at this Embassy. If you are still registered in a Belgian municipality, you can apply for a temporary passport only. Kindly take this into account when you move abroad for a considerable time.

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## In pictures



*The welcome drink of Ambassador Roxane de Bilderling and her husband Stephane Laime was very much appreciated by the Belgian community*

**Consular services in Madagascar**— Our Honorary Consulate in Madagascar has moved. Honorary Consul Mr Nicolas Verbert is pleased to serve all Belgians in Madagascar. Please find contact details on our website <http://diplomatie.belgium.be/kenya/>

**Upcoming visit to Madagascar** — Consul Hilde Van Inthoudt will visit Madagascar from 26 October to 30 October. During her stay, she will be available to the Belgian community for consular assistance. Furthermore, she will have bilateral meetings with the diplomatic community and the Madagascar authori-

ties. The Embassy team will further inform the Belgian community by email and social media.

**Be prepared when travelling** — Looking for solutions for Belgians abroad in need is part of the daily work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and this Embassy. To prevent problems at an early stage and to better inform travellers, the brochure "Reis Wijs! / Un Voyageur Averti!" aims to inform travellers and expats about travelling and moving abroad. You can consult it via our Facebook page or via the website [diplomatie.belgium.be](http://diplomatie.belgium.be).

## Diplomatic news

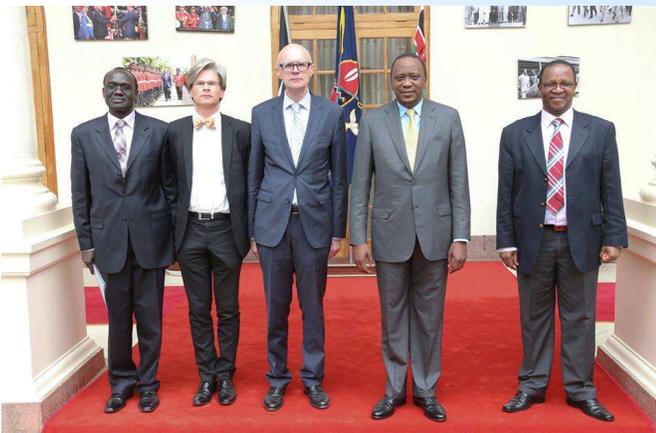


*Col. Herwig Holsteyns (right), his wife Inge Heynderickx and the German Military Attaché at the commemoration in Taita Hills*

**Do YOU want to become a diplomat?** - Later this year, the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs will organise an exam to recruit an additional 40 diplomats. This exam will be organised under the new statute for the diplomatic career that was adopted in August 2014. Selor will officially announce the recruitment process in the first half of October. Consequently, you will have 21 days to apply. Please note that in order to be admitted to the first round of the exam, you will have to have a Selor language certificate for the second language. If you do not have this certificate yet, please subscribe as soon as possible for the upcoming language exams. More information about this language certificate and about the recruitment process can be found under "Work for foreign Affairs" on our website [diplomatie.belgium.be](http://diplomatie.belgium.be).

**Commemoration of the Great War in Kenya** - Military Attaché Col. Herwig Holsteyns attended the commemoration ceremony at Salaita ("slaughter") Hill in Taveta in the shadow of Kilimanjaro. Not only Europe but also East Africa was very much affected by the First World War that started one hundred years ago. East Africa was the only then British territory to be occupied by the Germans. Taita Taveta became the battle field because the region lies on the border between Kenya (British territory) and Tanzania (Germany territory).

**Farewell** — Outgoing Ambassador Ouvry was welcomed at State House by the Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta on August 1 to bid farewell. It was an exquisite opportunity for both excellencies to discuss current bilateral issues and the state of play



*Outgoing Ambassador Ouvry and Counsellor Pieter Leenknecht at State House with President Kenyatta*

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of the cooperation between Belgium and Kenya.

**Leopold I** — On Saturday 30 August, the Belgian EU Naval Force warship BNS Leopold I conducted its

first friendly approach with two Yemeni fishing vessels. Having sighted the vessels at sea with approximately 15 men, women and children on board, the warship's Boar-

ding Party was dispatched to investigate the situation. BNS Leopold I's team provided drinking water and food and the warship's medical officer attended to the injured man's leg.

**Did you know...**

*Did you know Belgium is ranked 10th in the*

**GOOD COUNTRY INDEX?**

*The Good Country Index measure what each country on earth contributes to the common good of humanity, and what it takes away.*

**Belgian corner**

**Welcome to the new Ambassador** — It was a pleasure seeing you all during the welcome reception of Ambassador Mrs Roxane de Bilderling. The Embassy team wished for better weather but hopes you all enjoyed the atmosphere and the culinary delicacies and titbits of the Belgian chef Jürgen Brouillard of the Da Vinci restaurant in Dendermonde, Belgium.

**Red Devils screening** — Although we might all be (a bit) disappointed the Belgian Red Devils were eliminated in the quarter finals against Argentina during the last Fifa World Cup, we can be proud of our support during the screening of Belgium—Algeria on June 19 at the Residence of the Belgian Ambassador in Nairobi. Most of you were already dressed up in Belgian colours but with the merchandise we sold, the Embassy raised 50.000 KES for the Ghetto Classics project. Thank you all!

**National Day Celebrations** — Around one hundred Belgians gathered on Sunday July 20 at Windsor Golf & Country Club to celebrate the Belgian National Day. The day started early for the golfers, who competed in a Belgian-style golf tournament. All in all, about forty players registered and some won great prizes sponsored by Belgian companies. Chil-

dren took part in face-painting and played to their hearts' content on the bouncing castle, whilst parents enjoyed a great buffet lunch put together by Windsor. All children went home with a small gift, and thanks to the lucky pot draw, so did many adults! The day was also a final farewell to outgoing Ambassador couple Bart & Carine Ouvry, who bade their adieus but vowed to return as tourists!

**Newsletter** — All Belgians registered at the Embassy of Belgium in Nairobi and all honorary consulates of the jurisdiction automatically receive this newsletter and invitations for events organised by the Belgian Embassy. If you know Belgians who do not receive it, encourage them to register.

**The Netherlands School** — The Netherlands School Society in Nairobi offers primary education based on individual needs and offers a high quality, bilingual education. If you are interested, feel free to contact Thomas.Vanderwielen@netherlandschool.com. In order to get a real feel of NSS you can be shown around and sit down to talk with Thomas about how NSS can prepare your child for both worlds in the best possible way.

**Dhow design** — Countryman Benoit Raymaekers organises an exhibition of his unique dhow wood furniture and home decor from Friday September 19 to Sunday September 21 from 10am to 6pm. The exhibition takes place at Mdo Lane 65, Karen, off Dagoretti Road.



*The Embassy choir practising on the occasion of the farewell to outgoing Ambassador Bart Ouvry and his wife Carine*



*The football screening on June 19 brought about 350 Red Devils supporters together at the Belgian Residence.*



## In focus - Consul Hilde Van Inthoudt

### Hilde, welcome to Kenya. What brought you here?

In 1988 I started working for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. My first experiences I gained in our Embassy in Cairo; from there I moved on to Kinshasa, Beyrouth, Bangkok, Berlin and Beijing. After spending about 16 years in Asia, with a short stop in Europe, my husband and I were looking forward to returning to Africa. And we were lucky; the Ministry decided to send me to Nairobi.

### What does your work as a consul entail?

In a Belgian diplomatic mission, a consul is mainly in charge of the management of the mission (financing, staff, maintenance of buildings) and more importantly the consular affairs.

Consular work covers a wide variety of matters as administrative assistance to the Belgians living abroad (passports, identity cards, consular certificates), legal affairs (extraditions and assistance to the Belgian judiciary in international court cases, visiting Belgian prisoners, adoption) or general assistance to Belgian in distress (accidents, tourists etc.).

In addition, the consul is also in charge of issuing



visa and more generally of migration affairs.

In the 26 years I have been working as a consul I have witnessed a steady increase of consular interventions requested by our citizens (due to the growing number of Belgians travelling and settling down abroad) and of new phenomena (illegal migration, fake marriages, internet fraud). International cooperation, bilateral and multilateral (especially between EU member states), is needed; so negotiating bilateral agreements and improving EU cooperation became an important part of the job.

### What are your first impressions of the country?

I arrived four weeks ago, so unfortunately I haven't had the time yet to travel around. At the moment, coming from China, I enjoy the greenery and the

fresh air!

It is my first time to visit East-Africa and I can't wait to start travelling around, learning Swahili, meeting the different local communities.

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

Most Belgians living in Kenya know the country much better than I do, so I will be happy to receive their advice.

For countrymen new in the expat world, I wish them a successful integration and adaptation to their new life style. Living and working abroad is a wonderful experience, it enriches your life, but unfortunately for some persons it is rather stressful. Especially for 'trailing children and spouses'. I advise parents of expat kids to read *Third Culture Kids* (www.tckworld.com)

## Friends of Belgium

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

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### Website for tourism in Belgium:

<http://www.365.be>

### Foreign Investment Liaison in Brussels:

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*If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please send an email to [nairobi@diplobel.fed.be](mailto: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 an Economic Newsletter on a regular basis. If you wish to subscribe, please send an email to [nairobi@belemb.eu](mailto:nairobi@belemb.eu)

## News from the Embassy

### Economic newsletter —

The Embassy team attached the economic newsletter of Belgian Trade Commissioner Ivan Korsak to this « Friends of Belgium » edition n°11. If you would like to receive this newsletter on a regular

basis, please send an email to [nairobi@belemb.eu](mailto:nairobi@belemb.eu).

### Social media —

About 50 Belgian Embassies have launched their own Facebook page. To know which ones are online, visit the page "Diplomatie.Belgium",

section "Embassies". You will find out among others about their various activities and practical advice.

### Embassy closed—

The Embassy will be closed on October 10 (Moi Day) and October 20 (Heroes Day).