

DIPLOMAT

MAGAZINE

**GRAND CHANCELLOR OF THE ORDER OF
MALTA SHARES INSIGHTS ON GLOBAL
PEACE AND HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS**

FROM SEED TO BEACON: THE HCCH'S 130-YEAR JOURNEY
Dr Christophe Bernasconi, Secretary General of the HCCH

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**THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HAGUE
ACADEMY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW**

**NAVAL DIPLOMACY – A FRIENDLY TOOL FOR DETERRENCE
OR A PROVOCATIVE ACT ROOTED IN NEOCOLONIALISM?**

COLOPHON

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A broader selection of articles and contributions can be found in our free online version at: www.diplomatmagazine.eu

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A DECADE OF DIPLOMACY: REFLECTING ON OUR JOURNEY AND EMBRACING THE FUTURE

As we mark the milestone of our 10th anniversary, it is a time for both reflection and envisioning new horizons, as we deepen our commitment to the global diplomatic community. Throughout the years, our collaboration with embassies has not only been about reporting; it has been an active participation in the narratives, promoting their countries' policies and achievements on the international stage.

With a readership of 1.2 million and a robust archive boasting over 14,000 articles, 5,500 diplomatic events and news updates, along with contributions from more than 600 ambassadors, we've become a fixture in the diplomatic archives of nations worldwide. Our journey has provided us with the privilege of hosting guests ranging from Sultans and Queens to princes, prime ministers, presidents, ministers, ambassadors, international judges, diplomats, and academics from around the globe.

In this special edition, we are honored to present insightful contributions, including the Grand Chancellor of the Order of Malta sharing perspectives on global peace and humanitarian efforts. Additionally, Dr. Christophe Bernasconi, Secretary-General of the HCCH, takes us on a 130-year journey from seed to beacon, and Judge Leonardo Brant explores Brazil's significant role in the peaceful settlement of disputes. Mayor Jan Van Zanen reflects on the shared history and memories of The Hague, along with an exploration of the 100th anniversary of The Hague Academy of International Law. We also delve into the intriguing topic of naval diplomacy, questioning whether it is a friendly tool for deterrence or a provocative act rooted in neocolonialism.

Beyond the written word, our commitment extends to a myriad of events, from dance classes featuring salsa, tango, and merengue for diplomats to classical biking and walking tours. The success of events such as Cigars & Boleros, Welcome After Summer, and Wine

Extravaganza has been a proof of the solid ties between Diplomat Magazine and the diplomatic community. The support and contributions of the diplomatic community have been instrumental in shaping Diplomat Magazine into what it is today, and for that, we are sincerely grateful. Collaborating with embassies on their own initiatives has been a joy, but the challenge was how to celebrate our anniversary. In partnership with our long-time ally, the Residentie Orkest, we orchestrated a spectacular concert at the renowned theater Amare, inviting ambassadors and chiefs of mission for a memorable night out. During the reception preceding the concert, the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, Ambassador Sahar Ghanem of Yemen, Senate President Dr. Jan Anthonie Bruijn, and Mayor Jan van Zanen expressed their enthusiastic support and congratulations to Diplomat Magazine through inspiring words delivered in their speeches.

As we stand on this remarkable milestone, we acknowledge that diplomacy extends beyond forging alliances and negotiating treaties; it is about fostering understanding, building bridges, avoiding confrontation and celebrating the richness of diverse ideas. It has been a privilege to witness the convergence of minds from every corner of the world. Diplomat Magazine stands to these ideals, and we look forward to many more years of collaboration, friendship and shared success.

Dr Mayelinne De Lara

Publisher

R

**Residentie
Orkest**
Den Haag

Unwind on Sunday morning

After breakfast and the weekend supplement, it is time for a soulful violin solo or just the poignant sounds of one of Mozart's finest works. Or yet the symphony of symphonies, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, a universal message of peace, freedom and harmony set to music. At the Residentie Orkest, Sunday morning will be your favourite moment of the week.

Upcoming Sunday morning concerts:

Beethoven & Mozart

10 December 2023

The ultimate violin concerto
versus a concise symphony

200 years of Beethoven 9

26 May 2024

A symphony full of peace
and harmony

Mozart & Haydn

7 April 2024

Grand, expressive and full of joy



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amare



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Grand Chancellor of the Order of Malta, Riccardo Paternò di Montecupo

GRAND CHANCELLOR OF THE ORDER OF MALTA SHARES INSIGHTS ON GLOBAL PEACE AND HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS

In a recent exclusive interview with Diplomat Magazine, the newly appointed Grand Chancellor of the Order of Malta, **Riccardo Paternò di Montecupo**, provided valuable insights into the Order's mission, diplomatic efforts, and its commitment to promoting peace and humanitarian aid on the global stage.

Conveying a Message of Peace

During his address at the UN Security Council, Grand Chancellor Paternò di Montecupo emphasized the Order of Malta's unwavering commitment to ending the tragic conflict in Ukraine. He stressed "The main message the Sovereign Order of Malta has been conveying since the very outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine is that we need to stop a war that it is causing tragic human suffering, heavy damage to infrastructures and huge costs to the world economy, especially with regard to the poorest countries and the most vulnerable groups". The Order of Malta, through its organization Malteser Ukraine, has been actively involved in providing vital goods, medical and social assistance, and even prosthetic limbs through a clinic in Lviv for war wounded individuals in over 60 cities and towns.

Maintaining Neutrality in a Turbulent World

One of the hallmarks of the Sovereign Order of Malta is its steadfast commitment to neutrality, impartiality, and an apolitical stance. Grand Chancellor Paternò di Montecupo explained that these principles do not equate to turning a blind eye to global conflicts or crises. Rather, the Order advocates for the protection of civilians in conflict zones, adherence to International Humanitarian Law, and universal access to basic social services.

"We approach conflicts from the perspective of the most vulnerable ones and those in need, irrespective of nationality, gender or religious belief." He said.

A Dual Role in Promoting Peace

Historically, the Sovereign Order of Malta maintains a neutral stance in international politics. Grand Chancellor Paternò di Montecupo recently addressed the UN Security Council, marking the first time a Grand Chancellor from the Order of Malta has spoken at this prestigious forum. In this dual role of advocacy and humanitarian aid provision, the Order calls for peace, the safeguarding of human life, and adherence to humanitarian principles. Since the onset of the Ukrainian crisis, the Order has provided assistance to displaced people and refugees both within Ukraine and in neighboring European countries, making it one of the most extensive operations in the Order's history since World War II.

Universal Access to Healthcare

Addressing universal access to healthcare, Grand Chancellor Paternò di Montecupo shared that "In several countries around the world the Order of Malta runs hospitals, health centers, mobile units with a view to ensuring access of the poorest groups to basic health services".

In regions such as Africa, the Middle East, including Lebanon and Palestine, the Order's presence is felt through its commitment to promoting and supporting One Health, a holistic approach that seeks to align environmental, human, and animal health for the greater good.

Diplomatic Relationships and Humanitarian Efforts

The Sovereign Order of Malta maintains bilateral diplomatic relations with 113 countries, and its Embassies and Missions to the United Nations play a vital role in facilitating humanitarian activities. These diplomatic relationships help the Order navigate diplomatic channels and collaborate with respective countries of accreditation. This collaboration was particularly evident during the Ukrainian crisis, where the Order's Embassy in Kiev facilitated – and still does – the delivery of goods, protection of humanitarian staff, and implementation of assistance projects within the country.

Challenges in Humanitarian Aid and Peace Promotion

Grand Chancellor Paternò di Montecupo acknowledged the significant challenges the Order of Malta faces in providing humanitarian aid, including violations of International Humanitarian Law and threats to the safety of humanitarian workers. Hospitals and clinics operated by the Order are also vulnerable to attacks, resulting in severe damage and destruction. Ultimately, these challenges disproportionately affect the most vulnerable, including the elderly, women, children, and people with disabilities.

Future Priorities and Goals

As the new Grand Chancellor, one of Paternò di Montecupo's top priorities is to strengthen the Order's relations with other states and international organizations. They aim to enhance the Order of Malta's role and visibility within the global community while diversifying funding sources to increase the capacity to deliver aid where it is most needed.

Support from the International Community and Civil Society

Grand Chancellor Riccardo Paternò di Montecupo emphasized the importance of establishing and strengthening partnerships with the global and regional community to achieve humanitarian and diplomatic objectives. The Order also relies heavily on civil society, with numerous volunteer-based associations and relief corps actively engaging in humanitarian operations worldwide.



The Grand Chancellor of the Order of Malta, Riccardo Paternò di Montecupo at the UN Security Council. Photography courtesy of the Order of Malta

Adaptability in a Changing World

Given the dynamic nature of global conflicts and health crises, the Sovereign Order of Malta remains committed to reviewing and updating its strategies continually. Its humanitarian activities have expanded to encompass a broader range of initiatives, including food security, vocational training, support for small farmers, and sustainable development, reflecting the organization's adaptability to address evolving challenges effectively.

In closing, Grand Chancellor Riccardo Paternò di Montecupo's insights shed light on the unwavering commitment of the Sovereign Order of Malta to promote peace, provide humanitarian aid, and advocate for the most vulnerable, even in the face of complex global challenges. The Order's unique blend of diplomatic efforts and on-the-ground humanitarian assistance is poised to make a lasting impact on a world that desperately needs compassion and cooperation.



Photography courtesy of the Order of Malta

Photography courtesy of the Order of Malta



DIPLOMATIC EVENTS

THE ALASITAS AND THE BOLIVIAN CARNIVAL PROMOTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

H.E. Mr. Roberto Calzadilla Sarmiento, Ambassador of the Plurinational State of Bolivia in the Netherlands organized the celebration of the Alasitas and Bolivian Carnival festivities for the international and Bolivian community, as well as for Bolivia's friends, exhibiting miniature crafts, paintings, Bolivian dances, didactic materials for children and promoting Bolivian tourist attractions, as the Uyuni Salt Flat and the Madidi Park. Many attendees enjoyed the originality of

the Oruro Carnival and the ceremonies related to the festivities at the embassy.

"The Oruro Carnival, celebrated every year in February" noted Ambassador Calzadilla, "was inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008 and has been declared a "masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity" by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization (UNESCO) since 2001, as it constitutes an expression of Bolivia's extraordinary identity and rich cultural diversity and heritage."

The renowned Oruro Carnival is celebrated for six days every year, between the months of February and March. It gathers more than 28,000 dancers, 10,000 musicians, and more than 50 dance organizations as part of the Procession (or Entrada) —the main event of this

TASTE THE COLORS, FEEL THE BEAT: ECUADOR FOOD FESTIVAL



A week dedicated to honoring Ecuador, organized by His Excellency Andres Teran Parral reached its grand finale with the Ecuador Food Festival. This extraordinary event, held with the collaboration of Diplomat Magazine and the Leonardo Royal Hotel in The Hague, was a vibrant celebration of Ecuadorian cuisine.

Among the distinguished guests were ambassadors from countries such as Cyprus, Panama, Serbia, Netherlands, Cameroon, Greece, Nigeria, Tanzania, Yemen, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Ukraine, and Georgia, along with diplomats representing many countries international organizations, the arts, and the business community. Many Ecuadorians and friends of Ecuador also graced the event with their presence.

Ambassador Teran Parral set the tone for the evening, saying, "I would like to give you a warm welcome to the fourth edition of the Ecuadorian Food Festival." He went on to describe Ecuador's unique culinary landscape, emphasizing the diversity of ingredients, flavors, and cooking styles that

define Ecuadorian cuisine, influenced by the country's four distinctive regions and the multitude of cultures that coexist within them.

Ambassador Teran Parral also highlighted the presence of award-winning Ecuadorian wines from the Dos Hemisferios Vineyard and exquisite single-origin coffee from the Ecuadorian Andes, provided by Illimani Coffee.

The key to the festival's allure was the presence of renowned Chef David Reyes, originally from Quito but currently based in London, United Kingdom. Chef Reyes crafted a special tasting menu that blended traditional Ecuadorian recipes from his childhood home with modern culinary techniques.

The evening's musical entertainment was provided by 'Duo Pudica' featuring the talented Ecuadorian-Palestinian acoustic bass musician Yussif Barakat and violinist Yumina Ishii from Japan.

The four-course dinner, prepared by Chef Reyes and Chef Sido de Brabande from the Leonardo Royal Hotel, featured a mouth-watering selection of dishes. The appetizers included Corn with coriander sauce, Chifles (fried plantain chips) with avocado sauce, and Pork croquet with dried roasted corn sauce. These were followed by three types of ceviche as starters: Palm hart and mango ceviche, Prawn ceviche, and Hominy ceviche. The main courses included Encocado (Fish with coconut sauce and basmati rice), Hornado (Slow-cooked pork with potato cakes, mote, and salsa), and Seco (Lamb stew with cassava and pickled red onion). The culinary journey concluded with three exquisite desserts: Ecuadorian guava meringue with blackberry sorbet, Chocolate mousse with praline of toasted corn, and Pumpkin compote with cheese, all accompanied by Ecuadorian wines from Dos Hemisferios vineyard, including Armonia Rosé and Armonia Red. The dinner culminated with a sip of Ecuadorian-origin coffee by Illimani Coffee.

The highlight of the evening was the raffle, offering two tickets for a trip from Amsterdam to Quito via Air Europa, which stops over in Madrid. Other prizes included wine from Dos Hemisferios vineyard and an Ecuadorian handmade toquilla straw hat. The winners were overjoyed, also all those who had the privilege of experiencing the flavors of Ecuador over the course of these three days—a taste of happiness, a taste of Ecuador.



H.E. Mr. Roberto Calzadilla Sarmiento,
Ambassador of the Plurinational State of Bolivia

celebration—, which extends throughout the Oruro city streets in an uninterrupted four-kilometer procession, allowing visitors to experience and share firsthand the richness and cultural mix between the original traditions of yesteryear and Christian liturgies.

The Diablada, Morenada, Caporales, Tinku, P'ujllay and all of the other dances derive from other carnivals and festivals

throughout Bolivia, such as the carnivals of yesteryear (Sucre), the Corso de Corsos (Parade of Parades), the Carnival of Concord (Cochabamba), the Miner Carnival (Potosi), the Entrada del Gran Poder (La Paz), the Fiesta Grande de Santa Cruz, among others, which can be visited in Bolivia and which offer so much to share.





Dr Christophe Bernasconi, HCCH. Photography by Hester Dijkstra

FROM SEED TO BEACON: THE HCCH'S 130-YEAR JOURNEY

By Dr Christophe Bernasconi, Secretary General of the HCCH

On 12 September 2023 the Hague Conference on Private International Law – known as the HCCH – celebrated its 130th anniversary.

I would like to take you on a journey through time to explore the history of the HCCH, which started with the opening of the first “Hague Conference” on 12 September 1893 by Tobias Asser, a leading Dutch jurist, scholar, and statesman. As we explore the HCCH’s history, I will invoke the timeless metaphor of a tree to trace the remarkable growth and

development of the HCCH, because much like a strong, steady tree, the HCCH has grown and flourished over time, its branches reaching out to connect, its leaves providing protection, its roots firmly anchored in cooperation. Three distinct periods can be distinguished in the growth of the HCCH “tree”.

Period 1: 1893-1955 The Kernel – A Dream Becomes Reality

In the beginning there was a dream: Tobias Asser's dream of bringing experts together to start unifying rules of private international law. In 1893! Asser, the visionary, anticipated that the number of cross-border situations and transactions would increase. He saw the need for private international law unification and the benefits this would bring to States, individuals, and commercial operators. Asser also believed in the power of international collaboration. And so, the HCCH started as a tiny seed planted in the fertile soil of international legal cooperation. A seed that soon started to grow.

During this first period, the Organisation was not permanent. It was "on and off", in the sense that in between two so-called "Conferences" – Diplomatic Sessions – which were often several years apart, not much would happen. From 1893 to 1955, seven such "Hague Conferences" or "Sessions" were held, involving a total of 24 States. During this period, nine Conventions and other instruments were adopted.

The name of the Organisation ("Hague Conference on Private International Law") was not the only take-away from this period. Tobias Asser, the man who had planted the HCCH seed, was awarded the Nobel Peace prize in 1911. Interestingly, this was not for his role in the two Peace Conferences held in The Hague in 1899 and 1907, but rather for initiating the HCCH. To me, this fact serves as a constant reminder of an important aspect of our work: for there to be lasting peace between nations, there must be peace between people in their cross-border relations; and there must be a clear, predictable, fair, and practical legal framework that governs these cross-border relations. If one thinks of global peace as a puzzle, then private international law is a piece of that puzzle – a small piece perhaps, but an important one, nonetheless.

Part 2: 1955-2000 Setting Down Roots

The year 1955 was a milestone for the Organisation. This is the year in which the Statute of the HCCH entered into force. The Organisation had become permanent, with a Secretariat – the Permanent Bureau – to conduct work in between "Conferences". The roots of the Organisation, of our tree, started to grow and deepen. First rather slowly; however, over the years, the roots of the Organisation grew deeper, and during this period, 47 States became Members of the HCCH.

Thirty-three Conventions and other instruments were developed during this time, including the 1961 Apostille Convention,

which may well be the most successful HCCH Convention, both in terms of the number of Contracting Parties – currently 126 and counting – and the number of actual applications: with well over 30 million Apostilles issued around the world each year, the Apostille Convention is undoubtedly one of the most applied legal cooperation Conventions. Other HCCH Conventions from this period with a significant practical impact are the Service and Evidence Conventions, the Child Abduction and Adoption Conventions (the latter two also being Conventions with currently more than 100 Contracting Parties) as well as the Child Protection Convention. The last three Conventions, incidentally, all have a crucial human rights dimension: they provide States with a framework that enables them to give real effect to the basic principles enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This second period led to 481 so-called treaty actions, i.e., ratifications, accessions or other instances in which a Convention would come into effect in a State, which underscores that the HCCH developed steadily. The sapling continued to grow, slowly maturing into an adult tree.

Period 3: 2000-current day Branching Out

Today the HCCH is a well-established, far-reaching tree which is flourishing and providing many benefits. Just as a mature tree offers shade, protection, and fruits, the HCCH offers a wealth of practical advantages to people and commercial operators across the globe, and to the international legal community as a whole.

In this most recent period, seven Conventions and other instruments have been adopted, including the Choice of Court, Child Support, and the Judgments Conventions, as well as the HCCH Choice of Law Principles, the first "soft law" instrument of the HCCH. These may all be slightly younger branches, but they are important to keep the HCCH tree healthy and growing.

In the last 23 years there have been 526 additional treaty actions. As a result, there are now more than 1'000 instances in which an HCCH Convention has been brought into effect in States and other Contracting Parties around the world – an impressive expression of the HCCH's practical and effective multilateralism, all the more so when one considers that it would take more than 31,830 bilateral agreements to establish the same network of treaty relations!

A crucial development during this third period has been the elevation of the principle of

consensus to a fundamental, strategic guiding principle for the HCCH. In fact, since the year 2000 not a single vote has been taken during negotiations or in relation to the HCCH's Work Programme. Putting consensus at the heart of our core discussions has undoubtedly been crucial for the branching out of the HCCH, for bringing more States to the table, and ensuring that their interests are taken into account. Universality, inclusiveness, and consensus are the key strategic principles on which the further growth and development of the HCCH rests.

Today, the HCCH is not only rooted in The Hague but also in Buenos Aires (since 2005) for Latin America and the Caribbean, and in Hong Kong (since 2012) for Asia and the Pacific. Considering the important contributions of these Regional Offices, I continue to hope that one day, a new root in the form of a Regional Office for Africa will start to grow, which would greatly help to strengthen and develop the strategic principles of universality and inclusiveness.

In Conclusion

One hundred and thirty years is obviously a long period to look back on. The rich history of the HCCH is a reminder of the collective responsibility of the Members of the HCCH, Contracting Parties to the Conventions, judges, practitioners, academics, and, of course, the Permanent Bureau to make sure the HCCH tree remains in good health. It is our responsibility to look after the HCCH and to promote it: by seeking new Members and Contracting Parties; by developing Conventions, and possibly other instruments, which respond to real, practical needs; and by continuing to support the proper implementation and operation of existing Conventions.

The story of the HCCH is not just about Conventions and rules, though. It is ultimately one about people. Committed people, who, like arborists, nurture the tree through the years. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the many experts and delegates from Members and Contracting Parties, to the colleagues of the PB – both past and present – who have contributed to the HCCH's success. The 130th anniversary of the HCCH is a testament to the enduring value of international cooperation and diplomacy in the field of law. The HCCH's historic milestones, including this year's celebration of the 1000th treaty action, remind us that progress is not measured solely in tree-rings, but in the impact made on the lives of people around the world. With the continued support and contributions from all the people involved in its work, the HCCH will keep growing from strength to strength.

H.E. William Ruto, President of Kenya

KENYAN PRESIDENT

H.E. WILLIAM RUTO ON OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE NETHERLANDS

By Roy Atjam

The President of Kenya, H.E. William Kipchirchir Samoei Arap Ruto Ph.D. CGH, made an official two-day visit to the Netherlands on May 2023 for a series of bilateral meetings including a meeting with HM King Willem-Alexander.

HM Queen Maxima, met with the President's spouse, Rachel Ruto to discuss financial inclusion and women's empowerment in her capacity as the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development (UNSGSA).

President Ruto visited the headquarters of the Global Centre on Adaptation (GCA) and participated in a Strategic Dialogue at the upcoming Africa Climate Action Summit. The GCA, the only international organization focused exclusively on climate adaptation, is working closely with Kenya to mobilize financial commitments for adaptation during the Africa Climate Action Summit.

Diplomat Magazine organized a causerie with President William Ruto on the Africa Climate Action Summit and other topics at the Salon Van Briemen at the historical Hotel Des Indes, The Hague.

The full causerie follows.

President Ruto stated that “We have been having a conversation largely centred around finger-pointing. Who did what, who did not, that conversation is not progressive. It is true that Africa has contributed the least to climate change and yet is bearing the biggest burden. Despite its accuracy, we want to move from this victim narrative.

We believe it is time to have a different conversation, one about Africa coming to the table with innovative solutions to climate change and sustainable development”.

The president added that “We want to bring an African perspective to climate action, put our ideas on the table, and formulate innovative solutions that will help tackle this monster that is threatening humanity. The stakeholders at this conference are African Heads of State, it is a conference on climate action, by heads of state and government and the people of the African continent. We also have other players. We are working with the Global Adaptation Centre, the Africa Union, African Development Bank, many other stakeholders, and other partners. Climate change is not an African problem, it is a global problem and requires input, participation, and contribution from as many stakeholders as possible”.

Your Excellency, do you recall Glasgow 2021 when the Prime Minister of Barbados Mia Mottley delivered her smashing remarks? Mottley “We come to Glasgow with global ambition to save our people and our planet but now find three gaps! What do we say to our people living on the frontline in the Caribbean, Africa, and the Pacific when both ambition and some of the needed faces are absent?”

The President reacted that “We will be building on a body of knowledge and information and scaling it up with ideas and innovative solutions, that we can bring to the table where we then want to have a very candid conversation in the style of PM Mottley, but more progressive. We have concrete suggestions on what we think these ideas and solutions should be.

Yes, we need to have a robust conversation about adaptation and what African countries need to do for example about water, and agriculture. How do we drive the space around sustainable agriculture? building of dams, harvesting rainwater making supply much more predictable. What do we do about carbon markets, about mitigation?

President Ruto continues “The big conversation so far has been about loss and damage but in our respectful submission we need to take it beyond that and go all the way to finance and climate investment because that is a much bigger conversation. Damage and loss is a conversation about a hundred billion dollars, that is not forthcoming.

The conversation that we need to have is about climate financing. What conversations can we have around carbon markets, and about carbon trading? How do we get the people who do more with carbon sequestration, to help the globe with decarbonizing? How do we convert that into revenues? How do we have the big conversation about climate investment?

Loss and damage are around 100 billion dollars, climate Investment is 150 trillion dollars. Should we be having a conversation about a hundred billion dollars? Or should we be having a conversation about 150 trillion?

That is where we want to take this debate and we want to make sure that as a continent this time around, we are not left out of the conversation. I am told the risk of not being on the table is that you could easily be on the menu, and we are crystal clear we need to be at the table. If we have this conversation, we will go all the way up to the International Financial Market, the International Financial architecture, and the International Financial system.”

President Ruto stated that “We need a system that is climate-aligned, climate-responsive, and inclusive. We cannot continue with the International Financial architectures it is because it prices Africa out of the market, using only one factor-risk. The kind of financing today that the global South can access, concessional financing, is so small. It is ridiculous. You cannot finance any meaningful development with that kind of access. Yet even though this concessional financing takes inordinately long, it comes in very small quantities, and it is one hell of an exercise to access.

The International Financial architecture must change, it is not working, and I dare



Roy Lie Atjam, Diplomat Magazine's Editor and the President of Kenya during the interview

say it is rigged against one set of people as against another. Hence our push is for an International Financial Architecture that is fair. Africa is the continent with two-thirds of uncultivated arable land. We can feed the whole globe. We are the youngest continent. We have the biggest demographic dividend- a quarter of the people on Earth will be living on the African continent by 2050.

We have all the renewable energy assets in the world Whether you talk about, Hydro, wind, or solar geothermal and we are ready to make these assets available to decarbonize the world.

“The transition from fuel fossil fuels energy to renewable energy is a foregone conclusion. We cannot sustain, however, reckless we want to be, development and growth driven by fossil fuels. With Africa’s assets, we have opportunities that we have what we can bring to the table, and we want to meet halfway with everybody. We have our assets: a big Market, our young people, we have minerals. We want to meet halfway with our compatriots from the North who can come with technology and financing and together we create a better future.”

Regarding Kwanza Technology: President Ruto deems it an interesting phenomenon

because technology is a big component of winning the future. Kenya is known for technological innovation. M-pesa for example is a financial inclusion platform with global acclaim. It has driven financial inclusion from below 40% to the region of almost 90%.

When asked about Blue Economy, President Ruto indicated that “our blue economy space is part of the reason why I was in Rotterdam yesterday. There is an opportunity to build a global ecosystem that will enable us to get into the untapped space around Blue Economy resources. Whether you are talking about fishing and the whole ecosystem around processing and what comes with it. How do we develop that ecosystem and bring shipping on board? Blue economy helps us to sort out food security. This is in addition to creating jobs, creating value, and decarbonizing the whole infrastructure around maritime transport and Logistics.”

He further stated that “the current architecture of the African Union is not effective. We, African Leaders, are having a very frank, intense, and honest conversation about what we need to do differently because we certainly must change. We need to give the AU the power and resources to engage with the

European Union, America, China, and all of our other partners so that we can be able to get what we need to transform our countries. Look at what the Asian countries are doing (ASEAN)

This is the new thinking and we need to adapt.” He added “If we are engaging with Europe, we must empower the African Union president to engage with the EU president at the same level. We want to engage with China, America in the same way. We have been asked for a meeting between Africa and Russia we cannot send 54 heads of state. We have decided that this is going to be different. We are going to have a Troika of the past chairman, the current chairman a future chairman. They can transact on behalf of the continent. That way you can have a reasonable meeting.”

“If you offer me the last word, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. I look forward to another engagement. Welcome to Kenya. Let us talk about climate action and what we can do to save our globe”.

Thank you for sharing your vision your Excellency.

Asante Sana (Thank You)

DIPLOMATIC EVENTS

THE SEVEN BEAUTIES MUSIC GROUP CONCERT

By Roy Lie Atjam

The President of the International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation Mrs **Gunay Afandiyeva**, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Netherlands H.E. Mr **Rahman Mustafayev**, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Mr **Askar Zhumagaliyev**, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye, H.E. Mr **Selçuk Ünal**, invited friends, colleagues and others at the concert by the **Seven Beauties Music Group**, at the Chancellery of Azerbaijan in The Hague, on 24 October 2023.

The "*Seven Beauties*" music group reflects the rich and diverse cultural heritage of the Turkic world. The ensemble comprised talented female musicians representing seven member states of the Organisation of Turkic States (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Hungary (observer).

The ensemble included: **Turan Manafzadeh** from Azerbaijan as the conductor and pianist, **Maiya Medetbek** from Kazakhstan violin, **Kanysh Nurdi**

from Kyrgyzstan violin, **Gökce Bahar Oytun** from Türkiye on cello, **Vlada Guseynpva** from Uzbekistan violin, **Selbi Kadirova** from Turkmenistan violin and **Paulovits Boglárka** also on violin.

The "*Seven Beauties*" music group concert was astonishing, their creativity, performativity and musicality captivated the audience for the entire duration of the concert. Everyone left the concert in high spirits.

10TH DIPLOMATS WELCOME AFTER SUMMER EVENT 2023

By Roy Lie Atjam



First row: The Ambassador of China, H.E. Mr. Jian Tan, Dr. Mayelinne De Lara, Diplomat Magazine's Publisher, the Ambassador of Panama, H.E. Ms Elizabeth War Neiman, the Ambassador of Cuba, H.E. Ms Anet Pino Rivero, the Ambassador of Yemen, H.E. Ms Sahar Ghanem, the Ambassador of Costa Rica, H.E. Mr. Arnoldo Brenes Castro. Second row: Mr. Diego Emilio Sadofski, Minister Counsellor of Argentina, the Ambassador of Cote d'Ivoire, H.E. Mr. Diarrassouba Mifougo Youssouf, the Ambassador of Algeria, H.E. Ms. Salima Aldelhak, the Ambassador of Sri Lanka, H.E. Mr Aruni Ranaraja, the Ambassador of Uruguay, H.E. Mr. Alvaro Gonzalez Otero, the Ambassador of Rwanda, H.E. Mr. Olivier J.P. Nduhungirehe, the Registrar of the International Court of Justice, H.E. Mr. Philippe Gautier and H.E. Mr. Rene F. Violenus Minister Plenipotentiary of Sint Maarten.

Dr Mayelinne De Lara, the Publisher of Diplomat Magazine, warmly welcomed the guests to the 10th Diplomats Welcome After Summer event, "Over the years, we have strived to become an integral part of the teams representing each embassy, working tirelessly to promote your country's policies and achievements on the international stage.

As we reflect on our journey, we take immense pride in having published over 14,000 articles, 5,500 diplomatic events, more than 600 articles authored by ambassadors and organising over 100 events exclusively for diplomats. Moreover, our collection boasts more than 50,000 pictures capturing important moments from your careers.

We have had the opportunity to host distinguished guests such as a Sultan, a Queen, numerous princes, prime ministers, presidents, ministers, ambassadors, international judges, diplomats, and academics from around the world. Your support and contributions have been instrumental in shaping Diplomat Magazine into what it is today, and for that, we are sincerely grateful.

Tonight, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the visionary ambassadors who founded Diplomat Magazine: Japan, Malta, Vietnam, Canada, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Bolivia.

We also extend our gratitude to our permanent sponsor, Leonardo Royal Hotel, for their support throughout the years. We

are deeply appreciative of the collaboration of the Embassy of Argentina, which has been our partner during this event for the past decade.

Tonight, we are delighted to have the support of our sponsors Bodegas Salentein, providing us with the finest wines from Argentina, and Kaandorp Cheese the best Dutch cheese on the market.

We cannot forget the diligent and talented individuals who make Diplomat Magazine possible - our team of photographers, proofreaders, volunteers and our editor, Roy Lie Atjam

In closing, as we raise our glasses in celebration tonight, let us remember that diplomacy is not just about forging alliances and negotiating treaties; it's also about fostering understanding, building bridges, and celebrating the richness of diverse cultures. Diplomat Magazine stands to these ideals, and we look forward to many more years of collaboration, friendship and shared success."

The next speaker was Mr **Diego Sadofski**, Charge d'affaires a.i. of the Embassy of Argentina.

I'd like to start by thanking Mrs. De Lara and her team for hosting once again this X edition of Diplomats Welcome After Summer Drink. As many of you know, the Argentine embassy has regularly participated in this annual event, since its first edition 10 years ago.

Like in past editions, we are happy to share with all of you, two of our best wines: **Malbec**

The Hague, Friday 8 September 2023, the end of the summer, return of the diplomatic community to town was celebrated by Diplomat Magazine in collaboration with the Embassy of Argentina and Hotel Leonardo The Hague. The reception has gathered ambassadors, diplomats, politicians, and business people.

and Chardonnay, and our sparkling wine, all courtesy by **Verbunt Verlinden** for Bodegas Salentein.

You will also have the opportunity to savour the classic Argentine empanadas, which hold a special place in both our gastronomic and cultural heritage. Tonight, I encourage you to indulge your senses and immerse yourself in this delicious exploration of Argentine cuisine and viticulture. We truly hope that in the near future you will be able to visit our country and enjoy its hospitality and natural beauties, as well as its gastronomy and wines.

As closing remark let me let me just say that in the 11th edition, next summer I hope to deliver my speech in Spanish since we have seen in The Hague much progress during 2023 in its usage. You made recall the HCCH historic decision to adopt Spanish as an official language. This decision together with other initiatives to promote the Spanish language - like the 44th session of the External Program of The Hague Academy of International Law that will be held in Asunción, Paraguay-will undoubtedly benefit all stakeholders in mutual binding instruments in particular in the area of International Cooperation.

The Secretary General of The Hague Academy of International Law, Mr **Jean-Marc Thouvenin**, delivered a detailed presentation on the Academy's past, present (Centenary of the Academy), and upcoming activities.

A live Jazz Band led by **Gary Kavanagh** animated the evening. The event was a celebration of the relations of friendship and fraternity between the diplomatic community, the authorities of the host country and the Dutch friends in creating spaces and setting bridges between us to continue strengthening cooperation among all parties.



Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi, President of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROME STATUTE INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT SILVIA FERNANDEZ DE GURMENDI

This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute which established the International Criminal Court. Different commemoration events will be organized with a view to celebrate this extraordinary achievement of the international community. This includes an exhibit entitled “Common bonds” in The Hague, a commemoration event at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, the day when the Rome Statute was adopted, and an event in Rome.

Looking back at the Rome Diplomatic conference in July 1998, what were the hopes then when deciding on the creation of the world’s first permanent International Criminal Court? How much has been achieved, and how much is yet to be fulfilled?

At the end of the diplomatic conference, on 17 July 1998, an enthusiastic crowd of representatives of States and civil society hailed the adoption of the treaty – the “Rome Statute” – creating the first international permanent criminal court to investigate and try perpetrators of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Rome Statute

also covered the crime of aggression, but only in a programmatic way pending an agreement on its definition and other requirements, which could only be attained some years later.

Expectations were high. The creation of the Court was based on the belief that prosecuting those responsible for the worst atrocities would not only bring remedy for past crimes but also prevent others in the future, thus contributing to international peace and security.

In the 25 years that followed, the Court demonstrated its capacity to investigate and prosecute in situations in Africa, Asia, America and Europe. It also showed that it was possible to involve the victims and survivors of the crimes in its proceedings and to repair the harm suffered by thousands of them, with the assistance of the Trust Fund for Victims.

Notwithstanding these achievements, the Court has not been able to meet the expectation that all atrocities, wherever committed, would be addressed. This is because the Court can, in principle, only intervene in those situations where States directly concerned are parties to its founding treaty. This leaves entire situations beyond its reach and is the reason why achieving universality is so important.

As President of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute, and former President of the International Criminal Court, what are the challenges that you foresee for this institution in the future?

The main challenge is to ensure that the Court can indeed address all atrocity crimes equally. Today, the Rome Statute has 123 States Parties, a significant number that comprises two thirds of the international community, but still insufficient to achieve the Court's global aspirations. Increasing this number to attain universal participation is thus of crucial importance. Another important challenge is to ensure sufficient political support and resources for the Court as well as concrete cooperation for its investigations and prosecutions. The Court has no intelligence service, police, or army of its own. It relies entirely on the cooperation of States, organizations, and civil society to collect evidence, protect witnesses, arrest suspects, and provide victims access to justice and reparations.

In a world that is becoming more polarized than in the 1990s, and in the midst of violent conflicts, how do you think the Assembly and the Court should proceed to be able to meet the expectations of the victims around the globe?

In our turbulent world, justice is more necessary than ever. It is thus crucial that the Court can deliver justice to its full potential. Currently, the Assembly is undertaking, together with the Court and civil society, a holistic review that aims at strengthening the Rome Statute system by accelerating proceedings and improving the performance, governance, and work culture of the Court. Among other initiatives, the Assembly has already implemented measures and practices to improve the selection of judges and other high officials, in recognition that the Court can only be as good as the individuals that are trusted with its important functions.

However, to meet the expectations of all victims of the world, it is necessary not only to deliver high quality justice at the Court but also to contribute to justice efforts undertaken by others. Fighting impunity for massive crimes cannot be and was never intended to be the work of the Court alone. On the contrary, the Court was created as a complementary institution of last resort.

It is a welcomed development that nowadays, despite adverse current circumstances, the international community has redoubled its demand for justice and initiatives to that effect have multiplied. In addition to proceedings by the Court and other international tribunals, more States are willing to exercise jurisdiction over international crimes at the national



level, and international mechanisms are set up to assist in the collection and preservation of evidence. Furthermore, a new treaty was adopted in Slovenia, a few weeks ago, to facilitate inter-State cooperation for the investigation and prosecution of these crimes, which will be opened for signature in The Hague early next year. We witness the gradual emergence of a global justice system, or a justice "eco-system", within which international and national courts have a role to play. In this context, the Court and the Assembly must join forces with all those involved in justice efforts to help to consolidate this system.

Many major powers have not ratified the Rome Statute, some of them were or are openly hostile to the ICC. Does this affect the cohesion of the Assembly of States Parties and its commitment to defend its Court?

The lack of universal participation in the Rome Statute affects the effectiveness of the system. We need more States to join, big or small. Open hostility against the Court, when it translates into threats and attacks, seeks to frustrate its core mandate by undermining its independence and integrity.

These attempts are extremely grave and need to be countered effectively. These are not just hypothetical dangers. We have already witnessed economic sanctions being imposed against the former Prosecutor and one of her directors, which were lifted by the new US administration in April 2021. When these sanctions were imposed, States and civil society mobilized against them, demonstrating their commitment to the Court. I trust the same resolve will be shown to counter the reprisals by the Russian Federation against the Prosecutor and judges involved in the Ukraine situation.

The Assembly has recently adopted a mechanism to be followed in case of threats and attacks against the Court, its officials and staff, and any other person cooperating with it. This mechanism intended to improve

coordination within the Assembly and to contribute to a robust collective response is without prejudice to any other initiative that may be taken by individual States or civil society.

Finally, as we commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Rome Statute, what message you would like to leave our readers, here in the Netherlands, with?

The Court has its seat in the city of The Hague, which has now become the symbol of justice against the worst crimes and a beacon of hope for victims of all over the world. I encourage all those in the Netherlands that have not yet done so to visit its beautiful premises, to see the Court in action and get to know more about its goals and achievements. This year is a particularly good occasion to do this as we commemorate the twenty fifth anniversary of its historic creation. In 1998, the Court was an idea seeking to be realized. Now that we confront an increasingly fragmented world, it is the time to join our efforts again to preserve the bonds that united us at the time of its creation.

Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi is the President of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute. She was President of the International Criminal Court (2015 – 2018) and served as a judge (2010 – 2018). She played a leading role in multilateral efforts to create the International Criminal Court (ICC), by presiding over the entire negotiating process of the ICC criminal procedure provisions in the Rome Statute and the Rules of Procedure and Evidence (1995 – 2000); as Vice President of the Ad Hoc Committee and the Preparatory Committee on the Establishment of the ICC, which led to the Rome Conference (1995 – 1998); as Vice President of the Committee of the Whole (the negotiating forum) and President of the Working Group on criminal procedures in 1998; and as part of the Preparatory Commission of the International Criminal Court (2001 – 2002).

MINISTER OF ENERGY OF CHILE, DIEGO PARDOW, VISITS THE NETHERLANDS



Minister of Energy of Chile, Diego Pardow

The Chilean Minister of Energy, Diego Pardow, came to the Netherlands on March to renew the Memorandum of Understanding with the Port of Rotterdam, and to sign a Strategic Work Agenda with the Dutch Minister of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, to advance the bilateral work being carried out. On the occasion, he visited a hydrogen refuelling station and the Port of Rotterdam facilities, as well as meeting with the main companies in the green hydrogen supply chain.

How is Chile preparing for the green hydrogen industry?

Green hydrogen has a fundamental role to play in Chile's path towards the goal of carbon neutrality by 2050, as established in the recently approved Framework Law on Climate Change. President Gabriel Boric himself has recently reaffirmed this.

The National Green Hydrogen Strategy has aimed to position the country's vision and aspirations regarding the development of this industry and its derivatives, highlighting the great comparative advantages that Chile has to become one of the main producers of green hydrogen worldwide.

Complementing the National Strategy, we have initiated a Green Hydrogen Action Plan

2023-2030 to include a more comprehensive view, built in a participatory manner and thus promoting the development of a sustainable industry that enables more complex and diverse local economies.

What do you expect from this green hydrogen roadshow?

We want to invite European developers to invest in the green hydrogen industry in Chile. In our country we are working together with

the industry to understand the needs for its proper development and from the government we want to become a facilitator to match them with the expectations of the people in the communities involved. Currently, we are generating regulation in key sectors for the industry such as safety, quality and certification. In addition, we are preparing the environmental assessment of projects as we are generating training in the State so that the assessors are properly trained and we are also creating assessment guidelines to guide these processes in a good way.

Our commitment is to do everything in our power to implement public policies that will allow Chile to become a world leader in the production of this clean fuel. Chile needs the world and the world needs Chile.

What are the strategic partners (countries) for this issue?

From Chile we are working with different countries in Europe, Asia and America to generate cooperation agreements and attract investment that will allow us to become one of the world's leading countries in the production of Green Hydrogen. I am currently visiting Europe to advance in a series of agreements in this line and in the next weeks I will visit Japan and Korea with the same objective.

What stamp of your administration do you want to leave on green hydrogen?

I would like to lay the foundations for the development of this industry in Chile. For that to happen, we have to create a set of public policies that complement the needs of companies and communities. It is very difficult for an industry to be successful in the long term if it is not able to generate links with the communities where it is inserted, so our main hallmark must be that of facilitators to provoke this synergy.



Dr Mayelinne De Lara, Diplomat Magazine's Publisher and Minister of Energy of Chile, Diego Pardow during the interview

CROATIAN WINE HAS A NEW AMBASSADOR

The Croatian embassy in The Hague together with the wine importer Croatiangrapes.com organized a professional wine tasting. On this occasion, wine centipede Barbara Verbeek has been appointed Croatian Wine Ambassador 2023 in the Netherlands by the Croatian ambassador, HE Ms. Dubravka Plejić Marković.

Most of the distinguished attendees were professionals from the wine and media industries. The Ambassador of Rwanda, H.E. Mr. Olivier Jean Patrick Nduhungirehe, the Ambassador of Mexico, H.E. Mr. Jose Antonio Zabalgoitia, the Ambassador of Tanzania, H.E. Ms. Caroline Kitana Chipeta, the Ambassador of Portugal, H.E. Ms. Clara Nunes dos Santos and the Ambassador of Greece, H.E. Ms. Caterina Ghini also took part in the event.

This year it's the fourth time that the title has been awarded in the Netherlands. The honor previously fell to Sabas Joosten (then head sommelier of De Librije), cheese expert Betty Koster and wine writer Hubrecht Duijker.

It is a recognition that the person who receives the title has contributed in a special way to the promotion of Croatian wine in the Netherlands. According to the nomination committee, chaired this year by the Ambassador of the Republic of Croatia, HE Ms. Dubravka Plejić Marković and wine importers Mario Pranić and Diederik Swart, Barbara Verbeek is the perfect person to bear this honorable title.

Mrs. Verbeek has visited several Croatian wine regions and presented the diversity and the great grape varieties of this ancient wine country. Meanwhile, she has often offered a stage to Croatian wine in her Wine Theater, during national catering fairs.

Barbara Verbeek inherited the love for good wine from her father. In 2001, she graduated as a registered viticulturist and in 2002 as a wine and food specialist from the Academy of Gastronomy. She is the owner of the 'Wijntheater', being also a wine columnist for De Telegraaf. She is the initiator of the Wine Woman of the Year Foundation, is the designer of the Expert's Collection glass line and an ambassador of the Royal Leerdam glass factory.



In her acceptance speech, she said: 'I am much honored to bear this title. Since 2015, whenever I had to fill the program of the Wine Theater, I have always paid a lot of attention to Croatia, a wine country that hardly anyone had heard of at the time, and neither had I. But with Croatian wines and the people from Croatiangrapes.com it was love at first sight. My father became a wineologist in the 1980s and when I came into the living room as an eight-year-old child, there was a book by Hubrecht Duijker on the table. I leafed through it and thought it was magical at the time. The fact that I can now take over this ambassadorship from Hubrecht is the circle of life for me and it honors me deeply.'

Mario Pranić and Diederik Swart started Croatiangrapes.com, an import company with a complete focus on Croatian wines, in 2014. The company has since grown into the leading specialist in this field. The wines they promote

are from unique local grape varieties, from all the main wineries in the country.

During the event at the Croatian embassy, after the awarding ceremony, a reception followed, where wines from all the important regions of Croatia could be tasted. In addition, suggestions were offered for various cheese combinations, specially chosen by the former Croatian wine ambassador, Betty Koster. The Croatian MasterChef winner, Sascha de Lint, catered the event, offering the distinguished guests special dishes from the Croatian cuisine.

Ivan Novak, director of the Benelux Croatian Tourism Office, was also present and he offered a study trip to one of Croatia's unique wine regions to the new wine ambassador, Barbara Verbeek.





Minister January Makamba

JANUARY MAKAMBA STRENGTHENS DIPLOMATIC AND ECONOMIC TIES IN THE NETHERLANDS

In a significant diplomatic undertaking, Honourable January Makamba, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania, had a three-day working visit to the Netherlands on the 14th and 15th of November 2023. This visit that signifies a pivotal moment in the diplomatic collaboration and economic endeavors between the United Republic of Tanzania and the Kingdom of the Netherlands was marked by the Minister officiating the Tanzania-Netherlands Trade and Investment Forum.

Minister Makamba expressed his enthusiasm about the evolving relations between the two nations and extended his gratitude to the Dutch Government for the warm hospitality accorded to him and his delegation. He acknowledged the historical ties between the

countries, dating back to the early days of Tanganyika's independence, with a special mention of the enduring friendship between the late Prince Bernhard of Lippe-Biesterfeld and the late Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere. "I am very excited to be here as these are very exciting times for both our countries in our diplomatic collaboration and endeavours.

Before I explain, let me first thank the Dutch Government for the warm hospitality that was accorded to me and my delegation since our arrival. This is not my first time to visit The Netherlands, my previous portfolio had brought me to this country before. So, to me, it is not the first time that I am experiencing the Dutch hospitality. I wish to therefore re-reiterate my sincere gratitude to my counterpart Honourable Hanke Bruins Slot, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for the warm hospitality in this beautiful land." Expressed Minister Makamba.

The Minister's visit coincides with a critical juncture for both countries. Tanzania is actively working to improve its business environment and revive regional and international relations, while the Netherlands has recently unveiled its New Policy Document 2023, emphasizing on effective and stronger economic ties based on equal footing, along with a continent-wide Strategy on Africa. Minister Makamba said "The Tanzanian-Netherlands Trade and Investment Forum is taking place at a momentous period when, Tanzania on the one hand, is prioritizing efforts to improve the business environment and revive regional and international relations and The Netherlands on the other, has just unveiled its New Policy Document 2023 entitled: Do what we do best; A strategy for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation and the first ever continent-wide Strategy on Africa (The Africa Strategy of The Netherlands 2023-2032). With this new strategic approach of our countries, we have found a common ground. While our host emphasis is on "effective and stronger

economic ties based on equal footing” ours in Tanzania is to re-focus the bilateral relations between our countries and set an agenda for an action-based vision and commitment for mutual benefits.

While highlighting the alignment between the strategic approaches of both nations aiming for effective economic ties and mutual benefits Minister Makamba said, this Forum provides a platform for fostering economic cooperation and poised to be a catalyst for re-focusing bilateral relations and setting an agenda for an action-based vision and commitment. It serves as a beacon for enhanced collaboration promising a future of shared prosperity and mutual benefit for the United Republic of Tanzania and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Regarding the diplomatic relations between Tanzania and the Netherlands, Minister Makamba underscored the historical significance of the ties, mentioning the last high-level visit by a Tanzanian leader in June 2015 and recent ministerial exchange visits by Hon. Dr. Damas Daniel Ndumbaro and Hon. January Makamba in 2022. He outlined flagship programs of cooperation, such as the review of Dutch Policy on Development Assistance, rural electrification, health, private sector support, support to Tanzania Revenue Authority, water infrastructure, climate adaptation, agriculture, aquaculture, livestock sectors, and education.

Further, during his visit to the Netherlands, Minister January Makamba engaged in a productive meeting with the Dutch Minister

of Foreign Affairs, Her Excellency Hanke Bruins Slot. The meeting provided an invaluable opportunity for both ministers to discuss the prevailing global situation, emphasizing the importance of international cooperation in addressing shared challenges. Minister Makamba and Minister Bruins Slot explored avenues for reinforcing diplomatic ties and harking back to the solid relations that have historically bound Tanzania and the Netherlands. The discussions revolved around mutual interests and shared values, aiming to establish a framework that would deepen collaboration on a wide range of issues, including economic development, sustainable practices, and regional stability. The commitment displayed during this meeting reflects the determination of both nations to build a robust foundation for their diplomatic relations and sets a promising tone for future cooperation.

As Tanzania and the Netherlands explore new avenues of collaboration, Minister Makamba sees the Trade and Investment Forum as a crucial mechanism for bridging the economic gap between the two nations. The forum provides an opportunity for key stakeholders from both the public and private sectors to engage in meaningful discussions, explore potential areas of cooperation, and strengthen economic ties.

In conclusion, Minister January Makamba's visit to the Netherlands underscores the commitment of both nations to elevate their diplomatic and economic relations to new heights.



DIPLOMAT MAGAZINE #16

ZELENSKYY VISITS INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT



The President of Ukraine HE Volodymyr Zelenskyy and ICC President Judge Piotr Hofmański on 4 May 2023

The President of Ukraine, Mr. Volodymyr Zelenskyy, visited the International Criminal Court, where he was received by ICC President Judge Piotr Hofmański and ICC Registrar Mr Osvaldo Zavala Giler.

President Hofmański briefed last May, President Zelenskyy on the ICC's current work, spanning 16 situation countries on four continents and four ongoing trials. He emphasized the Court's independence and impartiality as a judicial institution mandated to address the most serious crimes under international law. President Hofmański thanked Ukraine for its cooperation with the Court, notably the recent agreement allowing for the creation of an ICC office in the country.

President Zelenskyy expressed appreciation for the role of the ICC in providing justice in Ukraine and contributing to the rule of law worldwide.

Ukraine is not a State Party to the Rome Statute, but it has twice exercised its prerogatives to accept the Court's jurisdiction over alleged crimes under the Rome Statute occurring on its territory, pursuant to article 12(3) of the Statute. The ICC opened an investigation regarding the situation in Ukraine on 2 March 2022.

IN CONVERSATION WITH THE NEW ICC REGISTRAR, OSVALDO ZAVALA GILER



ICC Registrar Osvaldo Zavala Giler

On 5 April 2023, Osvaldo Zavala Giler (Ecuador) was sworn-in as the new Registrar of the International Criminal Court (ICC), succeeding Mr Peter Lewis (United Kingdom). Mr Zavala Giler was elected by ICC judges for five years. In this exclusive interview with Diplomat Magazine, the new Registrar discusses some of his priorities and his vision for the Court.

What is your role as the Registrar of the ICC?

I am the principal administrative officer of the ICC. I am responsible for all the non-judicial aspects of the administration of the Court.

The Registry is the neutral organ of the Court that supports the Judiciary and the Office of the Prosecutor, as well as other parties and participants such as the defence and the representatives of victims. Effective judicial support services are essential to the Court's functioning, inside and outside the Courtroom. It also includes running our detention facilities, as well as performing all the translation and interpretation services needed.

In addition to this aspect, my role is also to ensure the proper administration of the Court, as a public international organization. In this context, the Registry plays a critical role in managing the Court's annual budget, dealing with staffing and recruitment, ensuring the security of the Court, and enabling a safe and inclusive work environment and culture in the

organization, for everyone who works in it.

Finally my role is also to foster engagement and communication with a wide array of external partners: by conducting public information and outreach, ensuring cooperation with the ICC, and managing our offices in various situation countries across the world.

What is your background?

I am from Ecuador. I have over sixteen years of experience on the work of the ICC, in different capacities, including as Chief of the Budget Section, senior special assistant to the Registrar and Head of Office of the Court's liaison office to the United Nations in New York. I was also a founding member of ICCQ, the Sexual and Gender Diversity Network at the Court

Before joining the Court, I worked as a legal officer, legal adviser and liaison officer to the United Nations for the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, a partnership of civil society organizations, in The Hague

and in New York. In Ecuador, I also worked in a law firm from 2000 to 2003, where I had the opportunity to work on cases before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Because of this experience, I understand well the functioning of the Registry, the ICC and the Assembly of States Parties. And I am well aware of the opportunities, challenges and expectations that come with this position. It is a great honour and a vast responsibility.

What are your priorities during your mandate?

In times of heightened expectations and challenges, my priorities will be to contribute to continuing to build the ICC as a model of modern public administration that ensures effectiveness and safeguards accountability.

More concretely, this will mean to: i) deliver on the important investment and commitment made by our States Parties through the increased budget they adopted for the Court for 2023, and ensure the Court has the capacity to effectively and efficiently deliver its mandate, ii) promote a healthy and productive working environment, iii) galvanize trust and support from stakeholders, and iv) safeguard cooperation including, in particular, regarding witness protection and the execution of pending arrest warrants.

I will encourage a working environment that promotes professionalism, respect, diversity, inclusion and equality. It is simple: being treated with respect, feeling safe in your own working environment, encourages motivation, increases innovation, supports engagement and better performance.

What challenges and opportunities do you foresee?

In my view, the main overarching strategic challenge faced by the ICC is the continuous consolidation of its legitimacy. While the Court's legitimacy is not always at risk, it is constantly at stake and is often impacted by some of the more systemic issues affecting the institution, as these directly affect the trust placed on the organization by its stakeholders and the international community as a whole.

The Registry contributes to strengthening the Court's legitimacy first and foremost by guaranteeing its operational sustainability.

In this regard, servicing the Court by ensuring its operational sustainability is the most direct and comprehensive responsibility of the Registrar. It encompasses, among other duties, building and sustaining a public administration that is accountable, responsible and efficient; and maintaining the support services required by the Judiciary and the parties and participants to the proceedings to bring to effect the judicial mandate of the Court.

As it is States Parties that contribute through their national finances to the Court's budget, the Registrar must guarantee the most cost-effective and efficient use of resources, while fostering an environment of fiscal responsibility for the demand and use of those resources. An efficiently run and fiscally responsible administration will allow for a constructive environment based on trust and respect that will be more conducive for stakeholders' willingness to

increasingly support the work of the Court. Another key challenge, and an opportunity, is cooperation from States Parties and support from stakeholders, including, as appropriate, non-States Parties, international and regional organizations, civil society organizations, and societies impacted by the work of the Court. Without cooperation and support, the Court is unable to execute some of the most fundamental aspects of its judicial mandate.

How do you plan on improving diversity at the Court?

Diversity in the workplace, including gender balance, geographical representation and multilingualism, must become an internalized priority of the Court. This is essential to

ensure a more dynamic, productive and representative workforce.

The improvement of workplace culture is reliant on leadership commitment. A safe, secure, diverse, respectful and productive working environment must be sustained by leaders who embody and reflect with their behaviour the values demanded of the organization. Leaders should not tolerate, in any form or degree, conducts that promote expressions of hatred, racism, discrimination, including gender discrimination and discrimination against members of the LGBTQI+ community, abuse of authority, harassment and/or sexual misconduct. I want us to lead by example.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) investigates and, where warranted, tries individuals charged with the gravest crimes of concern to the international community: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of aggression. Based in The Hague, The Netherlands, the Court was established by the Rome Statute, an international treaty ratified by 123 countries. As a court of last resort, the ICC complements national tribunals. The Office of the Prosecutor is currently investigating 17 situations on different continents. ICC judges have issued 40 arrest warrants and 9 summonses to appear. 7 persons are currently in ICC custody.

AMBASSADOR SHEIKH BELAL SECURES LANDSLIDE RE-ELECTION AS MANAGING DIRECTOR/CEO OF CFC

DIPLOMATIC EVENTS

In a historic turn of events at the 35th Annual Meeting of the Governing Council held in The Hague, the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) has declared the re-election of Ambassador Sheikh Mohammed Belal as its Managing Director. Ambassador Belal, now holding the rank of Under Secretary-General (USG), secured a landslide victory for a second and final term. It is worth recalling that Ambassador Belal was initially elected as Managing Director of the CFC in 2019, triumphing over candidates from five other member states.

The election, held on November 22, 2023, at the Marriott Hotel in The Hague, witnessed the participation of representatives from CFC member countries. Ambassador Belal's triumph, with a two-thirds majority in the first round, marked a significant milestone in the 34-year history of the CFC, being the first instance of any candidate securing such overwhelming support in the initial round. He garnered just over 68% of the votes, surpassing his Italian counterpart, who secured 31%.

The session, was chaired by H.E. Dr. Eniola Ajayi, Ambassador of Nigeria to the Kingdom of the Netherlands and formally inaugurated

by H.E. Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, President, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) through a video message. In his message, President Akinwumi, among others, stated that AfDB "count on the Common Fund for Commodities' impact-driven strategy to help turn this around. It is important to support organisations like this Fund – because your activities are reaching smallholder farmers and other beneficiaries across Africa's agriculture value chains. I commend the creation of a new "Agricultural Commodity Transformation Fund," to unlock local agriculture sector potential by providing affordable finance, reducing risks facing investors, and delivering technical expertise to create equitable low-carbon supply chains. This will bring us closer to overcoming challenges in the food systems".

The 35th Governing Council meeting, hosting representatives from 101 member countries and international organizations, served as a platform for dialogue and collaboration. In his capacity as the re-elected Managing Director, Ambassador Belal expressed his commitment to the CFC's mandate, stating, "I come as a firm believer in its mandate to



help alleviate as many smallholders as possible from poverty through our technology-enabled impact investment."

The Governing Council also ceremonially elected H.E. Margaret Shava, Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya, and H.E. Ambassador Jose Eduardo Malaya of the Philippines to the Kingdom of the Netherlands as the new chairpersons of the Governing Council and Executive Council, respectively.

The CFC, an autonomous intergovernmental financial institution operating within the United Nations framework. As an international organization, the CFC plays a crucial role in providing financial support to projects across commodity value chains in its member countries.

A STYLISH 10 YEAR CELEBRATION FOR DIPLOMAT ONE DECADE DOWN; TEN YEARS IS JUST THE BEGINNING

By Roy Lie Atjam

Diplomat Magazine recently celebrated a significant milestone, marking ten years of publishing in style. The event featured a violin concert by Bomsori Kim, accompanied by the Residentie Orkest, playing Tchaikovsky & Prokofiev at the grand Amare theatre in The Hague on Friday, November 10th, 2023.



The magazine was established by diplomats, for diplomats, with a mission of supporting diplomatic efforts, promoting their country's policies and accomplishments.

Over the years, Diplomat Magazine has taken centre stage, a prominent player in diplomatic activities in The Hague, with both a print and online edition. This 10th year anniversary is just the beginning of their continued success. A slate of ambassadors and diplomats attended the festive celebration. The list of attendees is as follows, Ambassadors of: Armenia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cameroon, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Cuba, El Salvador, Egypt, Estonia, Guatemala, Ivory Coast, Kosovo, Morocco, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Philippines, Peru, Slovenia, South Africa, and Uruguay. Diplomats of various embassies including Colombia, Argentina, Dominican Republic and Chile.

Several notable figures attended the event, including Prof. Dr J.A. Bruijn, the President of the Senate of the Netherlands, H.E. Ms. Sahar Ghanem, the Ambassador of Yemen and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, and the Mayor of Den Haag, Mr. Jan van Zanen. Mr. Sven Arne Tepl, Director of the Residentie Orkest, also gave a speech. All the speakers praised Diplomat Magazine for its indelible contributions. Below are some quotes from their speeches.

The Dean "Dear Mayelinne, dear Roy and Diplomat Magazine team, for me and many others, The Hague would be different if you were not here. You play a visible role in the

success of diplomacy efforts and making The Hague a place where many diplomats consider their favorite station.

Knowing that you are available and ready to help whenever we need is of a tremendous relief. From me, from fellow current colleagues and many departed ambassadors whom I know would love to be here to share with you this special occasion, congratulations and wish you many many more years to come full of achievements, reflected in numbers and hearts."

President of the Senate "I greatly value the meetings I have with you, because it is an opportunity to – for instance – discuss the importance of protecting our rule of law, the state of our politics, and these days also the conflicts that divide many parts of the world. Dutch diplomat and poet Constantijn Huygens, who lived and worked in the The Hague of the 17th century, wrote – and I have translated it off the cuff, the original is of course far better balanced and poetic...

The times were angry, and are, and will be I do not see change at hand for the world Turn around your hourglass, it seems a new being

But it runs as it ran, and it's all the same sand. Or, as the French say: tout ça change, tout ça reste la même chose.

They are the words of the experienced diplomat. But as the politician that I am, there is no other way than to add hope. Hope that change for the better is coming at last, and hope that conflicts, or in the words of Huygens

– anger – one day will be defeated. That hope is what keeps us all going, diplomats and politicians alike! Ladies and gentlemen, to the editors of the Diplomat Magazine I would like to say: thank you for your continuous efforts to open up Dutch society and politics for an international audience.

Please know, that your efforts are highly appreciated! Congratulations are in order on this occasion, but I hope that you will also feel the incentive to continue with your valuable work of bringing the Dutch and international communities closer together."

The mayor "Mayelinne and her staff are a great support to us in that respect. Indeed, the international community in The Hague is well-served with Diplomat Magazine, its website and newsletter which, together, provide an effective communication platform. A very important platform for The Hague's diplomatic circles. Therefore, in addition to our congratulations, a word of wholehearted thanks is certainly due here.

A word of thanks, on behalf of the municipality, for Diplomat Magazine's contribution to The Hague, international city of peace and justice. A contribution we should certainly not underestimate. I very much hope that you will carry on with this magnificent and important work. It makes The Hague a city of even greater international allure."

Indeed, one decade down; ten years is just the beginning. Without any question, it has been a splendid evening!





10TH IBEROAMERICAN WEEK

On June 7, 2023, The Hague hosted the Opening Ceremony of the 10th Ibero-American Week of International Justice, a collaborative effort by the Ibero-American Institute of The Hague (IIH) and the International Criminal Court (ICC). This annual event, a significant fixture in the realm of international law conducted in Spanish, has emerged as a cornerstone in the field.

The Opening Ceremony, traditionally hosted at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), unfolded entirely in Spanish and featured live music, generously sponsored by the Embassy of Spain. Attended by approximately 150 individuals, including representatives of States, international organizations, Latin American students, professors, judges, prosecutors, and civil society members, the event underscored the profound impact of both the Spanish language and the Ibero-American tradition on international justice.

The ICC Registrar, H.E. Osvaldo Zavala Giler, inaugurated the ceremony, expressing pride as the first Latin American Registrar of the ICC hosting the event. He acknowledged the Court's consistent support for the Week over the past decade and emphasized the influential role of Latin American academia in shaping and supporting the Rome Statute's system.

Dr. Hector Olasolo, President of the IIH and Professor at the Universidad del Rosario (Colombia), followed, recognizing the collaborative efforts that shaped the Ibero-American Week over the years. He extended gratitude to the host state and the embassies of Ibero-American countries for their support, emphasizing the universal scope of international justice epitomized by The Hague as its epicenter.

Dr. Cristina Hoss, Legal Officer of the ICJ, represented H.E. Mr. Philippe Gautier, Registrar of the ICJ. She highlighted the profound influence of Ibero-American thought and legal traditions within the ICJ and contemplated the future of Ibero-American legal thought in the face of contemporary global challenges.

H.E. Ms. Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi, President of the Assembly of States Parties to the ICC, emphasized the importance of the Week in strengthening the foundational values of the International Criminal Court. She highlighted the universal aspirations of the Rome Statute system, emphasizing respect for regional diversity and legal systems.

Ambassador Henk Cor van der Kwast of the Netherlands reaffirmed the Kingdom's commitment to promoting respect for international law and a rules-based international order. He acknowledged the strong cooperation between the Netherlands and the Ibero-American region in multilateral forums.

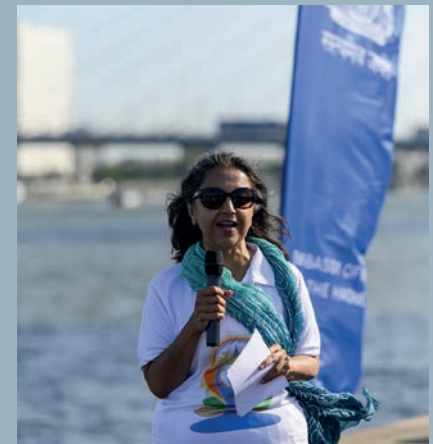
Ambassador Jaime Moscoso Valenzuela, Coordinator of the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), emphasized the vitality of the Spanish language in international legal contexts. He called for the recognition of Spanish as a valid language for the pursuit of international justice.

The keynote speech by H.E. Judge Luz Ibáñez Carranza, ICC's First Vice-President, centered on the centrality of human rights in international criminal justice. She urged young attendees to internalize the ongoing battle for international justice and their responsibility in upholding the values that unite humanity.

The 10th Ibero-American Week of International Justice provided a vibrant environment for Spanish speakers, featuring academic activities, publication presentations, seminars, and discussions across various venues, including embassies, the ICC, and the Hague University for Applied Sciences.

Notable events during the Week included the 8th Seminar on Ibero-American Thought and the preliminary hearings of the 10th Edition Spanish version of the ICC Moot Court Competition involving 58 students from 11 Latin American countries. The National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) emerged victorious, with the University of Buenos Aires (Argentina) and the University of Nariño (Colombia) securing second and third places, respectively. Julieta Valentina Ricagno of the University of Buenos Aires received the Best Speaker award.

ROTTERDAM HOSTS 9TH INTERNATIONAL DAY OF YOGA WITH GLOBAL PARTICIPATION



Celebrations for the 9th International Day of Yoga (IDY) took place at Koninginnenhoofd Quay in the Port of Rotterdam on June 21, 2023. Organized by the Embassy of India, in collaboration with the Port of Rotterdam Authority and the City of Rotterdam, the event highlighted the unifying power of yoga with the theme "Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam."

Innovative events such as the "Ocean Ring of Yoga," "Yoga from Arctic to Antarctica," and "Yoga at North Pole and South Pole" added a unique touch to this year's celebrations. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, led global yoga festivities at the UN Headquarters in New York, emphasizing yoga's holistic approach to well-being.

The United Nations designated June 21 as the International Day of Yoga in 2014, recognizing its universal health benefits. Yoga, known for promoting physical health, flexibility, and mental calmness, continues to positively impact millions worldwide.

The Government of India actively promotes yoga's positive benefits globally. The Embassy of India in the Netherlands, celebrating IDY since 2015, organized yoga sessions in eight cities this year, attracting over 1000 participants. This global celebration reinforces yoga's role in fostering unity, well-being, and a shared sense of global kinship.



BRAZIL'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES BETWEEN STATES AT THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

For over a century, through remarkable jurists, Brazil has stood out as a fervent defender of the principles of equality among nations, peaceful dispute resolution, the preservation of peace, and the humanization of international law. In these times of uncertainty marked by a resurgence of armed conflicts on the global stage, the Court has never been more solicited. In this context, as the sixth Brazilian judge to have the honour of sitting on the world court, my mandate will be guided by these fundamental principles for which my predecessors tirelessly advocated and which, in my view, will ensure fairness and justice in a world darkened by adversity.

Introduction

Brazil's contribution to the development of international law, and in particular to the peaceful settlement of disputes between States, has historically been based on four fundamental principles: the prohibition of the use of force, the principle of legal equality between States, whether rich or poor, the strengthening of international jurisdiction and the humanization of international law. Eminent Brazilian jurists have successively embodied the defense of these principles, which have become an integral part of contemporary international law. In so doing, they have contributed not only to the emancipation of Brazil and the states of Latin America, but also to all the nations of the global South.

Brazil's Doctrinal Contribution to the Establishment of Peaceful Dispute Settlement and the PCIJ.

At the 1907 Peace Conference, eminent jurist Rui Barbosa played a prominent role as head of the Brazilian delegation and left a lasting impression. During this conference, his influence enabled him to rally the support of Latin American nations against the initiative to create an international court whose composition did not conform to the principle of equality between great powers and small states. At a time when this principle had yet to be established, jurist Rui Barbosa was already arguing that: "Sovereignty is the fundamental right par excellence of constitutional and independent states" and that "sovereignty means equality".

H.E. Judge Epitácio Pessoa, former President of Brazil, played a major role in the codification of international law and the affirmation of equality between states. Leading the Brazilian delegation at the Paris Conference, he publicly opposed the aspirations of powerful states to form an influential group, reiterating that all countries should participate in peace negotiations on equal terms. As the President of the Advisory Committee appointed by the League of Nations, he contributed to the development of a Code of International Law. Finally, he was one of the initial judges to sit on the Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ) from 1922 to 1930.

The contribution of Brazilian diplomat H.E. Mr. Raul Fernandes is also hailed as invaluable. He staunchly opposed the special procedures for appointing judges that favoured the great powers of the time, and instead advocated a single procedure for permanent and non-permanent judges. This procedure was intended to preserve equality between all States. H.E. Mr. Raul Fernandes is also known for advocating the binding effect of the Court's judgments and for making its jurisdiction compulsory. As this proposal was not accepted by some nations, H.E. Mr. Raul Fernandes skillfully suggested the historic article that became article 36 (2) of the Statute of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the optional clause of compulsory jurisdiction, thus setting a lasting mark on the settlement of disputes between States.

Brazil's Judicial Contribution to the International Court of Justice.

It is also opportune to highlight the invaluable contribution of Brazilian judges to the International Court of Justice in the second half of the twentieth century. We should first mention the significant contribution of H.E. Judge José Philadelpho de Barros e Azevedo, in particular his participation in the Corfu Channel judgment, which contributed to the development of the regime of State responsibility for actions affecting international waters. H.E. Judge Levi Fernandes Carneiro's legal legacy includes his involvement in the Monetary Gold Removed from Rome in 1943, which was of great importance in international law, particularly with regard to the immunity of a state's property from foreign jurisdiction in wartime. Finally, as a member of the International Law Commission, a well-deserved tribute must be paid to H.E. Judge José Sette-Camara, the last Brazilian judge to sit on the Court as Vice-President, from 1982 to 1985.

SOIRÉE LITTÉRAIRE – EMBASSY OF KOSOVO

By Roy Lie Atjam

In the twenty-first century, H.E. Judge Francisco Rezek first marked the ICJ with his commitment to peace, justice, and respect for law in international relations. Among the high-profile cases to which he contributed his invaluable expertise was the Lagrand case, in which the Court ruled for the first time that orders indicating provisional measures are binding, and thus gave itself the means to intervene in the most violent conflicts, to propose measures to mitigate their consequences, and to prevent their escalation. Finally, tribute must be paid to the contribution of H.E. Judge Caçado Trindade, particularly his vision of “humanized international law”, based on the concept of a “new jus gentium”. In his individual opinions and dissenting votes, he consistently emphasized the central role of human beings as the ultimate beneficiaries of all legal norms.

In the first year of my mandate many different cases have been solicited at the Court concerning Racial Discrimination, Financing Terrorism, Genocide, Human Rights Violations etc. and I am inspired by my predecessors to renew my commitment and contribute to the peaceful settlement of disputes and the progressive development of International Law made by the Courts jurisprudence.

The Embassy of Kosovo and Carabela Books, an independent and non-profit publishing house, organized the poetry collection “Girl of Monday”, at the Kosovo Chancellery in The Hague, on 18 November 2023.

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Dren Doli, a professional lawyer, referenced the ability of literature to aid in comprehending legal texts through literary interpretation.

The poetry collection is the first of its kind. It is trilingual and an ongoing conversation in verse of twenty-eight Dutch and Albanian poets who have written about love, motherhood, women and girls, not from an imposed adoration of enamoured men, but from their recognition of women’s role in their lives.

Participating artists read from their work: Alban Bala, Erik Lindner, Gerard van Hameren, Jantine Dijkstra, Juan Heinsohn Huala, Leo Stilma, Liridon Mulaj, Marco Nijmeijer, Ramon Haniotis, Shqiptar Oseku, Albana Shala, as well as the daughter of

Moikom Zeqo, who departed two years ago. The well-known artist Hajrije Preniqi animated the evening with her songs. Typical food items were served. What a marvellous evening!



DIPLOMAT MAGAZINE EVENTS

THE VII DIPLOMATS FUN-RUN & WALK

By Roy Lie Atjam

The VII Diplomats Fun-Run & Walk took place on Saturday, October 21 2023 in the Haagse Bos, one of the oldest forests in the Netherlands. The event was organized by Diplomat Magazine to promote networking and camaraderie amongst the diplomatic community in The Hague. Despite the rainy weather, diplomats were brave enough to take the challenge, it was a successful morning.

The run-walk took off in front of the Chalet Ten Bosch, situated between the Louwman Auto Museum and Haagse Bos. The Diplomats and their families followed the well-marked route through the unique forest and breathtaking pond in the centre of the forest.

10-year-old Ema Flores Barco, daughter of Ivan Alfonso Flores Vinueza of Ecuador, Afraz Ahmed son of Mr Muhammad Wasif of Pakistan and Rwandan Ambassador Olivier

Jean Patrick Nduhungirehe, were the top three runners. The walkers, including children, were content with the 3 km walking event.

The Ambassadors of: Ghana, H.E. Mr. Francis Danti Kotia; of Costa Rica, H.E. Mr. Arnaldo Brenes Castro; of Peru H.E. Ms Marisol Aguero Colunga; of Rwanda, H.E. Mr. Olivier Jean Patrick Nduhungirehe, IOM Chief of Mission H.E. Mr. Antonio Polosa, Charge d'affaires of Thailand Ms Chonvipat Changtrakul, also a runner. Diplomats from Ecuador, Ivan Alfonso Flores Vinueza, Ghana, Mr John Bosco Dery-Kpebesani and Pakistan's Mr Muhammad Wasif, grace the autumn fun run walk event with their participation.

The VII Diplomats Fun-Run & Walk, concluded with a luncheon at Chalet Ten Bosch.





The Honorable Jan van Zanen. Photography by Valerie Kuypers

FROM A SHARED HISTORY TO A SHARED MEMORY

By Jan Van Zanen, Mayor of The Hague

In March of this year it was decided to place a monument on Lange Voorhout in commemoration of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and Caribbean slavery. The creation of this monument forms part of a wider programme to make The Hague's past of colonialism and slavery part of its collective memory. The municipal council had previously asked the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) to conduct an academic study on its behalf to examine The Hague's colonial and slave trade history. When the research report was presented, I, as Mayor, on behalf of the municipal executive, offered my apologies for the way in which past public administrators of The Hague supported and profited from the system of colonialism and slavery.

Anyone who cares to look will find numerous accounts related to the period of colonialism and slavery in The Hague and signs of it too. What comes to mind here in this context are the many people living in our city, roughly 20 per cent of The Hague's population, whose roots lie in the former colonies, some of whom are also descendants of people who were enslaved. Traces of that history can also be seen in the city's architecture (the Mauritshuis being the best-known example), as well as in art collections, the Royal Library and the National Archive.

Our colonial past is not a closed chapter in our history. Its consequences are clearly visible, even today. That the emotions are still there among all the different points of view was something I felt for myself during my visits to the six islands of the Dutch Caribbean, as well as Suriname, Indonesia, and India. The Hague elected to have a study carried out to look at both its history of slavery and its entire colonial past. Not least, because slavery was an integral part of the colonial system. But that does not mean that we are not aware of the wide differences between the victims. The Hague fully recognises the unique position of the victims of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and Caribbean slavery. Just as we also want to do justice to all the other victims of slavery and colonialism.

The Hague's colonial and slavery history differs from that of other cities in the Netherlands. The Hague was not a trading city and had no 'official' city rights until the start of the 19th century. As the seat of government and the residence of first the stadholders and later the successive monarchs and queens, however, The Hague was also the place where all national decisions about colonial policy and thus slavery and contract labour were taken. We are reminded of that by buildings such as the former Ministry of the Colonies. In the archives we find the names of people living in The Hague who invested in the United East India Company (VOC) and the West India Company (WIC), or directly in plantations where enslaved people were forced to work. Many of those investors could be found among the highest echelons of government, with positions at both local and national level.

The study by the KITLV showed that The Hague municipal council of the day was keen to gain influence within the VOC and WIC. Wealthy residents had no qualms about investing in matters directly related to slavery. As did the Sociëteit van 's-Gravenhage, The Hague's tax authority. The Sociëteit invested in British government bonds in 1774. And thus, via the international capital markets, sought to gain a slice of the pie from the colonial activities of its rival, Britain, which also included the slave trade. The Sociëteit clearly had no ethical awareness when it came to how profits were made. It was only ever about the money, and not the African people.

This was still the case in 1863 when slavery was abolished in the Caribbean: change only came about when a compensation scheme was set up. A compensation scheme that was instituted not for the victims of slavery, but for the slave owners. And partly funded by the culture system in the Dutch East Indies which forced Javanese peasants to produce products for export to the Netherlands. Once again, people were reduced to a commodity and exploited. The same fate befell those enslaved in Asia. More attention has been devoted in recent times to the Dutch trans-Atlantic slave trade and plantations in the Caribbean. But we should not forget that from the first half of the 17th century, the VOC also engaged in large-scale slave trading in Asia.

When slavery was abolished, there were at least 40 Caribbean plantation owners living in The Hague. Remarkably enough, none of them were merchants, but rather members of the nobility, military, public officials, and a few politicians. It is known that 564 citizens of The Hague served on the municipal council between 1795-1940. It has been established that 89 of these people had a direct or indirect link with the colonial administration. This could mean that their family had interests in slavery or that they themselves once worked in colonial administration. A direct consequence of the abolition of slavery was the arrival of contract workers in Suriname. Most of them

came from India and Java. Under very harsh conditions they had to create a new life for themselves in Suriname.

The municipal executive fully realises the extent to which our predecessors, as members of the governing elite of the time, were involved in the system of colonialism and slavery. An apology cannot undo the untold suffering inflicted upon the ancestors of so many citizens of The Hague. I also want to stress that no one currently living in The Hague is to blame for the deeds of those who lived in The Hague at that time or were responsible for its public administration. Although we are well aware that the suffering of the past continues to the present day; that it causes sorrow; and anger; not least because the system of colonialism and slavery was based on racism and notions of white supremacy. Phenomena still faced today by the descendants of the victims of colonialism and slavery.

Racism is still a toxic force, even in our society. And that is precisely why it is so important to acknowledge the suffering caused by the system of colonialism and slavery. We can only truly address today's racism when - by recognising its origins and consequences - we make colonialism and slavery part of our collective memory. Something which has not yet happened. The picture of our history is still incomplete. It was the decades-long failure

to acknowledge the historical role of slavery, in particular, that caused so much pain and anger.

The academic study of The Hague's colonial and slavery history carried out at the request of the municipal executive, marks a beginning. The start of a wider programme to give colonialism and slavery a permanent place in The Hague's commemorative culture. In addition, a Colonial and Slavery History Advisory Committee will shortly be set up to provide The Hague City Council with welcome advice. We are proud to be the first in the country with such a standing committee drawn from broad sections of the community. The topic will be covered in schools and, of course, 2023 will be an important year of commemoration. Slavery was abolished 160 years ago (although enslaved people were still required to work for another 10 years) and it is 150 years since the first contract workers arrived in Suriname.

This is how we will proceed, step by step and together, to ensure that the memory of the suffering caused by colonialism and slavery is firmly embedded in the collective memory of The Hague. With the aim of doing justice to all the victims and their descendants. In the hope that eventually, by remembering together it can become a shared memory. And that we, here in The Hague, on the basis of that jointly acknowledged past, can build an even better common future.

ROMANIA'S NATIONAL DAY

To celebrate Romania's National Day, Ambassador Lucian Fătu hosted an extraordinary concert at Theater Diligentia in The Hague. The event showcased the exceptional talents of Romanian musicians Liviu Prunaru, a violinist from the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam playing a 1694 Stradivarius and the soloist with the Romanian Radio Orchestra, Gabriel Croitoru, performing on a Guarneri violin that previously belonged to composer George Enescu engaging in a unique duel. Pianist Horia Mihail accompanied them, creating a memorable trio.

The concert, organized by the Embassy of Romania and supported by the Romanian Cultural Institute, drew a diverse audience, including members of the diplomatic corps, international organizations, the diaspora, and Dutch friends of Romania.

Following the concert, an animated reception provided an opportunity for guests to discuss and compare their appreciation for the two exceptional violins.

Ambassador Fătu, in his address, reflected on Romania's National Day and highlighted the country's historical journey since the World Wars. He also addressed the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, emphasizing Romania's solidarity and active support for its neighbor. "We stand with Ukraine for as long as it takes to defend the principles embodying the values shared by European and NATO members."

The ambassador underscored the robust relationship between Romania and the Netherlands, emphasizing the multifaceted role of Romania in addressing the crisis in the region. He acknowledged the support of the Netherlands and other partners in establishing Romania as a pillar of stability on NATO's eastern flank. "However, that's not the full dimension of Romania's multi-faceted role in addressing the crisis. Since the war began, under the framework of the refugee response plan, more than 4.9 million border crossings to Romania have been recorded. Currently, 150,000 Ukrainian refugees enjoy temporary protection in my country."



H.E. Lucian Fătu, Ambassador of Romania

Ambassador Fătu expressed Romania's solidarity with the Republic of Moldova and other aspiring EU members, advocating for their accession negotiations. He also condemned terrorist attacks and supported diplomatic efforts for peace in conflict regions.

The ambassador concluded his remarks by recognizing the human dimension of Romanian-Netherlands relations and expressing gratitude to honorary consulates for bridging the gap between the two societies.

The concert, sponsored by Damen Holding BV, Ventune BV, Van de Waart Solicitors, was a fitting way to celebrate Romania's National Day in the city of peace and justice.



H.E. Mr. Modi Ephraim, Ambassador of Israel

ISRAEL AND THE NETHERLANDS: TWO SMALL COUNTRIES, A BIG PARTNERSHIP

On year into his tenure as Ambassador of Israel to the Netherlands, H.E. Mr. Modi Ephraim talked with Diplomat Magazine Publisher Dr. Mayelinne de Lara about the bilateral ties between the two countries

After a diplomatic career spent mostly in Latin America and in the United States, H.E. Modi Ephraim has for the last year been Israel's top representative in The Hague – his first posting in Europe. "In this context – the Ambassador said – the commemoration of the Holocaust is something of particular importance. A large part of the Jewish community here disappeared during the Holocaust. And yet, we have seen recently that many young people in the Netherlands do not know what happened. Even worse, we see an increase of anti-Semitic incidents. The Israeli government, together with the Jewish community, the Dutch government, NGOs and all other relevant stakeholders, is working to correct this trend".

Bilateral ties between the Netherlands and Israel are currently very strong, Ambassador Ephraim explained, pointing at the visits to Israel made by Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte in October and by Foreign Minister Wopke Hoekstra in May. These visits covered all aspects of the bilateral ties between the two countries, ranging from investment in the hi-tech sector to international cooperation in the fight against terrorism. The October visit by PM Rutte also paved the way for further diplomatic exchanges, set to involve civil society, academics and business people.

Speaking of the business ties between the two countries, the Ambassador noted: "There are several Israeli entrepreneurs who are here in the Netherlands, active in several different domains, with many investments in the high-tech sector. This will surely be one of the key themes of our partnership."

On the fight against terrorism, Ambassador Ephraim stressed the importance for Israel of relying on its international partners in order to combat terrorist threats that affect not only the Middle East, but the whole world."In the context of the war in Ukraine, we can now see the Iranians helping Russia. It is important to have dialogue with the moderates, but with the radicals it is necessary to have a very clear policy. The Iranian government, for instance, is violating the human rights of its own people and is supporting terrorism in Israel's region and beyond."

The October visit by PM Rutte also paved the way for further diplomatic exchanges, set to involve civil society, academics and business people. In his interview with Dr. De Lara, Ambassador Ephraim emphasized the importance of people-to-people exchanges between his country and the Netherlands. The field of arts is a prime example of these dynamics. Both countries are very active in

the international arts scene, and Israeli artists – musicians, dancers and writers – often come to the Netherlands for exchanges.

"The Netherlands is one of the most important international centers of contemporary dance – the Ambassador noted – and there are many exchanges with Israeli dance groups. Last year, some of them came to Rotterdam, to the Holland Dance Festival, but also in other parts of the countries, like Amsterdam and The Hague." A prominent Israeli writer, David Grossman, recently won the 2022 Erasmus Prize. The coming months will see more and more initiatives in the arts domain. In September, Israel will join the Embassy Festival in The Hague, with a delegation of artists set to participate in the event. Moreover, a number of initiatives are being planned to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the State of Israel – not only in The Hague, but across the whole of the Netherlands.

Overall, H.E. Mr. Ephraim said, the Netherlands and Israel are both small countries in terms of size and population, but they both have big ambitions and initiatives, hard working people, and a multi-cultural background. On this basis, cooperation between the two countries can thrive – and Ambassador Ephraim is set to work hard for this to happen.

Embarking on an insightful dialogue with Ambassador Modi Ephraim, with a focus on recent events, the Ambassador shares his perspectives on the response of the Dutch government and people, the resilience of the Jewish community, and the potential avenues for strengthened collaboration in the face of challenges.

DM - In light of the recent unprecedented attack from Hamas, how would you describe the response of the people of the Netherlands and the Dutch government?

Immediately after the Hamas attack, I was met by an outpour of support. Solidarity events organized by people of all sorts of walks and religions, demonstrations for Israel, and the raising of the Israeli flag by countless people who were shocked by the brutal attack on innocent Israelis by Hamas terrorists on October 7th.

Following the attack, the Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte showed solidarity with Israel by raising the flag in front of his office and he was clear in his stance that Israel has the right to self-defense. There was a moment of silence in Parliament to honor the victims of the brutal attack that took place on October 7th which I was honored to attend, and I received messages of solidarity and support from countless Parliamentarians.

In Israel, I accompanied the Dutch minister of Foreign Affairs of Hanke Bruins Slot in a visit to Kfar Aza, one of the villages that was brutally attacked by Hamas terrorists on October 7th. The devastation the minister saw and the stories she heard made a big impact on her. I think anyone who bears witness to the atrocities, understands that the Hamas terror organization needs to be destroyed.

The Prime Minister made multiple visits to Israel and took ample time to meet with the family of Ofir Engel, an Israeli boy with also Dutch nationality who was abducted by Hamas terrorists to Gaza. After the meeting, I spoke with Ofir's grandfather and he was so appreciative of the kindness and support PM Rutte showed.

In the Netherlands we have seen many demonstrations and solidarity actions, demanding the release of all hostages. Because of his Dutch background, there was particular attention for Ofir, and we are all so happy that he is now released and back with his loved ones. I appreciate the role of the Dutch government and all citizens who called for the release of him and all other hostages.

There are still 137 hostages kept by terrorists in Gaza. It is important that everyone continues to ask attention for this urgent matter, and I am appreciative to see that demonstrations and creative actions continue to be organized

to shine a light on the plight of the hostages.

DM - Given the increase in anti-Semitic incidents you mentioned earlier, how has the Jewish local community in the Netherlands responded to the recent events?

There is great concern about the alarming increase of 818% of anti-Semitic incidents in the Netherlands. I find it dreadful that 80 years after the Holocaust, some people in the Netherlands have to hide the mezuzah on their door or the yarmulke on their head out of fear. We work with the leadership of the Jewish community, the Dutch government and Parliament to ensure that Jewish life can continue. It is appalling that Jewish events are being cancelled and that Jewish schools had to close because of safety concerns. Just like any other people, the Jewish community must be able to live safely and freely in the Netherlands.

DM - As the Ambassador, how do you see the role of the Dutch government in fostering stronger ties and cooperation between Israel and the Netherlands during this challenging time?

In 2024 we mark 75 years of bilateral ties between Israel and the Netherlands. A diamond jubilee. Throughout these years our two countries have enjoyed a close friendship and ever-growing trade, as we continuously work together in various fields to enhance cooperation. We cherish our shared values that serve as a basis to this close friendship.

We appreciate the friendship of the Dutch government in the past few months since the brutal October 7th attack. As I mentioned earlier, PM Rutte made clear that Israel has the right to self-defense. The role of the Dutch government in getting hostages released, including Ofir Engel, cannot be underestimated and we are very grateful.

To ensure the eradication of the Hamas terror organization, it is important that this is part of the international agenda. Just like an international coalition was formed to fight Islamic State, the same must be done against Hamas to ensure that their terror will not reach Europe.

DM - In your experience as Israel's top representative in The Hague, how has the recent situation impacted people-to-people exchanges, especially in the field or arts, between Israel and the Netherlands?

In the many demonstrations and actions in support of Israel, artists use their talents to ask attention. For example, recently in Amsterdam I attended the making of a painting on a wall by Israeli graffiti artist Benzi Brofman. His artwork shines light on sexual war violence against women and calls to speak up for our sisters. Brutal rapes were broadcast live by Hamas on social media and the hostage women experienced terrible things. This deserves more attention, and I am grateful for the efforts by Brofman and other artists who use their art as a wake-up call.

At the same time, we also see demonstrations that show support for the Hamas terror. Anti-Semitic chants are being shouted and the state of Israel is being denied the right to exist. It is important that we stand against terror and those who seek the destruction of the Jewish state.

DM - Looking forward, what are your expectations or hopes regarding the ongoing collaboration between Israel and the Netherlands, considering the recent events?

I am optimistic that we will have victory in the war against terror and that we will have peace in the region. We will continue to grow ties with our neighbors, and together with the Netherlands we can grow multilateral projects that are of benefit to Israel, its neighbors and the Netherlands.



THE LATIN AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL IN DELFT: SECOND EDITION - A CELEBRATION OF CULTURE



H.E. Dr. Juan Duran, Ambassador of Dominican Republic with diplomats at the opening of Carajita



Once again, the Latin American Film Festival has graced the city of Delft with its cinematic brilliance, marking its second edition with an auspicious launch on Wednesday, October 25, at Filmhuis Lumen. This year's opening featured the Bolivian masterpiece "Utama," directed by the talented filmmaker Alejandro Loayza Grisi, and was honored by the presence of H.E. Roberto Calzadilla Sarmiento, the Ambassador of the Plurinational State of Bolivia to the Netherlands.

In the eloquent words of Ambassador Calzadilla Sarmiento, "Utama is a call about Mother Earth, and taking care of her is everyone's task." The film delves into the compelling story of an indigenous family in the highlands of Bolivia, navigating the challenges of climate change, water scarcity, and the need for migration due to environmental changes.

This cinematic gem, produced in 2022, garnered critical acclaim by winning the Best Film Award at the Sundance Festival and securing the top spot at the World Cinema Amsterdam festival.

As the Ambassador emphasized, "The title of the film Utama, which translates from Aymara to signify 'Our house,' is a provocation to think that we must be aware today of the urgency to save our planet Earth, to save our nature, as we

witness incurable consequences everywhere in our Pachamama, our common house."

Beyond the profound ecological message conveyed in "Utama," the film's photography is breathtaking. Capturing the landscapes of the Uyuni salt lakes and the Atacama Desert with mesmerizing beauty, it offers viewers a glimpse of awe-inspiring, otherworldly terrains. The film's silence, broken only by the sound of the wind and the passage of llamas through the desert, creates an absorbing atmosphere. "Utama" vividly portrays the challenges faced by the inhabitants of this arid land as they confront a life without water, with their journey becoming increasingly treacherous due to rising heat and remote distances. Despite the harshness of their circumstances, "Utama" captures the subtlety and wisdom with which these people navigate life in harmony with nature.

This year's festival is divided into two parts, with the first segment taking place from October 25 to October 28. It features films from Bolivia ("Utama"), Guatemala ("Gol de Plata"), Uruguay ("La Sociedad de la Nieve"), the Dominican Republic ("Carajita"), and the famous Cuban film "Fresa y Chocolate," celebrating its 30th anniversary with a timeless narrative. The second part of the festival, featuring contributions from other countries

in Latin America, will be hosted in spring.

During the presentation of "Carajita," the Ambassador of the Dominican Republic, H.E. Juan Duran, highlighted the growth of the Dominican film industry, citing 125 projects in 2022, with significant economic impact and numerous awards for "Carajita."

In the organization of this event, the Embassy of Costa Rica played a vital coordinating role on behalf of the Group of Embassies of Latin American and Caribbean countries and the local organizers in Delft. Manuel Morales, Costa Rica's Consul General, spoke of the collaborative efforts that brought this festival to life, highlighting the success of the first edition in 2019.

The Latin American Film Festival in Delft transcends cinema; it is a celebration of culture, nature, and our shared responsibility for the well-being of our planet. As we immerse ourselves in the captivating stories and stunning visuals of these films, we are reminded of the importance of preserving our environment and the urgent need for global action. The festival enriches the cultural landscape of Delft and prompts us to contemplate our collective role in nurturing our planet, our "common house."

CHINA AND CFC SIGNS AGREEMENT FOR A JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER PROGRAMME

The Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) and the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China (MOFCOM) announced the signing of a landmark agreement at the Embassy of China in The Hague, Netherlands, on 27 July 2023.

Ambassador Tan Jian, Ambassador of China to the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Managing Director of the CFC Ambassador Sheikh Mohammed Belal witnessed the signing ceremony in presence of other delegates.

This agreement, the first ever, paves the way for the provision of Junior Professional Officers (JPOs) as a part of the CFC's Junior Professional Officer Programme. The goal of this initiative is to enhance the skill sets of young professionals with limited work experience by providing them an enriching and structured learning opportunity under the guidance and supervision of experienced CFC officials.

The Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China is taking an important

step towards contributing to this program by deploying JPOs to the CFC, demonstrating its commitment to the professional development of future international civil servants.

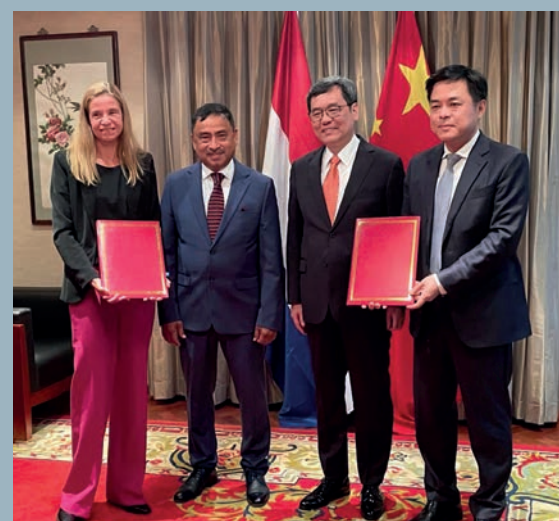
The exchange of human resources will allow the JPOs to accumulate knowledge and practical experience, preparing them for successful careers as international civil servants. This agreement signifies the strong collaboration between the CFC and the People's Republic of China and their shared dedication to fostering future talent.

We believe that this agreement will mark a new chapter in our collaboration, opening doors for more dynamic, creative, and innovative professionals who will undoubtedly contribute significantly to the sustainable development and growth of the global commodity sector.

China's poverty reduction story is a story of persistent growth through economic transformation. As China's economy now adjusts to a new low carbon growth model, its eagerness for upgraded skill levels is in line with China's vision for an improved social

protection to ensure a just transition that complements CFC's mission for alleviation of poverty.

The JPO program, it is hoped, will open up windows to learn from China's battle against poverty that has benefited the largest number of people in human history.



INDONESIA MEDIA DIPLOMATIC GATHERING 2023

By Roy Lie Atjam

H.E. Mayerfas, Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia, invited a selection of media persons to a casual gathering at his residence Wisma Duta, to reignite the cordial relationship with the media.

Even though the world is undergoing tremendous changes not seen for decades, and we are at the brink of the era of Metaverse Diplomacy, we still need to meet face-to-face.

After a friendly welcome, "Selamat petang dan selamat dating" Ambassador Mayerfas went on to say, "I know that we have online news or social media that live 24/7, but I always believe that seeing in person, exchanging views directly is so much better and meaningful. Do you agree?"

In the last 77 years since its independence, Indonesia has been going through many ups and downs, just like any other countries in the world, but we have proven that we are resilient and we can come back stronger.

When the pandemic was still lingering and amidst the geopolitical crises, Indonesia chaired the G20 and we delivered. When the global economy demonstrated a slowdown, ours remains strong and become the 'bright spot' in the region. Our economy grew 5.3 percent. Investment increased 3.87 percent. And our inflation rate was under control at 5.5 percent.

Next, I would like to mention that year 2023 is an important stepping-stone for Indonesia.

Aside that we're holding the chairmanship of ASEAN and MIKTA, Indonesia is also in the period of preparing our General Election in 2024, a crucial step towards deciding the next leadership.

We are also in the period of preparing our New Capital, that will be the centre of Government, but also the centre of green innovation. Looking ahead, Indonesia is optimistic that

our economy will continue to grow despite the global challenges, and whatever the result of the election next year."

A dinner concluded the evening, on the menu featuring, Sup Tekwan, Manis Rendang, Martabak manis and much more. By all means, a successful media gathering.



BORN IN INDIA, MADE IN THE U.S.A.



An interview with H.E. Shefali Razdan Duggal, The Ambassador of the United States of America to the Kingdom of the Netherlands



Mayelinne De Lara, chief publisher of Diplomat Magazine, had the honor and pleasure to have a friendly discussion with H.E. Shefali Razdan Duggal, the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Ambassador Shefali Razdan Duggal is a very warm, modest and authentic person, with a genuine interest in people, which transpires through every action or word that she shares. She began by expressing her pleasure and excitement for talking to Diplomat Magazine, because, as she says, “I have many bilateral and personal goals for my time in the Netherlands. Of course, our bilateral relationship is historically lengthy, as the Netherlands was the first country to acknowledge U.S. Independence 247 years ago. And, if we look even further back, the first settlers from the Netherlands came to the United States over 400 years ago. For example, New York City was first called ‘New Amsterdam’ and New York State was initially named ‘New Netherland.’ The relationship between the two countries

is very solid, and one of my aspirations is to continue maintaining that balance, as well as do my small part to improve upon it. The Netherlands is an important member of the EU and NATO, and the United States values the international work with this vital country. Another very critical Ambassadorial goal for myself is to further grow our vibrant economic relationship. There are around 3,000 U.S. companies based in the Netherlands. The U.S. is the largest foreign investor into the Netherlands, with more than 1 million jobs are created between both countries and a \$38 billion USD trade surplus in 2022. The scale of our economic relationship is vast and wide.”

Right from the beginning of our conversation, Ambassador Razdan Duggal reveals her deeply

human, affectionate, optimistic and vibrant personality. She introduces herself as “Shefali,” as she does with everyone, irrespective of rank or title. She brings a common touch to each interaction, expressing an authentic interest in each person whom she meets. She talks about the shared values between the United States and the Netherlands, stating that this is one of the many reasons why President Joe Biden chose her as his on-the-ground governmental representative to the Netherlands. She mentions that the two countries share and appreciate the same values: freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of press, women’s empowerment, freedom of religion and many others. She states candidly: “I realize that Dutch values are also my values.”

In addition to the bilateral goals of her diplomatic posting to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Ambassador Razdan Duggal also has personal hopes, dear to her heart. “I

In addition to the bilateral goals of her diplomatic posting to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Ambassador Razdan Duggal also has personal hopes, dear to her heart. “I will be visiting all the provinces here in the Netherlands, to meet with real people. Not just from The Hague, not just from the fancy parties or within the diplomatic circle, but to meet people from all corners of this historic country. It is an extremely high personal priority to meet and show respect to the good people who are, effectively, the backbone of this vast and beautiful Kingdom....from local governmental and business leaders, to students, NGOs, women’s shelters, local neighborhood establishments and diverse socioeconomic and ethnic communities. I have already visited 5 provinces, and we are currently scheduling the 6th. I traverse through many neighborhoods to learn about varying cultures, and I am often undetected in my baseball hat, jeans and no makeup! I have also traveled to two of the six islands, and am looking forward to visiting more in the near term. I am speaking with people, openly expressing my respect for and to them. I am attempting to be a walking example that we humans, irrespective of job title or background, are all equals. That we are each contributing to society....just in different ways.”

Her eyes light up as she talks with so much passion about the people she meets and what she hopes to convey through the message she attempts to bring to them. She tells us about her past and childhood, as a clear example that “America is the land of all possibilities.” In her perspective, when people have faith in something greater than themselves, exercise active humility, are kind and empathetic to others, and work incredibly hard.... anything is possible in the United States. “The future possibilities for those living in democracies, like the United States and the Netherlands, are infinite. People who may not have come from any feasible version of advantage can passionately strive towards achieving their goals. I was raised by a single mom who worked two minimum-wage jobs to support us. Mummy and I lived in a one-bedroom apartment. I didn’t have any contacts, I had no advantages, I paid for my studies through loans and scholarships. To imagine that someone with my background, an immigrant who moved to the United States at 2 years old, would be representing the United States as an Ambassador 48 years later, is surreal, a dream, an unimaginable blessing. I will never forget my roots....in fact, quite the contrary. I will always honor them. When I walk into communities where people may not expect a U.S. Ambassador to be actively and opening walking around, I want for people to see

not just the U.S. Ambassador, but a real person who understands, to a great extent, what it is like to be in their circumstances. The face of the United States is changing, and I am a living example of that reality.”

Her life philosophy is about helping others, being grateful for all opportunities (and, challenges) in life, and paying it back and paying it forward. She wants to lead by her own example. She says something that will definitely stick within everyone's hearts: “God is a verb. How you treat people is the reflection of God coming through you.”

She does her part by also mentoring others. “We have, at the Embassy, the ‘Women’s Mentorship Network,’ which matches 20 mentors (Dutch professionals) to 40 young women, all of varying ethnicities, education and backgrounds. In addition to those young women, I personally mentor an additional 6 young Dutch women. Personally, I have also been so touched by the fact that young women often approach me, when I am out-and-about for official work, to ask for my guidance, to share their experiences and difficulties. I always listen and make time, give them my card and try to be there when they need me. I often welcome them at the Embassy or speak with them on the phone. I brought this mentoring focus with me from the United States, as I mentored quite a few young women there, as well. A strong passion of mine is to be a voice for women. I want for these young people to know that they are not alone, that there are people who have very likely experienced what they are dealing with right now and we elder (“experienced”) women are now here to help. We went through what they did at some point, and we can share our wisdom and hopefully help guide them down a less difficult pathway.”

As the first person of color to become U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, human rights is very dear to her, especially racial, equity and Holocaust related issues. “I came from the human rights world. I believe that my presence here, serving as Ambassador, has had a positive impact on people of color. I try to actively, through my words, action and counsel, send the message that believing in yourself and having faith in your potential is critically important to your self-esteem and to your future. I want to gently remind people that things can be difficult at times, although please do not let that diminish your spirit and focus. Be kind and good to yourself and others. And, please have forgiveness within your

heart. Life is a blessing and we must actively improve from our challenges and occasional missteps. I have a sign right outside of my office in the Embassy that says, ‘Work hard and be nice to people.’ That is my mantra!”

Ambassador Razdan Duggal came to the Netherlands with substantive experience in the political world. She served as the first Asian Deputy National Finance Chair at the Democratic National Committee, served as the first Asian on the National Board of Directors for Emily’s List (an organization dedicated to electing pro-choice Democratic women to all levels of government) and was the first Asian appointed by President Barack Obama to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Council in Washington, D.C. Additionally, she worked for the Massachusetts Democratic Party, the New Hampshire Democratic Party, Al Gore for President 2000, Hillary Clinton for President 2008, Barack Obama for President 2008, Kamala Harris for California Attorney General 2010, Obama for President 2012, Hillary Clinton for President 2016 and Joe Biden for President 2020. Ambassador Razdan Duggal was always actively seeking ways to pay back the country which gave she and her mother so much opportunity. “There is an old adage in the U.S. which asks...‘Do you want TO BE someone or do you want TO DO something?’ I was never the person who thought about being someone, although since childhood, I always thought about ways to contribute to the country, the United States, which gave me to so much and that I loved so truly and deeply.”

When asked about any challenges between the two countries, she believes that while it is an already exceptionally positive relationship, “Maybe we talk a little more, meet a little more often. Perhaps President Biden and the Prime Minister meet over an ice cream or oliebollen,” she says jokingly.

“We have the same values, the collaboration is very symbiotic. The United States is so incredibly grateful to the Netherlands for the dedication, partnership and passion for human rights, especially in respect to the illegal invasion of the sovereign nation of Ukraine. The United States is in constant communication with the Netherlands within the bilateral and multilateral fronts. History has revealed that the United States and the Netherlands have an unbreakable relationship. As my time as Ambassador, I have generally witnessed that the good people of the Netherlands have such an incredible affection for the United States, and we have the same positive emotion towards the Dutch. Everywhere I visit, people are enthusiastic.”

Ambassador Razdan Duggal evoked a recent visit to the Netherlands American Cemetery and Memorial in Margraten, the second largest war cemetery in Europe for fallen WWII soldiers. She was incredibly touched by the unique generational connection of this Cemetery with the Dutch people. Since 1945, members of the local community have adopted graves, bringing flowers to the Cemetery and researching the life of the fallen soldier(s), as a way to honor their sacrifice. “Each Memorial Day, Mission the Netherlands, in collaboration with several allies, organizes a large event at the Cemetery. There were approximately 10,000 people attending this year’s moving ceremony. We are incredibly grateful to have this level of appreciation and love for our brave soldiers and veterans.”

The process to becoming a U.S. Ambassador is a long and arduous one, which includes a Presidential Announcement, a Senate Confirmation Hearing and then a vote on the Senate Floor.

As a first time Ambassador, Razdan Duggal shares that the honor of serving her country was something that she took very seriously and deeply within her heart. She decided to “bring her whole self” to this job, staying true to her personality, which included her diligent work ethic, positive attitude, authenticity, curiosity, empathy and her kindness. In fact, when doing research for this article, one longtime employee of the U.S. Mission voluntarily stated, “In the 19 years that I have worked here, it is very rare that I have seen the combination of professional, kind, elegant, charming, hardworking, always smiling attitude. We all notice it, and we are glad for it. It is felt throughout our Mission. And, people from other Embassies, both U.S. and other countries, notice it. It is often one of the first things they comment on when they enter the building. This is, in large part, due to our Ambassador.”

To conclude, the most important message that Ambassador Shefali Razdan Duggal would like to send to all Dutch people is that “we are your friend, you are our friend and we are true partners! Thank you for allowing me to be a guest in your wonderful country.”

Thank you, Ambassador Shefali Razdan Duggal for your time and kind message!



DEAN DIPLOMATIC CORPS RECOGNIZES PROFESSOR



Ottawa, Canada.- Ambassador Kamal Bashah Ahmad, dean of the Diplomatic Corps in Canada, granted special recognition for the second time to Eugene Matos G., professor of public diplomacy at the University of Ottawa and a law graduate from the Law School of that institution.

"I am pleased to present this scroll to Dr. Matos, a long-time diplomat and one of the first public diplomacy specialists in the Americas, who has been a collaborator for more than three decades on behalf of our diplomatic and consular corps in Canada," Kamal Ahmad said.

The delivery took place on the occasion of the 4th Canada's Ambassadors of the Year Awards Ceremony, held at the Professional Development Institute of the University of Ottawa.

The event was attended by 48 ambassadors accredited to Canada, senior officials of the Canadian Foreign Ministry, representatives of international organizations, members of the consular corps, the Canadian press and special guests.

Other merit awards were received by the Director of Protocol of the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Civil Law at the University of Ottawa and the publisher of The Hill Times newspaper.



ECUADOR OPEN FOR BUSINESS: A WEEK OF NATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE HAGUE

In September 2023, the Embassy of Ecuador in The Hague hosted a spectacular week-long series of activities in order to promote the economy, business and gastronomy of Ecuador. His Excellency Ambassador Andres Teran Parral presided over these festivities, which included an Investors & Buyers Dinner and an enlightening presentation titled "Ecuador Open to Business" by Juan Carlos Yepez, Counsellor and Head of the Commercial Section at PRO-ECUADOR.

The highlight of the week was the "Ecuador Open to Business" dinner, held on September 20, 2023. The event gathered more than 30 investors and importers from diverse sectors, ranging from well-known companies like Heineken, Nutreco, Horex, Sail Ventures, RVO, to representatives from the banking and finance sector, including FMO, CFC, ING, Rabobank, KVK, and NL in Business. Additionally, participants included importers of flowers, coffee, fruits, and vegetables, such as Trading Organic, Inti Harvest, Favorita BV, ILLIMANI, IFE Frozen Fruits, as well as notable representatives from the tourism sector, including Air Europe. Diplomatic staff, including the Consul and Honorary Consuls of Ecuador in The Hague, Amsterdam, and Rotterdam, also graced the occasion.

One of the most pleasant surprises of the evening was the introduction of Ecuadorian wines, a hidden gem relatively unknown to many attendees. During the reception and dinner, three exceptional wines, Armonia (Cabernet Sauvignon), Paradoja (Cabernet Sauvignon / Malbec) and the Enigma (Chardonnay) from Bodegas Dos Hemisferios, took center stage.

Ambassador Teran Parral, in his opening remarks, emphasized Ecuador's commitment

to deepening economic engagement with the Netherlands, highlighting the country's open-for-business stance. He noted that the Netherlands had become Ecuador's second-largest destination for exports, with \$665 million dollars' worth of products exported in 2022. He also announced upcoming negotiations for a double taxation treaty, which would further boost investments and service exports between the two nations.

Juan Carlos Yepez's presentation, "Ecuador Open to Business," provided a comprehensive overview of Ecuador's economic landscape. He highlighted Ecuador's advantages, including a dollarized economy, low inflation, tax incentives, infrastructure development, highly qualified human resources, and an impressively low inflation rate of 0.65%. Yepez outlined priority sectors for investment, such as agroindustry, aquaculture, the orange economy, IT services, tourism, energy, real estate, infrastructure, and transport. However, the crowning moment of the celebration was the Investors & Buyers Dinner, where Ecuadorian chef David Reyes, hailing from Quito, showcased his culinary mastery. He crafted a sumptuous menu featuring authentic Ecuadorian dishes, allowing guests to savor the nation's rich gastronomic heritage. The dinner was a gastronomic journey, characterized by warmth, abundance, and flavors, all accompanied by Ecuadorian coffee from Illimani. Ecuador's week of activities in The Hague, exemplified Ecuador's openness to international collaboration and investment while showcasing its cultural richness, culinary excellence, and the potential of its emerging wine industry.



TÜRKIYE AND THE NETHERLANDS: LONG HISTORY, STRONG FUTURE

By Selçuk Ünal, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to the Netherlands

Diplomatic relations between the Dutch Republic and the Ottoman Empire was initiated when the States-General of the Dutch Republic sent its first resident envoy, Cornelius Haga, to the Sublime Porte in Istanbul in 1612. The Ottoman Empire reciprocated over two centuries later by sending its first resident envoy to the House of Orange-Nassau, Yahya Karaca Pasha, in 1859.

However, Turkish-Dutch relations go way back than 1612; perhaps as much as by a hundred years. Dutch tradesmen were frequently visiting the Ottoman shores long before the establishment of diplomatic ties. Thus, the first tulip was brought from Istanbul to Amsterdam by one of these merchants in 1560. The first diplomatic mission was sent to Istanbul in 1561 whereas the first envoy had arrived to Ottoman Empire in 1569. As a result, in the second half of the 16th century, history recorded the assistance given by the Ottoman Navy during the Dutch War of Independence. A hamlet in the municipality of Sluis in Zeeland was named as Turkeye by Prince Maurice of Orange in 1604, in recognition of those Ottoman sailors helping the Dutch. Following the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in 1612, Turkish-Dutch relations have witnessed a steady growth in the following centuries.

Türkiye has always attached special importance to its relations with the Netherlands. It was not

a coincidence that following the establishment of the modern Republic of Türkiye in 1923, one of the first friendship agreements was concluded with the Netherlands in 1924.

In post war era, Türkiye and the Netherlands shared common perspectives regarding cooperation in multilateral fora. Our nations founded the Council of Europe, became staunch NATO Allies, worked together in the OSCE and the OECD, among others. Two countries promoted a vision of international peace, security, stability and development on a global scale.

Turkish-Dutch Labor Agreement was signed in this era in 1964. Thanks to this agreement, Turkish guest workers which founded the Dutch-Turkish community started to contribute significantly to the Dutch economy in transforming it into the welfare state of today. Based on this strong history, today Türkiye and the Netherlands have come a long way in their relations since 16th century for a strong future.

Our countries share the political will and determination to overcome issues arising not only among themselves, but also on a broader scale. We have a variety of dialogue mechanisms, bringing several ministries and agencies together regularly. Turkish-Dutch Bilateral Wittenburg Conferences commenced in 2008 provide an important additional platform for the two countries to exchange views, have consultations and further enhance their cooperation.

We share a bilateral trade volume exceeding

10 billion Euros. In terms of foreign direct investment (FDI), the Netherlands is the biggest investor in Türkiye. Likewise, Turkish investments in the Netherlands are also at the top in terms of worldwide Turkish FDI.

We are also proud to have hosted 1.2 million Dutch friends in their holidays last year.

Türkiye and the Netherlands today stand side-by-side in international missions such as Afghanistan, the Balkans, and UN peace keeping missions worldwide like Somalia and work together in international fora. Their shared vision is based on effective multilateralism, and prevention of conflicts through diplomacy. Türkiye is determined to exert every effort not only for our common interests, but also for mutual solidarity, dialogue and cooperation. In face of multitude challenges like armed conflicts, terrorism, radicalism, racism and discrimination, Türkiye and the Netherlands are cognizant that no single country is able to overcome those issues on their own. That is why, we are working together with a vision of a rules-based international system.

The EU member Netherlands and a candidate country for full membership Türkiye, could cooperate more on sustainable development, energy, green transformation, climate change, food security, poverty, cross-border crime and irregular migration in the face of global challenges to secure a more prosperous future.

Last, but not the least, I would like to thank for the support and solidarity that Netherlands has extended to Türkiye in the immediate aftermath of my arrival to the Hague – 5 days before the devastating earthquakes of 6 February 2023. Dutch participation to the relief efforts, aid to the victims of the disaster by deployment of the Urban Search and Rescue Team, military airborne Medevac Unit and numerous NGOs were welcomed with gratitude. Like the Turkish aid to the Dutch during the floods in 1916, 1953 and 2021, the gracious donations of the Dutch government, business circles and public, including those of the Turkish-Dutch community, will never be forgotten.

This year the Republic of Türkiye is celebrating its centennial anniversary. Just like the steady growth of Turkish-Dutch relations throughout centuries, the Republic of Türkiye has come a long way in every sense since its founding in 1923. We are determined to further utilize the enormous potential existing in our relations with the Netherlands, both in terms of mutual bilateral benefit and cooperation on the global scale.

DIPLOMATIC GATHERING AT GRAND HOTEL KURHAUS MARKS FESTIVE SEASON CELEBRATION

A festive spirit enveloped the Grand Hotel Kurhaus in Scheveningen as a group of diplomats from various Latin American countries came together for an informal celebration heralding the upcoming season.

The occasion saw Deputy Heads of Missions sharing camaraderie over a friendly lunch, graciously hosted by Marcel Menzo, Sales Manager of Grand Hotel Kurhaus, among them: Oscar Felipe Izquierdo, Minister of the Embassy of Ecuador, organizer of the event; Diego Emilio Sadofski, Minister Counselor of Argentina; Julian Camino Silva, Minister Counselor Embassy of Colombia; Josué Roberto Liévano, Minister Counselor of El Salvador; Manuel Ignacio Morales, Consul General of Costa Rica; Maria Fernanda Vila, First Secretary of Chile; Cassandra E. Gomez, First Secretary and Second Consul of Nicaragua; Fabiola Cruz, Second Secretary of the Plurinational State of Bolivia; Renato Antonio Famiglietti, Second Secretary Embassy of Panama. The gathering allowed the group to welcome new colleagues: Iván Andrés Chataing, Counselor, Charge d'affaires of Venezuela; Alfonso Ascensio, Minister of México; Juliano Maia, Minister Counselor of Brazil; Dayana Perez, Counselor of the Dominican Republic, and Oscar Paredes, Minister of Peru.

The chosen venue, the emblematic Grand Hotel Kurhaus, provided a picturesque



backdrop, situated in front of the vast expanse of the sea. The historic and opulent setting added an air of sophistication to the gathering, creating an atmosphere conducive to fostering diplomatic ties among the countries of the region.

Oscar Felipe Izquierdo, Minister of the Embassy of Ecuador, during his welcome remarks expressed his appreciation to Mr. Menzo for the kind hospitality of the Grand Hotel Kurhaus and wished the newcomers a warm welcome to The Netherlands. He further encouraged the interaction and cooperation between the Group of Deputy Heads of Mission, in an effort to promote common interests.

As diplomats engaged in lively conversations, the event transcended formalities, allowing attendees to unwind and connect on a personal level, highlighted the importance of creating informal spaces for meaningful interactions.

Marcel Menzo's hospitality played an important role in elevating the experience, ensuring that the diplomats felt welcomed and appreciated.

In an era where collaboration and understanding are key, such informal gatherings provide a platform for building bridges and strengthening ties outside the confines of official diplomatic settings.

FOURTEEN STOLEN CULTURAL ARTEFACTS RETURN TO ITALY WITH EUROJUST SUPPORT

The ancient artefacts, of considerable economic and cultural value, had been stolen from museums in Italy or illegally excavated and smuggled into Bavaria in Germany. The seizure and final handover of the cultural goods is the result of the cooperation between the Carabinieri Command for the Protection of Cultural Heritage (Italy), the Bavarian State Criminal Police Office (BLKA) in Munich (Germany), and the respective Ministries of Culture.

Eurojust provided legal assistance to the authorities involved and facilitated the conclusion of the agreement.

The handover took place on 5 June at the headquarters of the Operational Department of the Carabinieri Command for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, 'La Marmora', in Rome, between the Commander Brigadier General, Vincenzo Molinese, and the Police Vice-President of the BLKA, Guido Limmer. The ceremony was attended by representatives of the German and Italian National Desks at Eurojust, as well as members of the German police and the German Federal Ministry of Culture.

The cultural assets recovered include an Attic black-figure kylix, from 540-530 BC; a Corinthian bronze helmet from the 4th



century BC; several Roman bronze coins (68 BC - 3rd century BC); four gold coins of Valentinian II from the mint of Trier, era 367-385 AD; and an ivory box dated to the late Middle Ages.

The coins and the medieval box were all stolen from two different Italian museums located in Parma and Milan. Eurojust, through its Italian and German National Desks, provided advisory support to the national authorities involved to facilitate the seizure and return of these cultural assets. A coordination meeting was hosted by the Agency to find solutions to the legal problems related to the different national laws.



Michael van Os de Man and H.E. Ms. Marisol Agüero Colunga, Ambassador of Peru to the Netherlands

THE RETURN OF A UNIQUE CHIMU HUACO: A TRIUMPH FOR PERU'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

In a significant achievement for Peru's cultural heritage, a unique Chimu Huaco, representing a remarkable piece of the country's ancient history, has been voluntarily returned to the Peruvian Embassy in the Netherlands. The return of this precious artifact marks an important moment in the ongoing efforts to repatriate Peruvian cultural treasures that were removed from their homeland years ago. This act of goodwill by a Dutch citizen, Michael van Os de Man, highlights the collaborative spirit between the Netherlands and Peru in preserving the legacy of Peru's ancient civilizations.



Huaco is a prehispanic fine pottery artwork made by the inhabitants of the Americas.

The story of this Chimu Huaco's return is a testament to the relentless dedication and diplomatic finesse of H.E. Ms. Marisol Agüero Colunga, Ambassador of Peru to the Netherlands, who has spearheaded numerous initiatives to repatriate Peruvian cultural property. One such notable accomplishment was the signing of an agreement in July 2021 between H.E. Mr. Arjen Uijterlinde, Ambassador for International Cultural Cooperation of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ambassador Agüero, leading to the Dutch Government's delivery of 28 cultural objects belonging to Peru's cultural heritage. This was achieved through a concerted effort between the Foreign Ministries of both countries, the Dutch Information and Heritage Inspectorate, the Peruvian Ministry of Culture and the Embassy of Peru, in particular S.S. Galo Garcés' interest and expertise in this area.

The 28 returned objects encompass a wide range of artifacts from various ancient Peruvian civilizations, including the Chimú, Chancay, Moche, Wari, and Vicús, dating back to a span between 200 BC and 1476 AD.

The collection features captivating ceramics adorned with anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figures, as well as vibrant textiles boasting intricate patterns. Intriguingly, ancient seeds were also among the objects saved from being auctioned off.

The success in repatriating these artifacts is a reflection of the close collaboration between the Netherlands and Peru, particularly within the framework of the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. This international treaty has played a crucial role in ensuring that cultural treasures like the Chimu Huaco find their way back to their place of origin.

Ambassador Agüero emphasized the extraordinary significance of reclaiming these cultural treasures, underscoring that "the legacy of these cultures constitutes an immense source of pride for the Peruvian people." She also recognized the noble gesture of Mr. Michael van Os de Man of returning to Peru such an important piece of its historical past: "his decision to hand over this object belonging to the Cultural Heritage of my country, reflects a deep respect for the legacy of an ancient culture and the recognition of the importance that we, all Peruvians, give to it".

These objects represent the history and heritage of Peru's ancestors, and their return symbolizes the respect and gratitude of the Peruvian people toward the Dutch government for facilitating the repatriation process.

The recent return of the Chimu Huaco, handed over by Michael van Os de Man, is a heartening example of individuals taking responsibility for the cultural heritage they possess. Van Os de Man's decision to return the artifact is commendable, particularly as he inherited it from a relative who acquired it in a time when international regulations on cultural property were not established. Recognizing the importance of this cultural relic, he reached out to Dr. Edward de Bock, a renowned Dutch academic and pre-Hispanic culture authority, for guidance on the repatriation process.

Ambassador Marisol Agüero, who received the Chimu Huaco on behalf of the Peruvian State, lauded Mr. van Os de Man's initiative and Dr. de Bock's invaluable guidance. She also highlighted the significance of the return, as it would enable further study of this invaluable artifact and enhance our understanding of Peru's rich cultural history.

MEETING H.E. MS. CAROLINA OLARTE BÁCARES, COLOMBIA'S AMBASSADOR IN THE HAGUE

H.E. Ms. Carolina Olarte BÁCares presented her credentials to His Majesty King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands, almost a year ago, officially becoming the Ambassador of the Republic of Colombia in The Hague.

The new Ambassador brought with her an impressive amount of expertise in the domain of international law, owing to her academic engagement in this field during the past two decades. The Hague was not a new city for Ms. Olarte BÁCares, who has been a member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration, as well as an agent of Colombia before the International Court of Justice.

Ambassador Olarte BÁCares is excitedly taking up her role. "For a Colombian lawyer and international jurist like me, promoting the interests of Colombia in The Hague is undoubtedly a very significant opportunity."

Reflecting the breadth of the bilateral ties between Colombia and the Netherlands, the Ambassador's portfolio is set to be vast, focused on three specific priority areas: peace, a just energy transition, and women.

The Ambassador's focus on peace reflects the strong emphasis adopted by her government on the "Total Peace Policy," which seeks to achieve peace in the country by negotiating with all armed groups, as well as by including local communities in the negotiations. For the implementation of this policy, Colombia works with its international partners, including the Netherlands, who have already been providing their support to the building of peace in the country. "Total peace also implies constant collaboration with international criminal law institutions, such as the International Criminal Court, from a constructive and increasingly positive perspective of complementarity," the Ambassador noted.

The peace process in Colombia has included the creation of many innovative, ad hoc institutions such as the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and the Truth Commission. "One of my aims as Ambassador," Ms. Olarte BÁCares told Diplomat Magazine, "is to explain abroad the details of this long-term peace laboratory that we are going through in Colombia. This experience is very



innovative, and it could be extremely useful for other countries and in other contexts."

As a second priority for her mandate, the Ambassador stressed that "Colombia has a fundamental interest in strengthening bilateral relations with the Netherlands in favor of its energy transition and the promotion of renewable energies." Colombia sees itself as a 'world power for life,' and as such, it is "committed to a just energy transition that responds to the global crisis generated by climate change," she added. Areas of focus for Colombia are the development of solar and wind power capacity, as well as the implementation of green hydrogen projects and the strengthening of a circular economy. In these areas, there is a lot of room for cooperation with the Netherlands, the Ambassador told Diplomat Magazine. For instance, a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between Colombia and the Port of Rotterdam to enable the stocking of green hydrogen and its transport to Europe.

Delving into her third priority area—women, the Ambassador explained that Colombia is

currently in the process of drafting a feminist foreign policy based on three key premises: pacifism, intersectionality, and participation. "This policy addresses the root causes of gender inequality in the country and helps us bring them to international arenas with the aim of working together with others to overcome these causes," the Ambassador explained. "The collaborative work that we can promote from the Colombian Embassy in the Netherlands, both bilaterally and multilaterally, will be decisive in advancing this purpose."

During her conversation with Diplomat Magazine, Ambassador Olarte BÁCares also voiced her desire to further strengthen existing cooperation mechanisms for knowledge exchange—an area naturally dear to her, reflecting an academic background. The Ambassador praised the role of Dutch-funded programs in this domain, such as the Orange Knowledge Program, which helps people from rural and conflict-affected areas access quality education. She also noted the existence of networks of Colombian researchers and professors in the Netherlands and expressed her interest in supporting them to grow further.

THE NETHERLANDS AND LATVIA – CENTURIES OF STRONG RELATIONS BEING CONTINUED

By H.E. Ms. Claudia Pieterse, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Latvia

In the Baltic region, the Netherlands has taken on a committed and active role in security. The Dutch Navy is often exercising in the Baltic Sea. Our ships and sailors can frequently be seen in the port of Riga as the Netherlands is part of the Standing NATO Maritime group and the Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group. In addition, 350 Dutch soldiers are part of the NATO Enhanced Forward Presence in neighboring Lithuania. Last but certainly not least, fighter planes of the Dutch Airforce are regularly patrolling the airspace above the Baltic countries.

Many might not know this, but the connection between the Netherlands and Latvia has been strong for centuries. In both countries, you can find traces of this historic link. For instance, in the North of the Netherlands, you can visit the Veenkoloniaal museum where you can step back in time, into the city of Riga in the 17th century. You can view old trading contracts and admire Riga silver spoons and porcelain, once brought back as souvenirs. On my travels through Latvia on the other hand, I stumbled upon old Dutch silver coins in Latvian villages, wooden structures made by Dutch shipworkers in Latvian churches and Delftware in Latvian castles.

Dutch-Latvian trade history is now better known in the Netherlands, as it is featured in the popular TV-series (and book) “The Heir”. It tells the story of Dutch trader Joan Münnighoff and his family, who ran a flourishing wood and wooden furniture company in Riga before WWII. Yet, even centuries before Münnighoff started his business, Dutch-Latvian trade relations existed, as part of the Hanseatic trading routes. We can proudly speak of more than 800 years of bilateral trade relations.

Today, the Netherlands is still one of the most important investors in Latvia. Dutch companies are active in a variety of sectors. From transportation to real estate, from woodworking to manufacturing and retail.

A promising new business opportunity that we, at the Dutch Embassy in Latvia, are currently pursuing is Wind Energy. Both the Netherlands and Latvia have big climate ambitions and now there is an increasing

Since Russia’s war of aggression in Ukraine, the bond between Latvia and the Netherlands has grown even stronger. We stand together in condemning Russia’s illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine and are united in our unwavering support to Ukraine. We are joint in protecting the fundamental values of freedom and democracy, human rights, and rule of law. Working together on this as partners in the EU, NATO, UN, and other multilateral fora.



RIGA, LATVIA. 28.04.2022. King's day. Menzendorf's House. H.E. Ms. Claudia Pieterse, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the Republic of Latvia.

Latvian interest to explore Wind Energy possibilities, both onshore and offshore. Since the start of Russia’s war of aggression in Ukraine, Latvia has been focusing on strengthening its energy independence. For a country that used to be largely dependent on Russian gas, this energy transition represents a challenge. The Netherlands, with its extensive expertise and experience in Wind Energy, can be a great partner in the development of onshore and offshore wind parks in Latvia.

Latvia aims to increase its wind capacity from currently approximately 70 MW to 800 MW by 2030. In addition, the country plans to open the “ELWIND” tender, a 1 GW cross-border offshore project in collaboration with Estonia.

Last year, a delegation of Dutch Wind Energy companies visited Latvia, exploring opportunities and making key connections with local businesses. In return, a Latvian delegation visited the Netherlands to see Dutch examples of Wind Energy for themselves. This year, we will follow up with another trade mission to Latvia in April, further advancing our cooperation on Wind Energy.

In line with our mutual climate ambitions, we work on activities in Sustainable and Smart mobility. Of course, the Dutch are widely known for cycling, also in Latvia. To build on this, we connect Dutch companies to Latvian stakeholders. Last year, the embassy organized a study trip to the Netherlands for the Mayor of Riga and his mobility experts to learn more about Dutch best practices in cycling and mobility and to meet with Dutch companies active in this area. He gained real practical insights, even biking through Rotterdam himself and experiencing mobility solutions firsthand.

It is not strange that so many Dutch companies have found their way to Latvia. The familiarity with the Netherlands is striking in this part of Europe. The nearness of the sea with its wide sandy beaches and the long horizons with green farmland and forests. I can even ride my bike to work through the city of Riga, just like I would do through the city of The Hague. It is a true privilege for me to further build on the many centuries of rich relations between the Netherlands and Latvia.

VIVA O BRASIL!

In the Netherlands, the 201st Anniversary of the Independence of Brazil from Portugal was celebrated with a reception at the official residence by H.E. Ambassador Fernando Simas Magalhães.

Many diplomats were present, from almost every country and every international organization accredited to The Hague, accompanied by the most delicious Brazilian traditional foods and the refreshing Caipirinha, Brazil's national cocktail.

Ambassador Simas Magalhães, an experienced and internationally awarded career diplomat, with previous postings from Washington to Madrid to Quito, gave a warm and insightful speech to the large audience.

'Over the years, our bilateral relations have spanned a wide array of fields, from trade and investment to education and research. The exchange of knowledge and experiences has empowered us to tackle global challenges together, from sustainable development and climate change to health and technology'.

The Ambassador recognized the many political leaders, government officials, civil

servants, businessmen, scholars, artists, students and professionals from various fields have all contributed to the strong bilateral relations.

He noted that 'a clear example of the importance of the bilateral relations is the number of recently high-level authorities' meetings. Prime Minister Mark Rutte met with President Lula in Brasília, in May, and HM Queen Maxima visited Brazil, last June, in her capacity as Special Advocate of the UN Secretary General for Inclusive Finance for Development'.

The two countries collaborate on many levels, from artificial intelligence to sustainability, bioeconomy and agriculture.

He then added that, 'in 2022, international trade between Brazil and the Netherlands amounted to 14 billion dollars, while the Dutch investment in our country reached the amount of 126 billion dollars. There is great potential for growth, including in food, agriculture, energy and in the defense sector'.

Meanwhile, 'Brazil has been and will remain an active participant on the discussions held



at the legal multilateral organizations in The Hague. We are glad to see one of our most talented jurists, Leonardo Nemer Caldeira Brant, assume the daunting task of succeeding Professor Antonio Augusto Cançado Trindade at the International Court of Justice. And, at the HCCH, it was a Brazilian, Professor Marcelo de Nardi, who presided over the Council on General Affairs and Policy, during which the historic decision to recognize Spanish as an official language of the organization was taken'.

He also thanked the companies that made the event possible: BRASKEM, CUTRALE, EMBRAER and SEARA, and the cultural performance by pianist Elizabeth Fadel, in collaboration with the Brazilian Music School of Rotterdam.

CELEBRATING 213 YEARS OF CHILEAN INDEPENDENCE

On the 21st of September, in The Hague, the Ambassador of Chile, Mr. Jaime Moscoso Valenzuela, hosted a grand reception at Stadspaleis, marking the 213th anniversary of Chile's independence. The event was a remarkable gathering, attended by an impressive number of ambassadors, diplomats, Dutch civil servants, members of the business community, heads of international organizations, Chileans and friends of Chile.

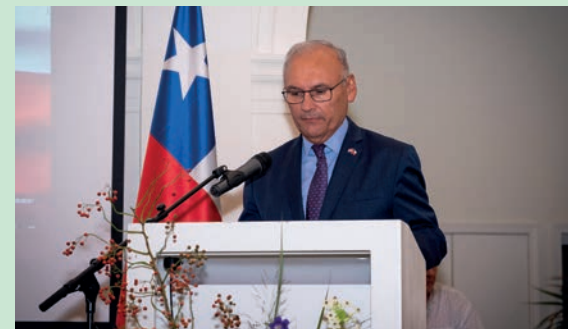
The evening commenced with the solemn playing of the national anthems of both Chile and the Netherlands by singer Macarena Pizarro and Rodrigo Cortez on the guitar. Ambassador Moscoso Valenzuela then delivered an insightful speech that highlighted the robust bilateral relations between Chile and the Netherlands, as well as their shared objectives and values.

The Ambassador emphasized that Chile and the Netherlands are like-minded countries, united by common principles such as democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. They also share commitments to sustainable development, climate change, and the

promotion of a feminist foreign policy, among other important global issues. These shared values have been essential in addressing the current global challenges and threats faced by both nations.

One of the key areas of bilateral cooperation between Chile and the Netherlands is climate change. The countries are actively working together to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote the sustainable management of water resources, and accelerate the transition to clean energy, particularly through the production of green hydrogen. To advance this agenda, a Bilateral Strategic Cooperation Agenda has been established to create a Green Hydrogen corridor from Chile to the port of Rotterdam, serving as the primary gateway to Europe.

In line with this initiative, Dutch investors and public authorities have made multiple visits to Chile to explore opportunities for collaboration in the field of green hydrogen. High-level meetings have been a consistent feature of this growing relationship, including meetings between President Gabriel Boric and



Prime Minister Mark Rutte at the CELAC-EU Summit in July 2023, as well as visits by Chilean Ministers of Energy and Transport to the Netherlands to engage with Dutch authorities and stakeholders.

Moreover, Chile has played an active role in various multilateral forums based in The Hague.

The success of such diplomatic endeavors would not have been possible without the dedicated work of the Embassy of Chile, the Consulate General, and the ProChile Trade Office. Ambassador Moscoso Valenzuela also expressed gratitude to Chilean premium

THE HAGUE ACADEMY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW CELEBRATED ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

By Roy Lie Atjam

The Hague Academy of International Law, housed in the Peace Palace, celebrated its 100th anniversary. Various international guests, including jurists, diplomats, politicians and prominent lawyers, attend a celebratory session on May 24th 2023.

The Hague Academy is a centre for education and research in the field of international public- and private law. The Academy is renowned for its summer and winter courses and has trained hundreds of future lawyers and diplomats, from around the globe. The first courses of the Hague Academy of International Law were in 1923.

It all began with Tobias Asser, the first Dutch national awarded the Nobel Peace Laureate in 1911. He contributed to the founding of The Hague Academy of International Law by donating part of his prize money.

Speakers at the solemn sitting on the occasion of the centenary of the Academy were: Prof. Jean-Marc Thouvenin, Secretary-General of the Academy, opened the solemn sitting to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of The Hague Academy of International Law. He stated, "The founders of our institution understood that international civil society, whose foundation is international law, needed an institution like the Academy to better study, understand, disseminate and critique international law so that it could be improved and updated. The Academy has fulfilled this role very well and has occupied a unique position as a result." Prof. Geneviève Bastid-Burdeau, former Secretary-General of the Academy, H.E. Mr. Paul van den IJssel, Ambassador for International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Netherlands, Mr

Jan van Zanen, Mayor of The Hague. In his remarks, he mentioned Tobias Asser strongly advocated for the Academy to be located in The Hague. The dissemination of knowledge and the training of new generations of jurists were matters dear to him.

Following a brief musical interlude the following speakers addressed the festive gathering.

Mr Piet Hein Donner, President of the Board of the Academy. H.E. Judge Peter Tomka, Judge at the International Court of Justice. H.E. Judge Hilary Charlesworth, Judge at the International Court of Justice. Mr. Peter Trooboff, Attorney at Law, Member of the Curatorium of the Academy from 1991 to 2019 Mr. Apollin Koagne Zouapet and Ms. Suzanne Zhou, Alumni of the Academy.

Professor Yves Daudet, president of the curatorial of the Hague Academy, at the end of the conference, looked hopeful towards the future: "The Academy's courses will continue to offer students a range of issues and reflections that complement the knowledge acquired at university. By opening themselves to innovative, sometimes ignored and elementary aspects, students will be able to organize their thoughts on a subject whose importance they have realized and learned to love, which is essential to practising the profession well."

On the occasion of the Centenary of The Hague Academy of International Law, the government of the Republic of Guatemala conferred the Orden del Mérito por Servicios Distinguidos, en grado de Gran Cruz, on The Hague Academy of International Law.



H.E. Mr. Mario Adolfo Búcaro Flores, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, presented the paraphernalia appertaining to the distinction to Professor Yves Daudet, president of the curatorial of the Hague Academy.

Upon departing, guests received a copy of the reference book 100th Anniversary.

A Reception generously supported by the Embassy of the Republic of Guatemala concluded the celebration of the Centenary of the Hague Academy of International Law.

THE GREAT WIENER BALL

"We had a great Wiener Ball's 54th edition this year at the Grand Huis ter Duin hotel, in Noordwijk", declared the President of the Wiener Ball 's commission. The traditional ball hosted 350 guests and everyone enjoyed the evening. Among them is Mr Peter Potman, Dutch ambassador in Vienna.

The president, Antoinette Nikkels van der Veen-Hermans and the organizational committee announced that the 55th edition will take place at Grand Huis ter Duin on the 3rd of February 2024. Diplomat Magazine will support once again the traditional event in 2024 and will invite diplomats and heads of missions to enjoy the experience.



EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH FASHION

BY ALEXANDRA PAUCESCU

I have never met Jessica in real life. We became online friends during the pandemic and we followed each other's path on social media. She is a beautiful young woman full of energy, she inspires optimism through every breath and her smile is surely contagious.

Jessica Cohaila, a gorgeous Peruvian brunette, was born in Tacna, a city known for its important role during the War of The Pacific (1879-1884), and studied law at The Pontifical Catholic University of Peru. It is there where she met her future husband and from where their whole 'diplomatic adventure' began.

'Our first posting started in 2015. We lived in Israel for 5 years and after moved to Bern, Switzerland. Israel will always hold a very special place in my heart because I've learned so much about life and marriage there. And the cultural experience was just incredible'. Indeed, we all hold a special place in our hearts for our first postings, don't we?...

But for her, leaving her independent life behind was hard. 'I was used to have a job, but not just a job: I was independent in every aspect of it, since I was an associate at a law firm and had a lot of freedom. Going to a new place where not only the law system was different but also the language was one of the hardest things that I had to go through. But it is also one of the greatest ones because it gave me the opportunity to follow a dream I always had. I love fashion and always did, so I got the opportunity to start a second career, as a fashion designer. I also discovered the Fashion Law, which is much more common in Europe but not in Peru. As soon as I came back home after Israel, I took the only available course in fashion law, while I was already enrolled in fashion school. I finally got the chance to embrace the idea of reinvention in every aspect of it'.

I can see she is passionate about the subject and, while I closely followed her on-line presence for the last couple of years, I could see her evolution, her determination to succeed.

'Fashion industry can be a very controversial topic sometimes. I think most people do not understand the process behind the scenes, the hard work and the difference you can make with it. I see fashion as art and as a way to express ourselves. The message you can send not only through clothes but through magazines, fashion shows or exhibitions can really make a difference. I could go on like this for hours, talking about amazing people to whom we owe a lot of the stylistic freedom we have today. History and fashion sometimes go hand by hand.'

Today, clothes can make powerful statements and are often used as soft diplomacy tools. She must be an expert in it. She also creates original patterns and designs and she hopes that one day she will become a fashion editor and maybe even have her own fashion magazine.

That's how she is, always solar and willing to help others.





FROM THE TUSCAN HILLS TO THE WORLD

BY ALEXANDRA PAUCESCU

Italy has always been one of my favorite family holiday destinations. All our Italian trips were filled with sunny weather, gorgeous sceneries, warm and friendly people and, of course, delicious food.....

Although I never met her in person, Francesca Andreini captivated me from the very beginning. A cultivated woman, born in Florence and with various artistic interests, she has managed to define her role into the diplomatic world and find her own path, while accompanying her diplomatic husband.

From native Florence and the beautiful, beloved hills surrounding it, to Rome and later on to Syria, Senegal, USA and Thailand, there has been a beautiful life journey sprinkled with family events, parables and experiences that completed the marvelous and accomplished woman (also a mother of three) that she is today.

'My first jobs were in television production and advertising. At that time, my husband joined

the Italian diplomatic service. I was fiercely against it at the beginning, the idea of losing my world, my identity, terrified me, but eventually he managed to persuade me. It was not easy for me to adapt to diplomatic life, to find my own sense of purpose. It was a gradual process.'

Francesca tells me: 'I had a desire to build something that was truly mine, that could not be taken away from me at each moving. That's how I began writing, about 15 years ago. At first, there were stories for a literary review, Zibaldoni, and then my two novels: Nessuno ti può costringere (QuiEdit, 2009) and Primi anni a WDC (Edizioni del Gattaccio, 2015). The latter has also been translated and released in the USA, under the title Under American Skies (New Academia Publishing, 2021). In Rome, I also wrote some screenplays, venturing into a whole new and exciting field. My script, Senza me, received recognition of cultural interest in 2010 by the Ministry of Culture and a grant for its production. In Washington DC I joined a business networking association and co-created ParoLab, a club that promoted Italian literature in the U.S., through a reading group, literary events and book presentations.'

'When I moved back to Rome, my passion for literature translated into creating more cultural events, some literary readings and workshops on creative writing. The latter inspired my video tutorials on "How to overcome writer's block" (available on YouTube in Italian under the title "Come superare il blocco dello Scrittore", with English subtitles). In Thailand, I made my past experience available to the Embassy, providing benevolent help on several projects, such as editing an anthology of Italian-Thai short stories and then publishing short videos inspired by them, also producing a documentary about the Italian architectural heritage in Bangkok. In the meantime I've been teaching Italian culture and literary history at Chulalongkorn University as a guest lecturer, I've continued to contribute to Zibaldoni and have occasionally held some conferences both in Italy and Thailand.'

I can see that her years abroad have been extremely dynamic and fulfilling. But that's because she made them this way and turned the downsides of diplomatic life into her advantages. Francesca says: 'I always managed to find my own space, to give life to my own projects. It was indeed very time and energy-consuming having to start all over again at each new posting but, on the other hand, every country I have lived in has taught me something important, offering me precious opportunities of inner growth.'

... in her own words... 'my strength is having a soft spot for everything'.

TUNISIAN GASTRONOMIC DAYS 2023 GASTRONOMIC DIPLOMACY

By Roy Lie Atjam

The Tunisian Embassy in The Hague have jointly organized a gastronomical event in partnership with the Tunisian National Tourist Office (ONTT) and Diplomat Magazine. It is the 2023 edition of the “Tunisian Gastronomic Days”.

This annual event promotes Tunisia as a tourist and cultural destination and introduces Tunisian music and gastronomy taking guests on a journey to savour the rich culinary art of Tunisia.

The Event was on 12 and 13 May 2023 at Leonardo Royal Hotel Amsterdam. May 12th was by invitation only.

Speaking at the occasion H.E. Slim Ghariani Ambassador of Tunisia expressed his delight in organizing “The Tunisian Gastronomic Days” for the second consecutive year in Amsterdam.

Ambassador Slim Ghariani went on to express thanks to the three famous Chefs who prepared the Tunisian dishes for this event and La Troupe féminin TARAB, under the acumen direction of Lamia Ktata.

The gastronomic spectacle was attended by Dutch officials, Heads of Diplomatic Missions: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, France (Cons), Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Morocco, Oman, OPCW (Rep), Panama, Rwanda, UAE. business community, Tour Operators, bloggers, media and other invitees. Also

present was Dutch TV. personality Ms Kysia Hekster

The internationally acclaimed Tunisian Chefs Wafik Belaid, Haykel Ben Zayda, and Mohamed Ali Ben Abouda introduced a specially conceived four-course gourmet menu paired with a selection of Tunisian wines.

These three Chefs are members of the Tunisian Association of Culinary Arts Professionals. They have participated in several international culinary competitions. They also run famous cooking TV shows in Tunisia.

The musical animation was by the orchestra “TARAB”. They performed classic pieces from the Tunisian heritage. The group is well known for its traditional and contemporary music and performed several times in Europe.

A Tombola with prizes including the grand prize of a roundtrip Brussels-Tunis, paintings and Tunisian ornaments.

Indeed, a fabulous Tunisia promotional evening, showcasing the real Tunisia.



H.E. Mr. Slim Ghariani, Ambassador of Tunisia together with H.E. Ms. Elizabeth Ward Neiman, Ambassador of Panama winner of a Tunisian original painting.



LATVIA NATIONAL DAY

Latvia is renowned for its Old City of Riga, beautiful natural surroundings, and rich cultural heritage. It is also a shining example of democratic government in the Post-Soviet era. Every November 18, Latvians celebrate their history and traditions during a patriotic period. This year, on November 16, 2022, the Latvian Ambassador, Her Excellency Ms. Aiga Liepina, hosted a reception at the Leonardo Royal Hotel in The Hague to celebrate this special occasion with diplomats.

During her address to the distinguished guests, Ms. Liepina emphasized the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine and Latvia's shared Post-Soviet legacy and struggle for self-determination. She acknowledged the pain and suffering of the Ukrainian people and declared that this year's National Day celebrations would be different for Latvia.

She also expressed her gratitude to the International Hague community for their support and invited them to raise a glass to the independence of Latvia and freedom for all nations.

Ms. Liepina also highlighted the importance of peace and justice and Latvia's commitment to effective multilateralism. She praised the successful cooperation between Latvia and the Netherlands and their shared determination to create a better future.

The reception was a great success, and Latvia's message of hope and solidarity resonated with all in attendance. The celebration of Latvia's treasured values was a joyous occasion, and we congratulate Latvia on this special day and look forward to many more celebrations of their rich history and traditions.

NATIONALDAYS





Ambassador of Bangladesh H.E. Mr. Riaz Hamidullah and his spouse Sazia Ahmed. Photography by Buonmassa W.G. G.N.S. Holland Division

EXCLUSIVE SAREE PAGEANT: BANGLADESH HOUSE ENTERTAINS AMBASSADORS' SPOUSE ASSOCIATION

By Roy Lie Atjam

Mrs. Sazia Ahmed, the wife of the Ambassador of Bangladesh, opened the doors of Bangladesh House to host a festive gathering for her fellow members of the Ambassadors' Spouse Association (ASA). The entrance hall of the residence was draped in different styles of sarees. The highlight of the event was a saree pageant as well as a presentation of elements of the rich Bangladeshi culture to the ASA members and by extension to the Diplomatic Community in the Netherlands.

The gathering also featured an exhibition of different sarees which were taken from Sazia

Ahmed's collection, so that guests had the opportunity to touch the sarees on display.

Models proudly showed off different styles of sarees, including an example of a bridal saree as well as New Year's outfits.

Mrs. Sazia, herself a saree wearer, eloquently explained the weaving process, the different fabric textures, combinations, the different ways of wearing a saree, the different occasions where they can be worn, as well as details of traditional Jamdani, Maslin, Tangail Tant, Mirpur Katan, Mirpur Benarashi, Rajshahi

Silk, and Katha Stitch.

Mrs. Sazia mentioned that UNESCO recognized Bangladeshi Jamdani weaving as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity.

Guests enjoyed the convivial atmosphere and Bengali hospitality, as well as the delicious cuisine which was served on the lawns of Bangladesh House.

All in all, it had been an informative, well-attended event and no doubt pleasurable Bangladeshi day that was enjoyed by everyone.

DIPLOMATOURISM&CULTURE

BURUNDIAN COFFEE ENTERS THE DUTCH MARKET WITH A BANG! By Roy Lie Atjam

The Hague, September 21st, 2023. Today, Pure Africa Coffee met with the Burundian Ambassador, H.E. Gamaliel Nkurunziza, to introduce its new Fiery Warrior Coffee and discuss their collaboration with Burundi.

Our Fiery Warrior Coffee is a unique blend of coffee beans sourced directly from farmers in northern Burundi. Our goal is to ensure that the farmers receive a fair price for their product, and we are proud to announce that

Pure Africa has increased the premium paid to these growers from \$1 per kg to \$3.62 per kg.

Burundian coffee makes up 65% of the new IDEALIST blend from Pure Africa Coffee, which will be consumed by Dutch Government Ministries and considered the best coffee in the Netherlands.

Kudos to Burundian coffee !



FIRST '1994 GENOCIDE AGAINST THE TUTSI IN RWANDA' MEMORIAL UNVEILED IN THE NETHERLANDS

The first '1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda' memorial site was unveiled in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Located in the northern part of the Beatrix Park in Amsterdam, the memorial site is a place for survivors and the larger Rwandan community to remember their loved ones and to pay tribute to more than one million victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. It will also be a place that will give an opportunity to the Dutch population, especially young generations, to reflect on the genocide and learn lessons from this tragedy, which will help prevent future genocides.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands remained the only major country in Western Europe without any memorial for the victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. This is why the Embassy of Rwanda and Ibuka-Netherlands believed that a city like Amsterdam, with its history and as a city that received a number of genocide survivors from Rwanda, is an important location for a memorial site.

The official inauguration of the memorial was carried out by H.E. Olivier J.P. Nduhungirehe, Ambassador of the Republic of Rwanda to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and Mrs. Christine Safari, Chairperson of IBUKA-Netherlands.

The installment of this Memorial site is the fruit of close collaboration with the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs and the Municipality of Amsterdam, and constitutes one of the most important tools to help preserve the memory of the victims and educate present and future generations about the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

About the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda:

April 7th is the International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, which was established by the United Nations General Assembly on April 20th, 2020. The date marks the beginning of the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi, which lasted a 100 days, and during which a million children, women and men were systematically killed.



H.E. Mr. Olivier J.P. Nduhungirehe, Ambassador of the Republic of Rwanda to the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



President Judge Gatti Santan, Mrs. Christine Safari, Chairperson of IBUKA-Netherlands and Mr. Marcel de Vries.

NEO FUTURISM IN PULCHRI By John Dunkelgrün

On a dark, cold, and wet December day, a large group of people had accepted the invitation of the Embassy of Italy and the Italian Cultural Institute in Amsterdam to the opening of a retrospective exhibition of works by the Italian artist Daniel Schinasi. Entering the beautiful large exposition hall of the Pulchri Foundation, the Mesdag Zaal, one felt that winter was gone and it was summer on the Mediterranean.

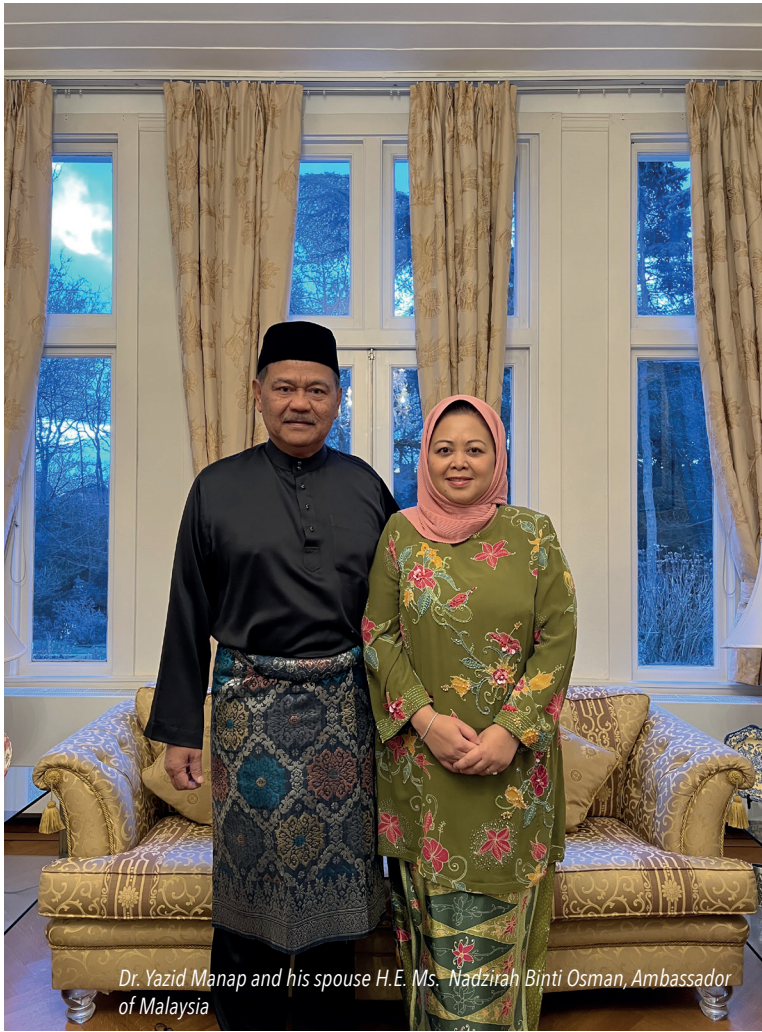
Schinasi (Alexandria, Egypt, 1933 - Nice, France, 2021) lived a significant part of his life in Nice, and it shows. His colors are bright, and most of his works show people happily doing what they are good at. The title of the exposition, "Un messaggio in movimento - A message in motion," reflects Schinasi's main focus, people in motion. Be they cyclists,

swimmers, or dancers; the still paintings miraculously capture the power of movement. Schinasi is one of the prominent painters of the Neo-Futurist school, a school of painting that shows the dominance of Man over Machine, Man over the powers of nature, and Man over himself. Visiting this show may put some much-needed sunshine into your world during the coming dark days.

It is an extensive exposition, 45 works in all, among which a massive homage to the Côte d'Azur (pictured). The exposition, which was curated by his daughter Sarah, is a rendering of his life in France, his admiration for Matisse and Chagall, and the influence of the Holocaust on the very soul of this Italian Jewish artist. His daughter Sarah is an internationally renowned (opera) stage director.

Paola Cordone, director of the Italian Cultural Institute, thanked Marieta Reijerkerk and Ed van der Kooy of Pulchri for their assistance in making this exposition possible. She then asked Ambassador Giorgio Novello, to speak the opening words.

James Bradburne, museologist and director of the Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan, had flown in, especially for the occasion, to deliver the keynote speech and was followed by Mr. Ermanno Tedeschi, President of the Museo Ceramica in Mondovì and long-time friend of the artist. Sarah Schinasi and her mother Manuela were present, as was H.E. Konstantin Dimitrov, the ambassador of Bulgaria, and his wife, Nadia Dimitrova.



Dr. Yazid Manap and his spouse H.E. Ms. Nadzirah Binti Osman, Ambassador of Malaysia

THE DIPLOMATIC GROWER

BY ALEXANDRA PAUCESCU

Over the last three years, as I did my monthly interviews with so many diplomatic spouses from all over the world, I discovered great stories of life, interesting and accomplished people, who not only proved my theory that a brilliant career can nicely go hand in hand with the 'diplomatic spouse' job, but, most of the time, they even exceeded my expectations.

Dr. Yazid Manap is the perfect example of that.

He is a Mechanical Engineer and a Food Technologist by qualification and a Researcher/Academician by profession. He graduated from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, USA and the University of Glasgow, Scotland, UK. He was for many years a professor at the University Putra Malaysia (UPM), the Dean of the Faculty of Food Science and Biotechnology (UPM) and Director of the Halal Research Institute. He recently retired (in 2021) but he is still very active and involved. 'I am in the process of completing an academic book in my field,' he says.

Life took him to different corners of the earth, from Malaysia to the USA, UK, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Austria, where he is currently residing with his wife, the Malaysian ambassador.

He tells me: 'I enjoyed life in all the places where we lived. Being in the diplomatic world is an enjoyable and fruitful experience. Plus that I now have plenty of time to read and write.'

He also speaks about his other passion '... I love gardening. Sometime in the future, I'd love to be a farmer, being closer to the land, closer to the environment, specifically. I'd like to be a

grower,' as they call it in the Netherlands.

But the way that I see it, he is already a 'grower'... he grew a beautiful family with 6 children and 3 grandchildren, a family that he is most proud of.

He fully appreciates the life he is living, takes his time to discover the new country of residence. He likes to meet new people and to make new friends. 'I love being in different places and cultures,' he says. 'We have a great opportunity to be very close to the culture and people of the country where we are posted.' He likes to try new foods and to play golf, whenever he has the time.

He admits that diplomatic life can sometimes be lonely and he also confesses that 'the most difficult part is at the beginning of each diplomatic posting.' It always takes time, patience and perseverance and, as Dr Manap says, 'it doesn't help being an introvert.' You have to learn to reach out to people, to be open and friendly.

He would advise younger spouses, at the beginning of this 'diplomatic road' to be supportive, to take care and pursue their own

professional life and career, but 'always make the time to be with the spouse.' I have often said that the full and constant family support is critical to any successful diplomatic career. At the end of the day, family is the most important. And what makes the difference in life is also a great attitude towards it...

As his life motto says, 'always be happy and thankful!'



Dr. Yazid Manap, Malaysia Spouse

BOLIVIA CELEBRATES

To celebrate Independence Day, the ambassador of Bolivia to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, **H.E. Roberto Calzadilla Sarmiento**, welcomed other ambassadors and fellow diplomats, representatives of international organizations, Dutch state officials and native Bolivians to a reception.

Fine Bolivian wines and traditional sweet and savory foods were served, while the day was brightened by the colorful traditional dancing group, Alma Latina and a classical music ensemble called La Plata. Guests could also admire a special photography exhibition by Francisco Claire Ajayu and paintings of Elizabeth Lizaso.

In his welcome speech, the ambassador said to his guests: “The Bolivian State is promoting the principles and values of culture of peace and diplomacy of living well.”

He emphasized that Bolivia is actively promoting human, economic, social, cultural, ethnic, and environmental rights, with repudiation of all forms of racism and discrimination, harmony with nature, protection of biodiversity and promotion of food security and sovereignty.

“Bolivia, as a pacifist and peace supporting country, considers that the only alternative to guarantee a just and lasting peace in various conflicts must be carried along by the use of dialogue and negotiation. Bolivia rejects every war of aggression as a means of resolving differences and conflicts between states.”

The ambassador appreciated the new approach and enhanced attention in the relations between Europe and Latin America, mentioning the recent EU CELAC summit of Heads of State in Brussels (the first in the last 8 years).

“Today we are experiencing profound changes at the global level, with great risks and challenges, but also with opportunities. We firmly believe that we can and must build better relationships: fairer, more balanced and cooperative, to improve the lives of our people. Bolivia recognizes the important cooperation work developed by the Netherlands in Bolivia during the last decades and this also constitutes an important basis to continue towards a positive and fruitful relationship that has been undertaken in many sectors.



When talking about Bolivia’s economic achievements, Mr. Calzadilla Sarmiento proudly mentioned Bolivia’s exports of natural gas, silver, zinc, lead, tin, gold, quinoa, soybeans, lithium carbonate and potassium chloride, which reached almost 14 billion USD, attaining record levels.

The evening was a nice and merry celebration of international friendship. Felicidades, and napay, Bolivia!

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATION 2023 “DIA DE LA INDEPENDENCIA”

By Roy Lie Atjam



For Dominicans in the Netherlands, the 23 of February, 2023, was a festive evening, with many colors, joyous faces, and a vibrancy in the air, as they celebrated their country’s 179th anniversary of independence.

The host of the soiree H.E. Mr Juan Bautista Duran, Ambassador of the Dominican Republic in the Netherlands welcomed his guests, among them fellow ambassadors from Argentina, Aruba, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Curacao, El Salvador, Ecuador, Israel, Nicaragua, Panama, St. Martin, Venezuela, Vietnam, and Yemen—further representatives

of International organisations, friends of the Dominican Republic and diaspora members.

After the national anthems, H.E. Mr. Juan Bautista Duran delivered a profound address:

“Relations between the Dominican Republic and the Kingdom of the Netherlands date back more than 500 years, shortly after the arrival of Europeans to the island and long before the consolidation of the territory and the nation as an independent state.”

“In 2001 the Netherlands established its Embassy in Santo Domingo and in 2005 the Dominican Republic established its diplomatic representation in The Hague.”

“Another factor that unites us with the Kingdom of the Netherlands is the relationship that we also have for more than 5 centuries with the Dutch Caribbean. In addition to the extensive trade relations that have been sustained over the years, there is a significant diaspora both in the islands and on the mainland. The bilateral relations between our countries manifest historical ties of solidarity

and friendship, which aim to promote and deepen cooperation, based on the principles of equality, respect and reciprocity around sovereignty, and mutual benefit.”

After the Ambassador’s speech, the second part of the program was a presentation by Mr Rafael Espinal on the history of Dominican music. There were also cultural performances by Ritmo Dominicano, on the Carnival Dominicano, with colorful costumes depicting traditional Dominican religious and secular carnival characters, such as Diablo Cojuelo, as well as dances and songs.

During the artist performances Ambassador Bautista Duran illuminated the evening performing “My Way”.

A Dominican buffet was prepared by Restaurant Casa del Mofongo. Generous samplings of excellent Dominican cigars and Rum, such as Barceló, helped make for a real party enjoyed by all.

Felicidades a la República Dominicana !

MEET SONIA MEIJER, THE HONORARY CONSUL OF EL SALVADOR TO THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS, WHO RECENTLY GRANTED US AN INTERVIEW SHEDDING LIGHT ON HER ROLE AND ENDEAVORS IN PROMOTING HER NATIVE COUNTRY.



Honorary Consul Sonia Meijer and Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele

She emphasizes maintaining a constant connection with companies in both countries through quarterly newsletters in English and Spanish, sharing news and information.

"Beyond the Board, I have a handful of honorary members — experts contributing to the development of the Chamber, providing regulations for entry, and offering advice to Salvadoran companies if needed."

Sonia is notably active, organizing numerous events for the diaspora and the Salvadoran community in the Netherlands. She recently completed a Coffee Cupping event and is currently preparing for a Coffee Tasting featuring organic coffee from Buena Vista Coffee Forest Farm, with a Rum Tasting in the pipeline.

As the President of the Organization of Salvadorans in the Netherlands, Sonia has orchestrated charity events to raise funds for children and support the elderly in leading dignified lives during their old age. She also collected funds to aid flood victims in Nejava.

"In these initiatives, I must mention our career diplomat, Ambassador H.E. Agustín Vásquez Gómez of the Republic of El Salvador to the Netherlands, who offered his full support, participation, and contribution."

"As Honorary Consuls, we serve as support figures to an Embassy and country, committed to transmitting and enhancing knowledge and actions carried out by the government. Being a native Honorary Consul offers advantages, as I understand the habits, ways of interacting, and culture."

Sonia recently participated in a congress in El Salvador, attended by 48 Honorary Consuls accredited from various countries across five continents, at the invitation of Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele.

Reflecting on the experience, she warmly expressed, "What a special moment, what a special President. He brought safety to the country and is dedicated to his people. It was wonderful to have the unique opportunity to meet him and other Honorary Consuls from

"As an honorary consul, I have personally dedicated myself to promoting trade opportunities and attracting investments across various sectors. In my pursuit of import-export opportunities, I founded the Binational Chamber of Commerce El Salvador – Holland, facilitating Salvadoran entrepreneurs of all sizes in exporting their products to the Netherlands. The successful launch of the Salvadoran Chamber, attended by 70 Dutch companies, was made possible after eight months of continuous, rigorous economic research."

all over the world. El Salvador is ready for investors and more tourism."

Returning to the Netherlands, Sonia has ambitious plans. With the Netherlands being home to many Salvadorans, she stresses the importance of fostering friendship and cooperation between El Salvador and the Netherlands.

"El Salvador has great potential for dynamic and resilient economic growth, with low labor costs making it attractive to European manufacturers. With two modern harbors, we could initiate a flow of trade from Central America to Europe and vice versa."

Highlighting the growing economy of El Salvador, Sonia affirms, "President Nayib Bukele is committed to lifting the economy, and he is a man who keeps his promises." The future looks promising for the relations between the two countries.



Ambassador Fernando Arias, the Director-General of the OPCW

DIPLOMATIC EVENTS

THE AMAZING MILESTONES THE OPCW HAS ACHIEVED SINCE THE CSP-27

The Twenty-Eighth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CSP-28) has started in The Hague on 27 November 2023. During the opening of the Conference, Ambassador Fernando Arias, the Director-General of the OPCW emphasized the importance of the conference in light of the current developments in peace and security, which increase the risk of chemical weapons utilization. As the highest decision-making body of the Organization, the Conference is to take decisive actions to maintain the norm against chemical weapons.

Take a look at the amazing milestones that the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has achieved since the 27th session of the Conference of the States Parties (CSP-27). Here is one of the key events that have taken place over the past year.

The OPCW has achieved several milestones related to the implementation of the Convention. The end of destruction of all declared chemical weapons stockpiles. On 7 July 2023, the OPCW verified that all chemical weapons stockpiles declared by the 193 States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention since 1997, totalling 72,304 metric tonnes of chemical agents, have been irreversibly destroyed under the OPCW's strict verification regime.

This was an important milestone for the Organisation and a critical step towards achieving its mission to free the world of chemical weapons. It represented a historic success of multilateralism in the field of disarmament, and the work of a generation of diplomats and experts over the past 26 years. Kudos to the OPCW team!

The accomplishment recently achieved by the Organisation marks a significant milestone and a crucial step in their mission to eliminate chemical weapons globally. It is a monumental achievement in disarmament, made possible by the hard work of dedicated diplomats and experts over the past 26 years. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the OPCW team on this impressive feat.

As the implementing body for the Chemical Weapons Convention, the OPCW, with its 193 Member States, oversees the global endeavour to permanently eliminate chemical weapons. Since the Convention's entry into force in 1997, it is the most successful disarmament treaty eliminating an entire class of weapons of mass destruction.

For its extensive efforts in eliminating chemical weapons, the OPCW received the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize.



Suljuk Mustansar Tarar Ambassador of Pakistan, Chairperson (CSP-28)

FIRST EAST INDONESIAN DIASPORA COMMUNITY'S FESTIVAL IN THE NETHERLANDS

NATIONAL DAYS

The First Eastern Indonesia Festival in the Netherlands, organized by the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague, unfolded on Saturday, December 2nd, 2023, at De Broodfabriek in Rijswijk. Building on the success of the Indonesia Festival in December 2022, which drew over 10,000 visitors, this year's event was uniquely dedicated to the Eastern Indonesian diaspora communities, including Papua Maluku, Manado, Nusa Tenggara, and Papua

Recognizing the significant Eastern Indonesian diaspora presence in the Netherlands, the festival aimed to address the lack of optimal exposure for these communities in various aspects, including social, cultural, economic, culinary, and creative industries.

Ambassador Mayerfas emphasized the festival's role as a forum for the diaspora to connect, share traditions, and showcase their potential in traditional arts, culinary delights, and socio-cultural values.

The festival opened with a ceremonial tifa beat, performed by the Ambassador and representatives of the Eastern Indonesia diaspora. Deputy Mayor Armand van de Laar acknowledged the diaspora's active role in promoting their culture in the Netherlands.

Running from 10:00 to 22:00, the 2023 Eastern Indonesia Festival featured diverse art performances, food and beverage bazaars, and showcases of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) products. Over 100 performers, all from the Eastern Indonesian diaspora in the Netherlands, graced the stages, presenting traditional dances, music, and clothing displays.

Despite challenging weather conditions, the festival attracted thousands of enthusiastic visitors. The 'Mari Makang' area offered a taste of rare and unique Eastern Indonesian dishes, including Papeda, Pindang Ikan Kuning, Sago Sep with Papaya leaf dish, sweet potato Olso

Ikan Rica or chicken RW, and red bean ice. Additionally, the 'Pasar Balanja' area featured 14 stands with various MSME products, from snacks and spices to traditional clothes and handicrafts, providing exposure for community associations and organizations.

The festival also served as an exposition platform for community associations, including the Indonesia Diaspora Network Netherlands (IDN-NL), Stichting Pelita, BNI, and media partner IndoMe Podcast, contributing to the positive image and strength of the Indonesian diaspora in the Netherlands.



MEDIATION

By Daan Breukhoven, owner of Breukhoven Mediation Certified international mediator.



If we look back 2500 years, we can see that the Romans were the inventors of alternative conflict resolution. In fact, basic mediation principles were used in ancient Asia, China, Africa and The Roman Empire, way before the emergence of legal norms and the establishment of state organizations.

Based on my own experience, conflicts, whether in or between organizations, can be normalized or even solved through meditation. The key is to reinstate communication to understand each other's common interests, rather than clinging to opinions and personal viewpoints. But how is mediation possible between international organizations and embassies, or between states and/or even heads of states?

UN Charter

Issues between States can lean on Article 33 of the UN Charter: "The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice".

That one word, mediation, is listed as one of the peaceful alternatives to maintain international peace and security. How it works in practice is worth exploring. There are several situations to use international mediation to resolve disputes between States and private companies;

companies need to be "Dispute Wise". First, mediation can be used to resolve disputes arising in the context of international trade or payment issues. Secondly, it could be used for Intellectual Property disputes. Thirdly, mediation may provide a solution to divergent interpretations of contracts.

Dispute Wise

Using mediation to resolve the above disputes can lead to a mutually acceptable result, while avoiding the need for costly and time-consuming litigation; it can also offer a durable, long-term sting solution. Research conducted by the AAA (American Arbitration Association) shows that "Dispute Wise" organizations have better relationships with clients and improved business relations. It also adds to a higher employee satisfaction rate; handling conflicts is viewed as more than a cost-reduction factor. From a business point of view, it offers advantages throughout the entire organization.

If the parties to the conflict are willing to hear each other's story and possibly make concessions, it is useful to try mediation. For example, if the conflict involves a payment issue, there may be numerous reasons why someone refuses to pay. A poorly written letter can lead to a misunderstanding. When people dig in, the behaviour of ostracising and shame can be remedied effectively with mediation. Mediation offers an opportunity to stay closer to an organisation's values. It allows the parties to find solutions in line with those values, in a language that everyone speaks. Conversations are more reserved in a court setting with solutions mandated by the Civil Code and Legal Procedure.

Embed it

As a business advisor on Conflict Management, I simply would knock on the door of the corporate legal officer and ask about the company's willingness to engage in ADR. One can successfully include this mediation step in the company's conflict resolution position within its mission statement or in its Terms and Conditions. Remember, not all issues are suitable for mediation. When someone deliberately does something wrong, mediation is not the first choice for resolution.

Question or inquiries to: info@breukhovenmediation.nl

A TRIPLE CEREMONY OF MERIT FOR PARTING AMBASSADORS

By Roy Lee Atjam

The Triple Ceremony of Merit for Parting Ambassadors, hosted by Diplomat Magazine, stands as a distinguished event that pays homage to the exceptional work of departing Ambassadors. Their remarkable contributions in strengthening bilateral relations between the Netherlands and their respective countries, as well as their endeavors in advancing the objectives of multilateral institutions, were celebrated on the evening of July 13, 2023, as The Hague bid farewell to the ambassadors representing the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Republic of Tunisia.

Diplomat Magazine orchestrated a valedictory ceremony at the Leonardo Royal Hotel in The Hague, symbolizing a proper inter-continental gathering uniting Asia (ASEAN) and Africa. The spotlight illuminated three distinguished ambassadors: Mr. Pham Viet Anh of Viet Nam, Mr. Chatri Archjananun of Thailand, and Mr. Slim Ghariani of Tunisia.

The ceremony commenced with the playing of the national anthems of the Netherlands and the respective countries, as each ambassador took their position next to their flag. Mr. Marcin Czepelak, Secretary-General of PCA, and H.E. Hatem El Sayed, Ambassador of Egypt, delivered thoughtful addresses, acknowledging the accomplishments of the departing ambassadors. The speakers expressed gratitude for the diplomats' stellar contributions to the Diplomatic Community in the Netherlands.

In response to the accolades, the departing ambassadors, Mr. Pham Viet Anh, Mr. Chatri Archjananun, and Ambassador Slim Ghariani, expressed their heartfelt gratitude with brief remarks. Ambassador Pham shared a poignant moment, drawing inspiration from a French song, "Les Feuilles mortes," and sang a verse to

A DAY IN THAILAND: A SPECTACULAR GARDEN PARTY CELEBRATING CULTURE AND FRIENDSHIP

symbolize the bittersweet experience of parting. He expressed deep appreciation for the warmth of friendship, openness, and kindness experienced during their time in The Hague. "When we are back to Vietnam, we will miss all of you very much. Thanks to the Diplomat Magazine, we will still witness yours events."

Ambassador Archjananun of Thailand reflected on the long history of cooperation between Thailand and the Netherlands, expressing pride in strengthening the bonds between the two nations. He thanked Dr. Mayelinne De Lara for hosting the ceremony and the people of the Netherlands for their friendship and support.

Ambassador Slim Ghariani of Tunisia reflected on the various criteria for measuring success in diplomatic missions, emphasizing the value of connections and networking. He expressed satisfaction at the supportive audience bidding him farewell and praised Diplomat Magazine for its role in enriching diplomatic life in the Netherlands.

Dr. Mayelinne De Lara, the Publisher of Diplomat magazine, presented the Ambassadors with their Certificates of Merit, and each spouse received a bouquet of colorful summer flowers. Diplomat Magazine acknowledged the Leonardo Royal Hotel for its commendable efforts in facilitating such events, expressing gratitude for the hotel's indispensable role.

The serene Ceremony of Merits concluded with a joyous reception, featuring the cutting of a cake and a photo session, marking a memorable farewell to the departing ambassadors.



Ambassador Chatri Archjananun and his wife Nataya

Amidst the vibrant colors and warm atmosphere, a garden party like no other was hosted at the residence of Ambassador Chatri Archjananun and his wife Nataya. Organised by the Thai Embassy in collaboration with Diplomat Magazine the event, named "A Day in Thailand," was dedicated to bidding farewell to fellow ambassadors and welcome friends of Thailand during the summer season. As the sun shone brightly, the garden transformed into a captivating Thai wonderland, showcasing every aspect of the country's rich culture and traditions.

Ambassador Archjananun stood before the gathering of distinguished guests, expressing his heartfelt gratitude for the overwhelming support received during his tenure as the ambassador of Thailand in the Netherlands. With a touch of nostalgia in his voice, he announced his impending departure in a few weeks.

Ambassador Archjananun declared: "As the Coordinator of the Asia and Oceania Ambassadors' Luncheon, I would like to express my appreciation to all the members who have actively contributed to the success of the luncheon's talks. The Ambassadors'

Luncheon has proven an invaluable forum for open dialogue and fruitful discussions in a trusted environment.

"I take this opportunity to extend my good wishes for continued success to our departing ambassadors. It is also with a mix of emotions that I have to announce my own and my wife's departure at the end of September. Every one of you will be dearly missed. It has been an honour and privilege to work with all of you." Throughout the day, the guests were treated to a feast of Thai cultural delights, ensuring an authentic and immersive experience. The event boasted a wide range of activities that represented the heart and soul of Thailand.

Numerous stalls displayed a diverse range of Thai products and activities, from Thai Boxing to Thai cooking demonstrations, from Thai musicians playing traditional instruments to fruit craving art, from Thai massages to all kind of Thai Products and Fashion. Thai street food, Thai beers bar, dancers, fashion show and a Thai market with many products including intricately woven bags, elegant dresses, and vibrant textiles, showcasing the country's exceptional craftsmanship.

"A Day in Thailand" was a resounding success, showcasing the unique beauty of Thailand's culture.



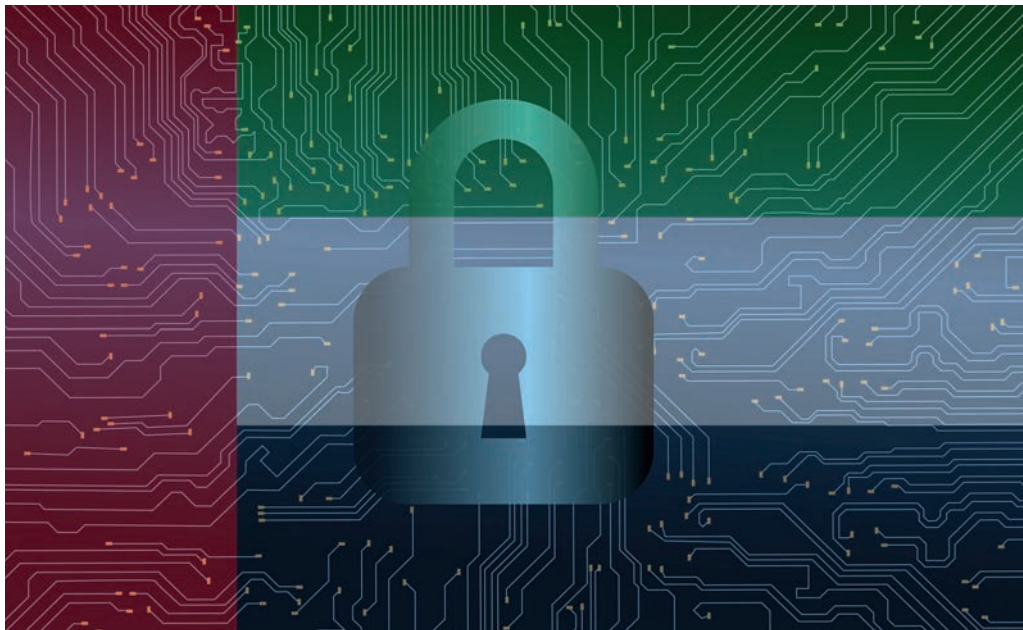
Nataya Archjananun and Dr. Mayelinne De Lara, Diplomat Magazine's Publisher



Ambassadors attending A Day in Thailand.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES CONTINUES ITS POLICY OF MODERNIZING INTELLIGENCE SERVICES

By Corneliu Pivariu



The geopolitical evolutions in the Middle East, marked by the so-called “Arab Spring”, the conflict in Yemen, the threat represented by the Iranian nuclear program and other global geopolitical developments determined United Arab Emirates (UAE) to take some important steps for modernizing and improving its intelligence services starting with the middle of the last decade .

As demonstrated by the evolutions of modern intelligence services, the countries enjoying considerable financial resources as it is the case of UAE are developing predominantly their technical segments such as Signal Intelligence and Artificial Intelligence (AI). This is due to the fact that getting certain important results by using technical means for acquiring information is relatively faster and safer as compared to using information gathered by human sources (HUMINT), which requires longer time for readying and exploiting such capabilities .

Besides enhancing its intelligence technical capabilities, UAE continued as well to encourage the development of the private sector of security especially in the cyber field, under a relatively tight government control of these activities indeed. Nevertheless, some slippages occurred such as the Raven Project (the Emirati company Dark Matter was embroiled among others), which triggered a FBI investigation for the use of certain activities of digital espionage leading to arresting foreign dissidents, besides a certain degree of involvement in Jamal Khashoggi's

assassination, gathering information about Gulf monarchies and other Middle Eastern countries.

UAE further enhanced the capabilities of the National College of Defence, headed presently by Maj. Gen. Aqab Shahin Al Ali, and having Thomas Drohan as Dean (he was preceded by John R. Ballard, the College's first Dean). Joel Hayword's name, considered an important international specialist in the field of military strategy and history of war, a New Zealander, is mentioned at one of the College's faculties.

National Electronic Security Authority (established in 2012 with the US assistance) headquartered in Abu Dhabi was renamed Signal Intelligence Agency (SIA). The Authority is the counterpart of NSA in the US and penetrating ISIS in UAE was one of its achievements. At the same time, there were suspicions that the Authority or other Emirati intelligence services were involved in using TikTok for recording certain conversations, relations, meetings and pictures of the general public in the Emirate.

For the 2022-2026 Five Year Plan, the UAE's approved cyber budget amounts to 79 billion dollar, the biggest in the country's history. According to Global Security Index 2020, UAE ranks 5th in the world.

Financial Intelligence Unit (UAEFIU) is another important institution headed presently by Ali Faisal BaAlawi. The name dates back to 2019 and it is in fact the continuation of an organization established in 1998 by the UAE Central Bank as a special investigation unit of fraud and suspicious transactions, renamed Anti-Money Laundering and Suspicious Cases Unit in 2002.

Although it is not part of the established field of the intelligence services, it is worth mentioning that UAE created a ministry of Artificial Intelligence, more precisely the Ministry of Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy and Remote Work Applications, headed by Omar Sultan al Olama.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of UAE declared that “we want UAE to become the best prepared country in the world in the field of Artificial Intelligence”, and an ambitious program for 2031 was launched to this purpose.

The program will have an important impact on the evolution of the Emirati intelligence services as well.

Last but not least, we notice a strengthening of the relations with intelligence services of other states, notably Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Israel, USA and maintaining good relations with correspondent services of countries such as Egypt, Russia, China and others.

In the development of the intelligence services activities, UAE hires experts among the specialists in the field from other countries, especially retirees in states like USA, Great Britain and other who are enticed with attractive salaries.

1 See <https://diplomatmagazine.eu/2018/02/03/ united-arab-emirates-modernizes-intelligence-services/>

2 It is generally estimated that training a HUMINT intelligence officer lasts 10 to 15 years.

3 See <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/usa-spying-raven/>

GREECE, IMAGES OF AN ENCHANTED LAND



On June 12, 2023, the embassy of Greece in The Hague, together with Diplomat Magazine, hosted the inauguration event of an outstanding photo exhibition entitled 'Greece, Images of an Enchanted Land', by world-renowned photographer Robert McCabe. The Embassy presented the pictures that the American photographer took in Greece from the 50's at the Atrium City Hall in The Hague.

H.E. Ms Caterina Ghini, Ambassador of Greece to the Netherlands welcomed all the participants and officially launched the exhibition.

In her opening speech she mentioned: 'Robert McCabe made his first visit to Greece in 1954. He was instantly captivated by the country, preserving his impressions within the clicks of his camera's shutter button, capturing moments of history in iconic images. His first trip gave him the opportunity to experience the islands before they became "destinations". Robert is a contemporary wanderer: in modern times he continues the age-old tradition of foreign travelers in the country. Influenced by his classical studies at Princeton University, his work constitutes a photographic archive of Greece in the 1950s and 1960s.

The exhibition of the renowned photographer includes two sections: the first section illustrates the aspects of daily life in Greece in the 50s and 60s: seascapes, festivals, women's and men's occupations, work at sea. The second section presents some archaeological sites. Mc Cabe's photographs are a work of art. They are characterized by realism, but also by a rare aesthetic quality'.

Due to the photographer's inability to attend the event, Frederiek Lommen, a journalist, writer, Greece connoisseur, and publisher,

who journeyed to Greece in May to meet McCabe, graciously introduced the artist and his body of work.

In her eloquent address, she shared, "I had the pleasure and privilege of meeting Robert McCabe in person a few weeks ago during my visit to Athens. Our conversation delved into his work and Greece at large, fueled by a shared passion that spans several decades. As a prelude to this exhibition, I would like to convey today the insights gained from that remarkable dialogue."

Robert McCabe grew up near New York City, where his father worked for a newspaper. At the age of four, he received a Kodak Baby Brownie as his first camera, initially capturing news events like hurricanes and accidents. However, his focus eventually shifted to people and landscapes. The turning point came in 1954 when his older brother Charles, studying at Princeton, received an invitation to spend two weeks in Greece from a Greek friend. Robert was fortunate to be included in the journey, marking the beginning of a profound connection.

Recalling those early days in Athens, McCabe expressed how he instantly felt 'at home' in a city that resembled a large village. Their initial plan to explore Egypt and Italy was abandoned in favor of an extended stay in Greece.

His photographs from that initial Greek journey were exhibited at Princeton University's library later that year. Subsequently, McCabe continued his annual pilgrimage to Greece, often exploring off-the-beaten-path locations with his brother, avoiding tourist crowds. His association with the National Geographic Society in the 1950s, particularly a commissioned project on the Cyclades, marked a pivotal moment in his

career, making him a dedicated ambassador for Greece.

McCabe's affinity with Greece deepened further with his marriage to Constantina (Dina) in 1963. His photographic archive holds immense value for two primary reasons. Firstly, many images were captured before the onset of mass tourism, providing a glimpse of an unspoiled Greece in the 1950s and 1960s. Secondly, McCabe's genuine interest in people is evident in his photographs, creating a visual anthropological record of Greece.

Lastly, Lommen emphasized the beauty and melancholy captured in McCabe's images. His photographs reflect a Greece on the brink of transformation, with modernization altering landscapes and lifestyles. While acknowledging the blessings and curses of tourism, McCabe's lens preserved a vanishing Greece, capturing moments of timeless beauty in regions that remain untouched and unspoiled. At the end of her speech, Ms. Lommen cordially invited everyone to discover all those marvelous places and to visit Greece.

The speeches were followed by an animated reception. The event, attended by ambassadors, academics, and people from the art, business and political sphere, Greek nationals and friends of Greece, was a memorable experience for everyone.

The exhibition remained open for a week at the Atrium, in The Hague and thousands of people had the chance to see it.



H.E. Ms. Caterina Ghini, Ambassador of Greece

CEREMONY OF MERIT DEDICATED TO WILHEN DIAZ LARA

By Roy Lie Atjam

Wilhen Neomar Diaz Lara, Charge d' affaires of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, recently concluded his decade-long service in the Netherlands, returning to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Caracas. Despite facing adversity, Diaz Lara exhibited unwavering loyalty and dedication, leaving an indelible mark on the diplomatic landscape.

Diplomat Magazine hosted an intimate farewell ceremony on September 22, 2023, at the Leonardo Royal Hotel, honoring Diaz Lara with a Certificate of Merit for his exceptional contributions to fostering diplomatic ties between Venezuela and the Netherlands. The event, attended by Ambassadors, colleagues, friends, the diaspora, and well-wishers, featured a sequence of activities highlighting his achievements.

During the Merit Ceremony, the Certificate of Merit was introduced, acknowledging Diaz Lara's pivotal role in promoting strategic diplomatic engagement and enhancing bilateral relations over his ten-year tenure. The national anthems of Venezuela and the Netherlands resonated, setting the stage for Mr. Diaz Lara's standing near the Venezuelan flag.

H.E. Mr. Antonio Polosa, Chief of Mission for IOM, expressed gratitude, praising Diaz Lara's professionalism and dedication. Polosa highlighted Diaz Lara's role as an Alternate Representative to international organizations, emphasizing his support for the Venezuelan community.

Next, H.E. Ambassador Mr. Calixto Ortega Rios, Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the OPCW, lauded Diaz Lara's service and shared insights about Venezuela with the audience. Dr. Mayelinne De Lara, Publisher of Diplomat Magazine, presented Diaz Lara with a Certificate of Merit and a vibrant bouquet of flowers.

In his response, Diaz Lara extended heartfelt thanks, acknowledging the support and friendship received throughout his diplomatic journey. Reflecting on his tenure, he emphasized the significance of Venezuela's longstanding relations with the Netherlands and their commitment to peace diplomacy.

As Diaz Lara bid farewell, the ceremony concluded with a lively photo session, a reception, and the cutting of a cake adorned



Wilhen Diaz, Charge d'Affaires of Venezuela



Mr. Antonio Polosa, Chief of Mission for IOM

with Venezuelan colors. Though he has left the Netherlands, Wilhen Neomar Diaz Lara's legacy endures, marked by a decade of dedicated service and strengthened diplomatic ties.

FOURTH ANNUAL DIPLOMAT WINE EXTRAVAGANZA

By Roy Lie Atjam



Fritz Haring Di Saronno - Netherlands with Dominican Republic's Ron Barcelo



H.E. Mr. Greg French, Ambassador of Australia

An exclusive wine and spirit experience, Embassies promoted their wine and spirits, exposing their silver taste in utensils to attract the Dutch market and friends at the fourth edition of Diplomats Wine Extravaganza.

Mayelinne De Lara, Diplomat Magazine's Publisher joined by Thomas Kortleve, General Manager of Leonardo Royal Hotel welcome the guests to the Fourth Diplomat Wine Extravaganza on 30 October 2023. It was tasting, walking, wine talk by enologists, experts and enjoying jazz music.

In her welcome remarks Mayelinne De Lara stated "today, we are here to celebrate the rich diversity of wine and spirits from around the world. Each country has brought its finest products, and we have extended invitations to importers, sommeliers, chefs, journalists, diplomats, wine lovers and friends to join us in this extraordinary journey of taste"

Mayelinne De Lara continued, Diplomat Magazine, founded a decade ago by diplomats with the mission to support the work of each embassy, and Diplomats Wine Extravaganza,

in particular, has proven to be an instrumental force in advancing the wine industry of numerous countries.

Let's give the floor to the distinguish figures of today, who have made this event possible, the ambassadors of Armenia H.E. Viktor Biyagov, Australia H.E. Gregory French, Bolivia H.E. Roberto Calzadilla Sarmiento, Chile H.E. Jaime Moscoso Valenzuela, Dominican Republic H.E. Juan Bautista Duran, Ecuador H.E. Andres Teran Paral, Kosovo H.E. Dren Doli, Peru H.E. Marisol Aguero Colunga and Uruguay H.E. Alvaro Gonzalez Otero.

The ambiance of the Fourth Diplomat Wine Extravaganza was characterized by vibrant energy and an excellent atmosphere. A Burgundian motto, "Jamais en Vain Toujours en Vin" ("Never in Vain, Always in Wine"), echoed the sentiment that the event was not just an occasion but a celebration of the timeless art of winemaking. As guests immersed themselves in the tasting experience, the universal language of friendship flowed, encapsulating the essence of this exclusive gathering.

FROM AGREEMENT TO ACTION: TURNING RISKY BUSINESS INTO THE GOOD BUSINESS OF BIODIVERSITY FOR THE AMERICAS

By Claudia S. de Windt.

Fast-paced biodiversity loss is increasing business risk. Companies and investors in the Americas that are ready to embrace change by accepting their relation to biodiversity and nature in corporate strategy may turn the tide from risk to value.

Biodiversity benefits people beyond wellbeing and livelihoods. It contributes to security, resiliency and enables social relations, health, freedom of choices and actions. Negotiators from 196 governments closed 2022 agreeing to halt the loss of biodiversity in the Global Biodiversity Framework. The agreement could result in nature business and finance regulation but also in opportunities for companies and investors willing to step up in the Americas. Business must anticipate and partner in a shared vision.

Over half the world's GDP is moderately or highly dependent on nature and its services. Unfortunately, this is not reflected in corporate strategies. 40% of the world's largest public companies have net zero targets yet less than 20% of S&P 500 companies have made biodiversity commitments. Meanwhile, nature, people and the economy are at high stakes risk. Climate goals, including corporate targets, depend on nature and biodiversity in decline as their contributions are in many parts of the Americas.

In 2019, unquestionably the best available science reaffirmed years of findings and projections. 1 million species threatened with extinction made headlines. Human induced, well documented faster changes in biodiversity in any time in history are creating significant risk.

There are five key drivers of biodiversity loss: land and sea use; fragmenting, transforming habitats and contributing to the second culprit - the climate crisis. The remaining three are direct use and exploitation of natural resources, pollution, and invasive alien species.

Most countries in the Americas are using nature more intensively than the global average and exceeding nature's ability to renew its contributions. Vulnerabilities such

as inequality increase regional susceptibility to biodiversity and nature risks enhancing consequences of nature loss. 32% of the world's socio-environmental conflicts occur in the region increasingly due to business resource use and extraction. So how do we shift from a risky business to the good business of biodiversity?

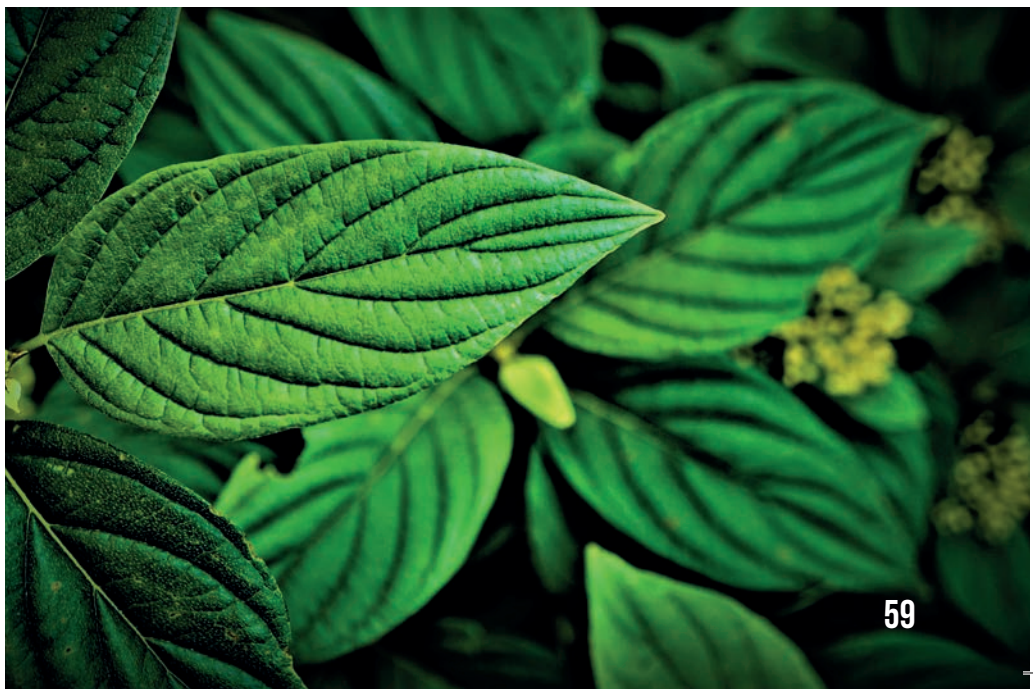
Countries committed to updating their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans and showing progress on 4 global goals and 23 targets by 2050. Commitments hint forthcoming regulatory action on business and finance nature-related disclosure & data, due diligence obligations and supervision, biodiversity risk management guidance and nature-based sustainable finance policy. This could mean hurdles but also represent opportunities. The Americas is highly biologically, culturally, and socioeconomically diverse. It is home to 7 out of the 17 most biodiverse countries and some of the most extensive wilderness areas on the planet. The economic value of terrestrial nature's contributions to people in the region is estimated at least \$24.3 trillion per year, equivalent to the region's gross domestic product.

Agricultural production, fisheries and aquaculture continue to increase food provision for the region and the planet. Nature-based sourced energy, including biofuels and hydropower at the local level

is increasing and so is dependence on infrastructure. Latin America is the largest global exporter of food and one of the largest traders in bioenergy. Critical minerals and metals for energy transition are concentrated in regions and countries of the Americas.

The region's natural and water capital can widen financing and investment options, increasing capital flows and reducing debt. Businesses within key sectors (blue economy, agribusiness, energy and infrastructure, minerals and metals and financing) have been operating with transnational regulatory implications for decades. This shows that the business nature nexus can be an asset rather than a liability.

Corporate strategies sorting competing social, economic, and ecological interests are paramount. Environmental and social governance of nature risks becomes value added and a safeguard for investors. To partner with governments in building back biodiversity from agreement to action, the first step for businesses is acknowledging their relationship with nature. Key are identifying risks throughout supply chains, key performance indicators and monitoring to address financial and stakeholder needs through sustainability, transparency, and accountability. In turn Governments must place incentives adequately. Businesses should get ready and embrace change. Integrating biodiversity is just plain good business.



THE HAGUE ROUNDTABLE ON CLIMATE AND SECURITY HOLDS ITS 14TH EDITION

On September 12, 2023, the world learned about the deadly consequences of Storm Daniel in Libya. Concluding a particularly destructive summer of natural disasters around the globe, this event rung the alarm as loudly as ever for the climate emergency we are facing. On the same day, the **Hague Roundtable on Climate and Security** was assembled for the 14th time, dealing with the very questions raised by this dramatic event. The Roundtable, started in 2015 by journalist and advisor **Matt Luna**, discussed the impact of climate change on the military, conflicts and humanitarian crises. The Roundtable gathered experts, diplomats, NGO, and institutional representatives to transfer experiences and generate inputs for policymakers and civil society.



This edition of the Roundtable was organised with the **Canadian Embassy in The Hague**, in partnership with the **NATO headquarters**. Numerous embassies and missions were represented, along with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations. The discussions were focused on water scarcity, knowledge transfer, inclusivity and the opening of **NATO's Climate Change and Security Centre of Excellence (CCASCOE)** in Montréal, Canada. The sessions were very interactive, allowing the table to ask questions and give inputs for each panel and to build conclusions collectively.

The first presentation by NATO policy officer Jordan Koop established the main impacts of climate change on a military institution. Climate change is indeed expected to increase military activity, not only to contribute to disaster relief efforts, but also to face the security threats arising from resource scarcity and humanitarian crises. While being a future relief actor, the military sector is also itself subject to the impacts of climate change, bound to affect equipment safety and operating conditions. The question of the responsibility of the military in the environmental crisis also arose, as it produces of 5.5% of global carbon

emissions. While the role of NATO was shown to be crucial in initiating a green transition in the military, it remains a major challenge since this sector's main priority is to increase its capacity.

The spotlight was then given to civil society actors Mahdi Ahmad and Amar Ibrahim, from the Bahr Aluloom Foundation in Iraq. This platform dealt with the current water crisis in Iraq. This specific case is a perfect example of a social crisis caused by climate change that increases the risk of conflict. The severe drought that Iraq has been facing has had a considerable impact on the livelihoods of farmers in the once ecologically rich marshlands. The water sources drying out cause a rural exodus that leads to competition and clashes with the urban working population; with women frequently left in precarious agricultural settings. This shows that climate-induced crises do not impact men and women equally. As marginalised groups will be more impacted by their consequences, an inclusive approach to crisis relief is needed.

The last presentation by Laura Birkman from the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies, exposed methods for water conflict risk assessment and

peacebuilding. By analysing possible conflict pathways, she showed how conflict risks can be predicted for better preventive action. The combination of water expertise and peacebuilding knowledge can be used to create cooperation in areas of resource competition prone to tensions. The need to identify the root causes of conflicts was also expressed. Though the case study of Iraq, it was shown that the problem of resource scarcity intersects with pre-existing socio-political conditions.

The important takeaway that climate impacts intersect with socio-economic inequality, whether by gender, class, or geographical region, led all actors to promote inclusive solutions to climate and conflict risks. As a result, the Roundtable's main keyword: cooperation, was evoked at the international and regional level and between the military, civil and academic sectors.

Concluding on the topic of the Centre of Excellence was an opportunity for the participants to remember that solutions exist and are being implemented to address issues around climate and security. More than an alarmist exchange, this Roundtable was also a platform to share and appreciate all the efforts that have been made by all the actors to study, inform and act upon these issues. Such discussions are crucial to make progress in addressing the climate crisis.

Ms. Marcia Vaune Jocelyn Kran O.C. is an international lawyer from Canada; who was formerly Director at the UN Human Rights Office in Geneva and Senior Regional Manager at the UN Development Programme in Bangkok and Bratislava, and is a member of the UN Human Rights Committee (2017 – 2024).

COMMEMORATION OF THE NATIONAL DAY OF THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA



Ambassador of Panama to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, H.E. Elizabeth Ward Neiman

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On December 4th, the Ambassador of Panama to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, H.E. Elizabeth Ward Neiman, presided over the celebration of the National Day of Panama in The Hague. The event brought together members of the diplomatic corps, international organizations, academics, friends of Panama, and Panamanians, marking the 120th anniversary of the birth of the Republic with a reception characterized by solemnity, solidarity, and patriotism.

In her address, Ambassador Neiman commemorated the courage, determination, and indomitable spirit of the Panamanian people, recognizing the historic events that shaped the nation's identity and paved the way for independence and sovereignty. She highlighted key moments in Panama's history, such as its proclamation of independence from Spain on November 28th, 1821, and the significant chapter on November 3rd, 1903, when the country separated from Colombian rule to assert absolute independence.

Reflecting on these historical milestones, the Ambassador emphasized the Panamanian people's ability to unite for a better future grounded in hard work, cultural diversity, and a shared commitment to achieving great goals. "Today, Panama stands out as a friendly, safe, vibrant, and continuously growing country with a thriving economy based on innovation and openness to the world."

The Ambassador acknowledged the importance of international collaboration, particularly with the host country, the Kingdom of The Netherlands. "Over the past three years, bilateral agreements between national agencies, universities, and medical research centers have strengthened ties. The import of Panamanian products and Dutch investments continues to grow, exemplified by the repatriation of 343 pieces of pre-Hispanic cultural heritage, a historic return for both the Netherlands and Central America."

The Ambassador expressed gratitude for the contributions of Panamanians residing abroad, emphasizing their power, commitment, and love for Panama as crucial elements in

strengthening cultural ties and contributing to the country's development.

"On this special day, Panama reaffirms its allegiance to the principles of freedom, democracy, peace, and justice that have guided its history. The Ambassador extended National Day greetings to all Panamanians and friends, celebrating the rich history, diversity, and greatness of the country."

Before the short award ceremony, Ambassador Neiman thanked sponsors, including Air Europa, Leonardo Hotel, and Diplomat Magazine, for their support. She then proceeded to recognize two special individuals from Panama and the Netherlands who have made significant contributions to Panama's development or left a positive imprint on the country in the past year.

"Chef Roberto Torres, who provided the evening's food, received recognition for his culinary contributions, promoting Latin gastronomy creatively at the renowned restaurant SELVA in Amsterdam. Vincent Westmass, a dedicated promoter of Panama and a friend of the Embassy, was acknowledged for his efforts in collecting rare Panamanian literature and cultural artifacts, as well as organizing tours to remote areas, promoting tourism among the Dutch."

The Ambassador concluded the ceremony with a heartfelt appreciation for her Embassy team, recognizing Milciades, Renato, Jorge, Sheyla, and Johanna as the committed backbone behind the Embassy's achievements. The evening closed with a round of applause for all those involved.



GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY AND THE WAR IN UKRAINE

By Dr. Franz Fischler

“Food security exists, when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient food that meets their dietary and healthy life” (World Food Summit 1996). This broadly accepted definition of the FAO is very demanding and points to 4 dimensions of food security, namely: availability of, access to food, its utilisation and its stability.

In contrast, food insecurity means that at least one of these dimensions is not met. The definition also shows that food (in) security is a gradual phenomenon and food insecurity does not automatically mean hunger. To measure the magnitude and severity of food insecurity, an Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) amongst other systems has been put in place.

However, following the latest report of the World Food Programme “the scale of the current global hunger and malnutrition crisis is enormous: This year 350 M people are projected to starve from hunger – more than double the number in 2020. More than 900.000 people are fighting to survive in famine-like conditions. This is ten times more than five years ago – an alarmingly rapid increase.

These figures also show that we move away from the aim of zero hunger by 2030 instead of getting closer. Without fundamental and immediate changes in the global food and nutrition system, the global community will fail on its promise to end hunger and malnutrition by 2030 and this would be a shame for the world. Even more so since most experts share the view that the world could nourish up to 10 Billion people.

The status report of “Food Security and nutrition in the world also shows the enormous geographic imbalance of hunger, the uneven distribution within the global society and the harder impact of food insecurity on those who are already disadvantaged.

Children suffer the most from famine and hunger. In 2020 15 M children below the age of 5 suffered from hunger “stunting” and another 45 M from “wasting” or acute undernutrition.

In the same report the key drivers of hunger were identified. The predominant drivers are persistent military conflicts and terrorism (two thirds) pre-existing and COVID 19 related economic shocks (one fourth) and

weather extremes (one tenths). Two thirds of the suffering people are concentrated in only 10 States. This was the situation before the outbreak of the Ukrainian War.

The War caused several additional problems, inter alia food insecurity for many Ukrainians, above all for the displaced persons but also for the world commodity markets.

The UN said, that the war’s impact on the global food market could cause up to an additional 13 M people to get hungry, especially in the Middle East and North Africa.

In addition, Ukraine is the Nr.5 amongst the wheat exporters, responsible for 8% of global exports and the Nr.1 in sunflower oil exports (39.5% of global exports). But Ukraine is also the Nr.1 supplier of wheat for the World Food Programme.

In addition one must not forget the volatility of the international wheat market prices. The Middle East and many North African countries are the biggest importers of wheat and as soon as the international wheat prices are rocketing an increase of food insecurity, mainly for the poor people in these countries is unavoidable.

The consequences of such developments are possible turmoil as we have seen in 2015 during the Arab Spring.

All this shows how important free access to the Ukrainian ports is.

To sum up:

- Hunger and famine are mainly caused by 3 key drivers: military conflicts and terrorism, economic shocks and weather disasters.
- Since 2020 the number of hungry people is rising and the aim to achieve zero hunger by 2030 is very likely out of reach.
- There is an enormous geographic imbalance and an uneven-distribution of food within the global society.
- The most vulnerable are women and children.
- Most experts share the view that the world could nourish up to 10 Bio. people.
- Fighting hunger means providing access to food and a fair distribution of food between all countries.
- The Ukrainian war worsened food security internally and also globally by adding another 13 M to the food insecure people and to provide enough wheat for the World Food Programme.
- The free access to the Black Sea ports is of utmost importance to be able to bring enough food to the Middle East and to North Africa.



INTERNATIONAL FRANCOPHONIE DAY 2023 FRANCOPHONIE WITHOUT BORDERS

BY ROY LIE ATJAM

Francophones celebrate their shared language and the great cultural diversity that comes with it during the International Day of La Francophonie; organized jointly by the Alliance Française, Group of Francophone Ambassadors, the French Institute in the Netherlands, the Lycée Français Vincent Van Gogh, and the support of TV5 Monde.

The theme was "Francophonie Without Borders," and visitors were taken on a trip to six countries of the Francophonie: Côte d'Ivoire, Romania, Morocco, Senegal, Tunisia, Wallonia- Brussels.

Each country offered an exemplary cultural activity, illustrating the cultural and linguistic diversity that enriches the common Francophone Movement. The Ambassadors of Armenia, France, Morocco, Rwanda, and Tunisia, and representatives of Romania and Wallonia, graced the event by their presence. Attendees from all walks of life, even children, joined in the festivities.

Ambassador Ghariani of Tunisia, president of the Group of Francophone Ambassadors delivered the welcome address in French at this festive occasion:

"We are very happy to share with you this beautiful evening in such a friendly

atmosphere which reflects the depth of the bonds of friendship existing within our French-speaking space."

"Tunisia, which currently chairs the Mouvement de la Francophonie, attaches great importance to the celebration of this Day, in which it sees a symbol of peace, solidarity, tolerance and mutual understanding. Founding country of the institutional Francophonie, Tunisia has always paid constant and particular attention to the development of the Francophone project."

"Anchored in its multiple North African, Arab-Muslim, African and Mediterranean identity, Tunisia has remained over the centuries an open country, tolerant in the search for new frameworks of cooperation, basing its relations with the rest of the world on a spirit of collaboration and partnership that benefits Tunisians and all of humanity."

This address, and the spirit of unity it embodies, displays the noble mission of the Mouvement de la Francophonie, and the strength and power of the cross-border ties it continues to inspire.

La Francophonie sans frontières: la journée internationale de la Francophonie, Edition 2023 has been a resounding success.



Ms. Hélène Pichon and the ambassador of France, H.E. Mr. François Alabrune. Also in the picture, the Ambassador of Rwanda, the President of the Alliance Française and the Ambassador of Tunisia. Photography by Tom Vandecasteele for Diplomat Magazine.



H.E. Mr. Mohamed Basri, Ambassador of Morocco, Mr. Richard Schreurs, President of the Alliance Française of The Hague, Ms. Hélène Pichon, Director of the Alliance Française de La Haye & Coordinator of the Network of Alliances Françaises of the Netherlands H.E. Mr. Slim Ghariani, Ambassador of Tunisia, H.E. Mr. François Alabrune, Ambassador of France, H.E. Mr. Olivier Jean Patrick Nduhungirehe, Ambassador of Rwanda, H.E. Mr. Tigran Balayan, Ambassador of Armenia and Mr. Alexandru Ion Steriu, Press Counsellor, Embassy of Romania. Photography by Tom Vandecasteele for Diplomat Magazine.

CIGARS, RUM, COFFEE, AND BOLEROS

By Guatemala

The Embassy of Guatemala, in collaboration with Diplomat Magazine and Casa del Habano, organized a series of Cigars Aficionado afternoons to share great cigars and rum with diplomats and friends.

Attendees joined from many embassies and international organizations to enjoy the friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Diplomats from, among other countries, Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Philippines, Slovenia, Uruguay, reunited themselves on a Friday afternoon to discuss over a good cup of coffee, later to taste Guatemala rum and De Graaff dark exclusive chocolate. It was a series of three installments of this event.

To open the evening, Mr. Lesther Ortega Lemus, Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of Guatemala, thanked everybody for their attendance. Then, Mr. Raymond van Hoorssen, owner of the Casa del Habano, gave a brief speech for any

newcomers, explaining the different types of tobacco that make up a cigar, as well as how to properly light one. He then introduced the different cigars available each night.

The first was a Nicaragua "My Father le Bijou," Also available was the Ecuadorian with Nicaragua filler "West Tampa White".

The second night he presented three products coming from Nicaragua, Ecuador, Honduras, and Cuba. JDN numero Uno, Wrapper: Ecuador / Binder: Nicaragua / Filler: Nicaragua. Plasencia Cosecha 149, 100% Honduras. RyJ Coronitas en Cedro, 100% Cuban tobacco.

The third occasion he presented exclusive Dominican cigars, Arturo Fuente OpusX and Davidoff Millennium Blend.

As for the accompanying drinks, a variety of Guatemalan rums now available in the



Msamary Guzman, Minister Counsellor, Dominican Republic, H.E. Mr. Juan Bautista Duran, Ambassador of the Dominican Republic and Lesther Ortega Lemus, Charge d'affaires of Guatemala

Netherlands were provided by the Embassy, including Ron Botran no. 15 Reserva, Ron Botran Cobre Spiced, Ron Botran no. 18 Reserva de la Familia, and Ron Zacapa 12.

In a convivial and soothing atmosphere, a guitarist played songs from Latin America as the aromatic Don Julian coffee from Guatemala waltzed through the room.

Then, experts began to talk about the cigars. Yvonne Litz, owner and founder of Casa del Habano, was also there to guide cigar amateurs in their choices.

Many thanks to Casa del Habano and De Graaff chocolaad for their hospitality!



NAVAL DIPLOMACY – A FRIENDLY TOOL FOR DETERRENCE OR A PROVOCATIVE ACT ROOTED IN NEOCOLONIALISM?

Ever since man became one with the sea, maritime expenditures and strategies have been elaborated, debated, and deployed. Its history can be traced down through the years since, with varying emphases, interpretations, and terminology.

On October 19, 2023, the Pentagon deployed the aircraft carrier Gerald R. Ford and its battle group into the eastern Mediterranean, and with the Dwight D. Eisenhower carrier strike gently on its way.

It begs the question, is naval diplomacy an effective non-threatening tool to deter the risk of war, or is it a remnant of imperialism whose goal is to assert dominance and order at the expense of lesser nations?

While viewed as an effective way to deter the risk of war in the short term, naval diplomacy is “the application of naval capabilities in pursuit of national objectives during cooperation and competition below conflict”.

However, some experts find the term as being too narrow, emotionally charged, and burdened by colonialism.

The general implications of the use of military presence serve a largely symbolic role such as signaling interest and physically demonstrating support to one’s allies. It can also signal changing commitments, depending on their manipulation. Its objective is to constrain the opposition’s role in a crisis.

On the other hand, naval diplomacy is defined as “the use or the threat of limited naval force in order to secure advantage or to avert loss in the furtherance of an international dispute”.

Its main component resides in its intent to influence behavior. The lower limit of its spectrum of activity is nonthreatening in nature and the upper limit of spectrum falls short of the state of war but can include violence.

Yet, it raises the question of when an act of influence crosses into an act of violence and whether such provocative activity can still be legitimately classified as diplomacy.

Diplomacy is distinguished from the broader idea of foreign policy in the sense that, “diplomacy involves means and mechanism” including a wide range of techniques.

Military diplomacy, on the other hand, is defined as a set of activities carried out by the representatives of the defense department, as well as other state institutions.

This involves gathering intel on the armed forces and the security situation in the receiving state, organizing working visits of representatives of the defense authorities, and more importantly supporting business contracts with arms and military equipment.

In the context of its nature, naval diplomacy is not – unlike military diplomacy – a form of “diplomacy” in the sense of a non-violent instrument for the pursuit of foreign policy based mainly on negotiations, but it is in fact a specific method of the use of military force – primarily as an instrument for intimidation.

Introducing naval forces into an already existing crisis is often viewed as highly provocative and requires a delicate approach. Hence the term “diplomacy” in naval diplomacy underscores the need to stabilize the conflict, supplementing the fighting connotation of naval use.

But one must question whether its presence is repositioned or projected into the crisis.

Warships and navies represent symbols of national sovereignty and power, and for having, not only a defense value but also a symbolic and supportive value such as

diplomatic envoys. A military commander quickly learns that diplomacy is not solely the province of diplomats.

This way of action can be counterproductive. Not only can it fail to produce desired political effects but can also cause unintended and unforeseen damages.

Domestic political factors, although complex, must be considered and should not be minimized by political leaders. Naval diplomacy, then, must take account of a state’s political, historical, economic and decision-making processes.

Therefore, naval diplomatic tactics must not only be an act not intended to start a war, but also one calculated not to incite a response or worse create an everlasting resentment that could potentially broaden into a regional conflict in the long term.

Washington’s unwavering support for Israel in its collision with its Arab neighbors seems to underline a US instinct for the solution of problems by force. More generally, the reliance upon naval fleets reflects the pragmatic orientation of American diplomacy inadequacy upon fanatical nation-states such as Iran.

This comes at a time when the region is currently in the midst of a change after long decades of war and insecurity. While Saudi Arabia and Iran engaged in on-off talks, with Beijing’s mediation, the United States finds itself no longer as influential a player in the region.

PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR DETERRENCE AND DIPLOMACY

The Embassy of Pakistan, The Hague, organized a "Book-talk" event on the book titled "The Security Imperative - Pakistan's Nuclear Deterrence and Diplomacy" authored by Ambassador Zamir Akram - a seasoned Pakistani diplomat. The event was attended by senior diplomats, academics, experts and researchers based in The Hague.

In his remarks, Ambassador of Pakistan to the Netherlands, Suljuk Mustansar Tarrar highlighted Ambassador Zamir Akram for his valuable contributions for Pakistan, and to the field of diplomacy throughout his diplomatic career spanning over four decades. He apprised the audience about the different

aspects of Pakistan's arms control and disarmament related diplomatic endeavours in maintaining regional and global security. He underlined that the book is a useful illustration of the contributions of Pakistan's diplomats and offers a distinctive perspective on this important subject.

In his remarks about the book, Ambassador Zamir Akram highlighted the rationale behind authoring a book on such an important theme. He stressed that Pakistan had repeatedly made clear that the development of its nuclear programme was a 'security imperative'. Later on, the audience had an engaging discussion with Ambassador Zamir Akram on the book.

This event was part of Embassy's efforts to engage local academia, and think tanks to share Pakistan's perspective on important issues. "

PAKISTAN AND THE NETHERLANDS: CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF BILATERAL RELATIONS

By Roy Lie Atjam

The Embassy of Pakistan in The Hague organised a talk by Ambassador **Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry**, former Foreign Secretary and Pakistan's former Ambassador to the Netherlands on his book "**Diplomatic Footprint**" (memoir).

Diplomatic Footprint is a memoir offering commentary and first-hand accounts of topics from the perspective of an experienced diplomat. The 654 pages book in the English language was first published in 2021. Hardcover,

ISBN-10 : 9693533682, ISBN-13 : 978-9693533682.

Diplomacy according to Mr Aiza A. Chaudhry, is a profession which requires diligence, finesse and tact. Chaudhry offers a unique points to understand Pakistan's foreign policy choices.

Mr Aiza A. Chaudhry's memoir describes meetings with world leaders like Biden, Obama, Ghani, Karzai, Xi, Putin, Modi, and other high officials, explaining from the perspective of a practitioner some of the difficult choices faced by the country's leadership and its diplomats.

Mr Chaudhry has also written a book "**Pakistan Mirrored to Dutch Eyes**", recounting an experiment in public diplomacy.

The event was organised to highlight the significant relationship between Pakistan and the Netherlands in connection with **75 years of bilateral relations**, celebrations in Islamabad and the Hague. Among the attendees were members of the Dutch parliament, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, academia, journalists and members of the Pakistani community.

Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry talking about his book Diplomatic Footprint, underlined the importance of bilateral relations between Pakistan and the Netherlands and Pakistan's overall foreign policy. Ambassador Chaudhry appreciated efforts by the Pakistan Embassy in further strengthening bilateral relations in areas of mutual benefit.

It was an enormous pleasure listing to the emeritus Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry.

Ambassador Suljuk Mustansar Tarar briefed the participants about enhanced bilateral

cooperation including in the fields of trade and investment, water and agriculture between Pakistan and the Netherlands over the last 75 years.





ALL-ENCOMPASSING MUSICAL WORLD TOUR

SVEN ARNE TEPL REFLECTS ON THE

From miniatures to masterpieces and from Bach to Wantenaar, the Residentie Orkest offers a variety of musicians and repertoires from different cultures and backgrounds.

Sven Arne Tepl, General and Artistic Director of the Residentie Orkest, takes his audience on a musical exploration of different cultures. Diversity and versatility are, therefore, at the center of the programming. 'We want to surprise and inspire our audiences time and time again, both with a large and innovative repertoire, and with guest soloists and conductors from completely different backgrounds. We are going on a world tour in our own concert hall Amare.'

Our own world tour also includes our audience that comes from almost every country in the world if we consider our vast clientele among the diplomats living in The Hague. From beginner music enthusiasts to experts, former musicians to new explorers, diplomats are always part of the audience, and we love it. Our 10-year-old partnership with Diplomat Magazine has been proverbial in developing this solid exchange with embassies.

Top Pianists Series

New to the lineup of regular series like Symphonic Friday and the Sunday matinee is the Top Pianists series. 'The piano repertoire is vast and comprehensive; there is a lot to choose from. We are home to some great soloists, including Denis Kozhukhin playing Rachmaninov. And former artist in residence Yeol Eum Son returns to The Hague.' New repertoire has also been considered: Ralph van Raat performs the piano concerto 'Prophecies of Stone' by John Luther Adams.

It was remarkable, the Auerbach Festival that we celebrated with American-Russian Lera Auerbach on her birthday party. To mark the 50th birthday of this pianist, composer, and artist, the Residentie Orkest, the Royal Conservatoire The Hague, the Netherlands Chamber Choir, and a number of other

ensembles from The Hague organized a weekend festival around this artistic jack-of-all-trades. 'Lera is a woman of boundless energy and countless ideas. She writes provocative books, makes intriguing bronze sculptures, goes skydiving, but with us, she played Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20 and conducted the Dutch premiere of her Fifth Symphony.'

Since opening, we have done some tweaking to the acoustics of the concert hall. 'The orchestral sound was just a little too bare, especially in the high registers like the first violins. We did something about that, and successfully, it has become one of the best halls in the country! Because the sound mixes so beautifully now, the sound image comes very close, as if you were looking directly into the score.' Artist in residence Czech violinist and former concertmaster of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra Josef Špaček brings the violin concertos by Dvořák, Beethoven, and Berg. 'Josef is our artist in residence this season. An exceptional musician who has a very diverse repertoire.'

Into the Neighborhood

'With projects like Portiekmuziek, where the orchestra goes into the neighborhood, we want to connect with all residents of the city.

We receive help from housing associations, healthcare institutions, and other partners. They identify what people want, and we respond to that.' A great example is the series of concerts at the Juliana church in the Transvaal neighborhood. The meeting between the musicians and local residents afterward is sometimes more important here than the concert itself.'

Sounds of Today

The program also includes a number of world premieres. These include a concerto for accordion and orchestra by Dutch composer Mathilde Wagenaar and the Triple Concerto written by Finnish composer Sebastian Fagerlund for the Storioni Trio. 'Contemporary composers use the same 12 notes that are prevalent throughout musical history, but you hear the sound of today. The echo of what is going on in today's society.' Tipped by Sven 'First of all, if you have not yet been to our fantastic concert hall, please come and visit us!'

'Contemporary composers use the same 12 notes that are prevalent throughout musical history, but you hear the sound of today. The echo of what is going on in today's society.'

THE HAGUE ACADEMY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, "A CENTURY OF DEVOTION TO THE STUDY INTERNATIONAL LEGAL PRINCIPLES AND RULES - FROM 1923 TO 2023"

By Steven van Hoogstraten, Former Treasurer Hague Academy

During the last week of May the Hague Academy of International Law (first courses in 1923) celebrated its Centenary. A festive program was held in the premises of the Academy in the new wing of the Peace Palace. The important moment itself was marked with a solemn sitting, with speeches by the President of the Curatorium, the French professor and judge Yves Daudet, and the chair of the Conseil d'Administration minister of State Piet Hein Donner. Mayor Jan van Zanen emphasized the continued welcome for the Hague Academy in the City of Peace and Justice. The representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dominique Kühling (Head of Protocol), complimented the Academy, while staying close to the response to the international situation with a war once again going on on European soil.

The scientific colloquium was the more substantive part of the commemoration of one century of high level teaching and study of international law. Many famous legal professors and experts had travelled to The Hague to be part of this impressive program, under the title "Challenges of International Law at the time of the Centenary of the Hague Academy".

The Hague Academy was in fact conceived – with the active support of Tobias Asser – during the second Peace Conference in the Hague in 1907, and was ready to start in October 1914. Unfortunately the Great War (WW1) intervened, so the first courses could only be held in the Peace Palace in 1923. The Academy has been famous for its world wide appeal, due in large measure to the excellence of the professors and of the students. "The best professors for the best students" is an underlying thought of this classic Academy. Admission is open to students who are in their last year of formation.

In these days, the Hague Academy attracts some 600 students from more than 100 nations to its summer courses, and 300 to the newly added wintercourses. All the scientific contributions, particularly the lectures by the professors and the result of the reserach centers, are being published in the globally famous "Recueil des Cours". This series is distributed world wide by publisher BRILL Nijhoff, both in print and also online. It is a great source of international legal thinking covering the perspectives on international law from all corners of the globe in both private international law and public international law. Not less than 430 volumes have as yet appeared. These scripts can be consulted in many of the law libraries around the world and

are widely quoted, both in academic literature and in decisions of international courts and tribunals.

Highlights of the Centenary program were, just to name a few, themes like "the humanization of international law", "the law applicable to international (investment) arbitration" and "should and can extraterritoriality be contained ? ". More down to earth were themes like "can international law help facing epidemics, or "Should and can, global finance be submitted to internartional law "? Many lively debates could be heard , by the best in the field, including the judges of ICJ who often were professors of international law and are sometimes elected to the Curatorium like former ICJ president Peter Tomka, judge Benouna (Morocco) and judge Charlesworth (Australia)

The Hague Academy of International Law is well known in the world, probably more so than in the Netherlands. The General Assembly of the UN annually calls upon States to support this grand old institution for the study, teaching and dissemination of international law. Over the years many States – at one point over 40 - have followed up on this call and made available some funding, in order to keep access to the courses as open as possible, notably for students from developing countries.

In this respect, the Hague Academy of International Law operates a succesful system of scholarships which are meant to reach those students who are best qualified to participate but lack the means to do so.

In the new Century ahead of it, the Academy will not only stick to its traditions like being

bilingual in French and English , but it will also try to innovate and engage with modern issues. One of these will no doubt be international criminal law, which happened to find itself at the forefront of several current debates. Not in the least because of the ongoing war in Ukraine, an aggression that goes against the fundamental principles of international law.



MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY IN THE HAGUE By John Dunkelgrün



The twentieth century produced three giants in the non-violent battle for human rights, **Mohandas Karamchand (Mahatma) Gandhi, Martin Luther King jr., and Nelson Mandela.** At the initiative of Ms. Roberta Enschede the organization Overseas Americans Remember (OAR) started an annual memorial dinner for Dr. King in 1986, the year his birthday became a National Holiday in the U.S. This year

the event was held at the press center of the Tweede Kamer (the lower house of the Dutch parliament).

The U.S. ambassador to the Netherlands, Her Excellency Shefali Razdan Duggal, opened the evening with a truly impassioned speech, in which she pointed out the many recent ‘wins’ for American women of color. She, Indian born, is the first woman of color to be the American ambassador to the Netherlands, Ketanji Brown Jackson is the first black woman on the Supreme Court and Kamela Harris is the first African-American/Asian-American woman Vice-President. That is how much has changed since the days of Dr. King.

Lois Mothershed Pot, who was the first black student at her university and the sister of Thelma Mothers, one of the Little Rock nine (remember them?) told of her father who served as an officer in the segregated US army in WW II, where white soldiers looked the other way, so they wouldn’t have to salute him, and his disappointment of coming back to a still highly segregated South.

There were other moving speeches and beautiful singing but the thing that struck me most was a speech by a young girl, Ariela Cohen. She is Jewish Israeli-American and spoke of her deep friendship with Malk Alblawi a Muslima from Saudi-Arabia. She was fed up with having to “explain their impossible friendship”, and was longing for the day when people could just be friends, whatever their background. It made me ponder. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if all the achievements about which the ambassador spoke, the fact that formal segregation no longer exists and that people of any color or creed can sit wherever they want, were so normal, they wouldn’t be worth talking about? Let us dream of the time when the achievements that the American ambassador spoke about so well, would be too humdrum even to mention.

Ms. Roberta Enschede is also the initiator of the annual Thanksgiving memorial in the Pieterskerk in Leiden, and was instrumental in getting April 19th formally recognised as Dutch-American Friendship Day by the U.S. Congress.

AMBASSADOR AZERBAIJAN MEETS MEMBERS OF THE PRESS

Representatives of some press outlets in the Netherlands had a briefing with the Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Netherlands, H.E. Mr. Rahman Mustafayev, at the chancellery on 9 October 2023 concerning projects for the reintegration of Karabakh Armenians.

Further on the program: the current situation in and around the Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the anti-terror measures undertaken by Azerbaijan in this region on September 19-20 and consequences, subsequent humanitarian support and reintegration efforts concerning the Armenian residents of the Karabakh region, the position of Azerbaijan on “ethnic cleansing” claims, the role of the international community in support of the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process, the relations between Azerbaijan and the Netherlands in the context of current issues in the South Caucasus.

The key takeaway points of the press meeting with Ambassador H.E. Mr. Rahman Mustafayev are as follows: Azerbaijan had to intervene in Nagorno-Karabakh due to the illegal presence of the Armenian military on

Azerbaijan territory. The enormous quantity of military equipment and ammunition found proves this. It is a violation of the UN. Security Council resolution and the agreement between Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Russia signed after the second war. Azerbaijan’s attack is, therefore, a counter-terrorism action.

Regarding ethnic cleansing, Azerbaijan facilitated free passage for the Karabakh Armenians exodus, providing food, fuel, and shelter access to the Red Cross. For those who would like to return, Azerbaijan has put in place a digital portal to enable people to apply to obtain Azerbaijan citizenship without relinquishing their Armenian passport. Additionally, on 11 October 2023, the Dutch Minister for Foreign Affairs Hanke Bruin Slot responded to questions from members of the Foreign Affairs Committee (No.2733) that there is no ground for any allegation of ethnic cleansing.

According to the Ambassador, the Caucasus region is ready for economic development. Azerbaijan proposes building a railway corridor to realize economic prosperity for Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia.



Concerning the allegations that Azerbaijan is an authoritarian state with a bad human rights record, the Ambassador referred to the fact that there is opposition, free press, and (media) tolerance in the country. There will be talks in Brussels and Russia, however, none in The Hague. Ambassador Mustafayev still sees a role for The Hague, the city of peace and justice in this conflict. The soft power of The Hague makes her an excellent mediator.

Furthermore, Ambassador Mustafayev considers it lamentable that the Netherlands is reluctant to assist with demining the territory.



MALTA CELEBRATES 59TH INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY WITH GRAND RECEPTION

the Royal Conservatory of The Hague, graced the occasion performing both the national anthems of Malta and the Netherlands. Their music selection included classical melodies and traditional Maltese folk songs.

Ambassador Pace, in his address, began by expressing his unwavering solidarity with Ukraine and paying tribute to those who have lost their lives during the war of aggression, which is now entering its second year. He acknowledged the courage and sacrifices made by the people of Ukraine and affirmed Malta's solidarity as an elected member of the UNSC.

During his speech Ambassador Pace extended his respectful salutations to the President of the International Criminal Court, Judge Piotr Hofmanski.

Looking ahead, Ambassador Pace noted that next year would mark a significant milestone

for Malta – the 20th anniversary of its accession to the European Union. He highlighted the economic benefits Malta has reaped from EU membership and underscored the shared values of peace, security, democracy, the rule of law, and human rights that unite EU member states.

In this context, Ambassador Pace paid tribute to the Netherlands for its longstanding commitment to the international rules-based order, hosting key institutions and international tribunals. He expressed gratitude to the representatives of these institutions present at the reception and assured them of Malta's steadfast support for their tireless work in upholding international peace and justice.

The historic embassy of Malta represented more than ever the spirit of a remarkable and storied nation.

To mark the 59th anniversary of Malta's Independence, Ambassador Mark Antony Pace hosted a splendid reception. The event saw the presence of high-ranking officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, diplomats representing many nations, members of the business community, heads of international organizations, individuals from the cultural sphere, Maltese and friends of Malta.

Adding a harmonious touch to the celebration, cellist Daniel Xuereb and violinist Kurt Falzon, both talented young musicians from

LAS HERMANAS VERA: A SPECTACULAR PERFORMANCE OF AUTHENTIC ARGENTINE FOLKLORE

On Wednesday, October 25th, the Argentine Embassy in The Hague was graced by the presence of Las Hermanas Vera, the legendary exponents of Argentinian Chamamé folklore. Their performance was nothing short of exceptional, captivating the audience that had filled the embassy's halls with joy and energy from the very first note. The Vera Sisters, hailed as legends of Argentine Folk Chamamé, delivered a concert that will be remembered for years to come.

This exclusive concert was made possible through the generous sponsorship of the Argentine Embassy, in collaboration with Diplomat Magazine. With over 100 original compositions and 32 albums to their name, along with two Gardel awards, Las Hermanas Vera are not just singers and songwriters; they are living legends who have crafted an extraordinary career that began in the 1970s in their hometown of Caa Catí, in the General Paz Department of the Corrientes Province.

The concert began with a warm welcome from Diego Sadofski, Minister Counsellor of

Argentina, who greeted the numerous guests in attendance. Among the distinguished guests were diplomats, Dutch and Argentinians, and the ambassadors of Uruguay, H.E. Alvaro Gonzalez Otero, and Bolivia, H.E. Roberto Calzadilla Sarmiento.

Once the formalities were done, the stage was set for Las Hermanas Vera to work their magic. The show kicked off, and it was a continuous stream of heartwarming, soul-stirring music. Songs like "Villa Guillermina," "A Pesar de Amarte Tanto," "Para ti," "Falso Juramento," and many others flowed seamlessly, leaving no room for rest. The audience was thoroughly engaged, with many joining in to sing along. The exceptional musicians accompanying Las Hermanas Vera were great interpreters of the rich rhythms of Chamamé, enhancing the entire concert experience.

Following the concert, the Argentine Embassy graciously hosted a reception where guests could savor Argentine wines, chipa, empanadas, and alfajores. This was a moment for photos and warm embraces, as the evening



had created an unforgettable bond between the audience and Las Hermanas Vera.

Chamame has been included as "Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity" by UNESCO in 2020. The performance by Las Hermanas Vera was a shining example of how the Argentine Embassy consistently brings authentic Argentine culture to the Netherlands. Congratulations to the Embassy of Argentina for yet another remarkable cultural event that further strengthens the bridge between Argentina and the Netherlands.

DIPLOMAT TOURISM & CULTURE

BEACH CLEANUP

India's G20 presidency in 2023 is marked by the poignant mantra "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," translating to "One Earth, One Family, One Future." Emblematic of this ethos, the Embassy of India in The Netherlands orchestrated a beach clean-up at Scheveningen on May 12, 2023, rallying over 150 participants to address plastic pollution through a citizen-led initiative. Ambassador Reenat Sandhu underscored India's commitment to combating marine litter during its G20 presidency, aligning with the nation's ongoing global initiatives. With the Netherlands as a guest member of the G20, this joint effort signifies a robust focus on environmental sustainability.

While instigated by the Indian Embassy, the clean-up was a collaborative endeavor involving Dutch civil society groups and public administrations. TrashUre Hunt, a Dutch NGO specializing in playful beach clean-ups, spearheaded the trash collection, joined by Stichting de Noordzee, dedicated to North Sea protection. The city of The Hague endorsed the initiative, exemplified by Deputy Mayor Hilbert Bredemeijer, while the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management highlighted the Netherlands' commitment to environmental cooperation with India.

The beach clean-up unfolded on a vibrant spring afternoon near Scheveningen's iconic pier, a popular Dutch tourist spot susceptible to litter accumulation during peak seasons. Participants, a diverse group comprising locals and diplomats, convened to witness a marine waste museum erected by TrashUre Hunt. This interactive display showcased various

objects found on the beach, emphasizing the impact of plastic pollution while inspiring creative repurposing.

The event commenced with participants mingling over South Indian coffee and millet biscuits, fostering a sense of camaraderie. Notable speakers, including Ambassador Reenat Sandhu, Deputy Mayor Hilbert Bredemeijer, and representatives from environmental organizations, articulated the collective responsibility in addressing marine pollution. The ensuing treasure hunt-style clean-up tasked teams with scouring designated areas for trash, emphasizing both quantity and specific items like cigarette butts. The outcome, a remarkable 240 kg of waste and 5420 cigarette butts, highlighted the tangible impact of communal efforts.

The significance of the event extended beyond a mere clean-up, serving as an educational platform. Ms. Afke van Rijn from the Ministry of Infrastructure emphasized the need for international collaboration to address Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and advocated for regulatory measures to combat plastic pollution. Ambassador Sandhu contextualized the clean-up within the broader G20 agenda, emphasizing the importance of sustainable lifestyles and India's Mission LiFE initiative.

India's G20 presidency extends its environmental focus to SDGs, including ocean preservation. The Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group meetings identified land preservation, circular economy, and resilient ocean management

as key areas. India's commitment to a 'Blue Economy' aligns with the Netherlands' expertise in water diplomacy, fostering collaboration in sustainable agriculture and renewable energy.

The Scheveningen beach clean-up underscores the power of collaboration, uniting citizens, government officials, and civil society to raise awareness and motivate collective action. Ambassador Sandhu's words echo the essence of the G20 slogan, emphasizing the shared responsibility of countries, individuals, and institutions in shaping a sustainable future on our shared Earth.



DIPLOMAT MAGAZINE CHESS TOURNAMENT 2023

By Roy Lie Atjam



Chess, is it a sport or an art? Some say it can be a sport, a science, or an art.

Diplomat Magazine organized two chess tournaments for diplomats and kiddies. The participants were chess fans of all ages, for example, the youngest participant was 6 years old. As in previous years the tournaments aims to consolidate friendship and strengthen solidarity among Diplomats.

The tournaments took place at Leonardo Royal Hotel in The Hague, courtesy of the Hotel, 18 February and 18 November 2023. Participants came from, Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Brazil, Norway, Bosnia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, Italy, Japan, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Senegal, Switzerland, Thailand, Ukraine and the USA. The ambassadors of Algeria and Bosnia participated in the tournament.

The tournament again attracted children as young as six years old. After a series of matches during which the players made their best tactical moves, Peru excelled invictus. Senegal came second. In November Brazil came on top followed by Senegal, Norway and Azerbaijan. Among the children, Russia, Philippines, Ecuador, Japan, Thailand and Pakistan.

It has been great fun, players enjoyed the networking opportunity. In the end all the players were given trophies or medals as a souvenir of the tournament.

Diplomat Magazine is looking forward to continuing to welcome diplomats chess fans of all ages.

DIPLOMAT TOURISM & CULTURE

CELEBRATING PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE: A CULINARY EXTRAVAGANZA IN THE HAGUE

Kalayaan. Kinabukasan. Kasaysayan – Freedom Future History



H.E. Jose Eduardo Malaya, Ambassador of the Philippines



The Hon. Dr. Rena Cristina Koa-Mlaya, spouse of the Ambassador of the Philippines, H.E. Jose Eduardo Malaya, warmly welcomed attendees to the cooking demonstration and luncheon hosted by the Philippine Embassy. This unique event aimed to showcase Filipino culture and heritage through the art of cooking.

The on-site cooking demonstration featured the talents of renowned Filipino chefs, Rolando and Jacqueline Laudico. Against the backdrop of the Embassy's garden, the chefs mesmerized the audience by preparing two signature dishes – Bistek Tagalog and Suman. The former, a seared beef tenderloin steak in pepper sauce served on sinangag garlic rice and topped with grilled onions. The latter, a sticky rice cake layered with coconut cream panna cotta, added a sweet note to the culinary showcase.

This culinary spectacle was a key component of the Embassy's commemorative activities for the 125th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence. Dr. Rena Cristina Koa-Mlaya emphasized the significance of the event, stating, "Today's event is extra special because we are proud to feature two renowned Filipino chefs who will not only cook for us but also introduce and provide insights into Filipino food and tradition."

While Filipino cuisine may be less known compared to its Southeast Asian counterparts, the country's diverse landscape and rich cultural influences contribute to a symphony of flavors. Dr. Koa-Mlaya highlighted the global recognition of Filipino cuisine, with chefs Andrew Zimmern and Anthony Bourdain branding it the "next big thing."

Chefs Rolando and Jacqueline Laudico, affectionately known as the "power culinary couple," have played a pivotal role in elevating Filipino cuisine onto the international stage. Their innovative approach to preparing, cooking, and serving Filipino dishes has garnered acclaim. The duo has traversed the globe, introducing Filipino food to diverse audiences, recently headlining culinary events in Brussels and Milan.

The cooking demonstration attracted a distinguished audience, including diplomats, friends of the Philippines, Dutch medias and chefs. The dynamic performance by Chef Lau and Chef Jackie allowed guests to savor the essence of Filipino food culture.

AMBASSADOR TAN JIAN'S SPEECH HIGHLIGHTS CHINA'S COMMITMENT TO PEACE AND COOPERATION

By Roy Lie Atjam

On the occasion of the 74th Anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, Ambassador Tan Jian delivered a thought-provoking speech during a multitudinous reception at the China Embassy in The Hague on September 21, 2023. His address was not only an opportunity to celebrate this significant milestone but also to shed light on China's stance on international politics and its bilateral relations with the Netherlands.

"Our world today is confronted with unprecedented challenges, like climate change, which require unprecedented cooperation," Ambassador Tan emphasized. He highlighted China's unwavering commitment to peace, development, and cooperation on the global stage, stating, "China is for peace, for development, for cooperation; China is for globalization, for multilateralism, for free trade."

The Ambassador then delved into President Xi Jinping's visionary initiatives, such as the Belt and Road Initiative and the Global Development Initiative. He stressed that these initiatives were not driven by geopolitical competition but rather aimed at fostering global cooperation.

In addressing global challenges like rising sea levels, Ambassador Tan stressed the importance of a stronger sense of community for a shared future, stating, "We are in the same boat."

Ambassador Tan acknowledged China's significant contributions to international organizations, including being the second-largest contributor to the UN regular budget and peacekeeping budget. He also noted China's commitment to disarmament, saying, "China is the second largest contributor to the budget of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons."

Reflecting on his mission's work over the past three years, Ambassador Tan emphasized the importance of promoting bilateral relations and multilateral cooperation, with the key message being that "China is part of the solution, not part of the problem."

As the speech coincided with the International Day of Peace, Ambassador Tan expressed China's deep love for peace, citing historical examples such as the construction of the

Great Wall for defense, not aggression. He also highlighted China's maritime expeditions led by Admiral Zheng He, which occurred 87 years before Christopher Columbus' journeys, with no colonization efforts.

Addressing concerns about technology, Ambassador Tan acknowledged China's role in the invention of gunpowder and emphasized the importance of responsible regulation. He said, "Seriously speaking, looking back at the one thousand year's history, I could not recall that China has done anything harming the interest of Europe."

Regarding bilateral relations between China and the Netherlands, Ambassador Tan celebrated the long history of contact between the two nations, tracing back over 400 years. He noted the substantial growth in trade volume, from \$69 million in 1972 to over \$130 billion in 2022, highlighting the Netherlands' position as China's second-largest trading partner within the EU.

The Ambassador also underscored the strong economic ties between the two nations, with the Netherlands being the largest destination of Chinese investment among



all EU countries. He reiterated the open and pragmatic partnership for comprehensive cooperation, defined by President Xi Jinping and King Willem-Alexander in 2014.

In closing, Ambassador Tan expressed optimism about the future of China-EU relations and emphasized China's commitment to maintaining open channels of communication and cooperation at all levels. He stated, "China will continue to promote exchanges at the levels of leaders, ministers, senior officials, and we will reach out to the people and local governments." Ambassador Tan's speech conveyed China's dedication to international collaboration and its aspirations for a peaceful and prosperous future.



H.E. Mr. Tan Jian, Ambassador of People's Republic of China

EXPLORING PAKISTAN'S TOURISM POTENTIAL

PAKISTAN TOURISM VIEWED FROM VARIOUS ANGLES



The Embassy of the Republic of Pakistan in the Netherlands organized the Explore Pakistan Tourism event with the aim of showcasing Pakistan's diverse tourism potential to the Dutch travel industry at Pakistan House in The Hague.

His Excellency Mr. Suljuk Mustansar Tarar, the Ambassador of Pakistan, along with Wiko van Rooijen, an explorer, writer, adventurer, and Jimmy Nelson, the author of the groundbreaking book *Before They Pass Away*, photographer, artist, and history teller, guided the audience through a journey to the hidden gems of Pakistan, sharing their experiences with Dutch participants who have traveled through the country.

The event drew the participation of prominent tourism companies, media representatives, and delegates from airlines, PUM, and VvKR—an association comprising 450 travel specialists.

Ambassador Mr. Suljuk Mustansar Tarar presented compelling reasons why Pakistan should be a preferred destination for Dutch tourists. He emphasized how those interested in history and civilization could explore the heart of the Indus Valley civilization, Buddhist sites, or locations linked to Alexander the Great's famous battles. Enthusiasts of geography and landscape could visit deserts, plains, and the Northern areas of Pakistan,

home to some of the highest mountains and plains, as well as the largest snow mass outside the polar regions. Additionally, those with an interest in cultural or religious sites could explore Sikhism's sacred places or Sufi shrines across Pakistan. He also highlighted Pakistan as an attractive business destination for investment in the hospitality industry.

Thematic videos showcasing Pakistan's diverse landscapes and cultural heritage captivated the audience, setting the stage for Mr. Jimmy Nelson's animated presentation. Mr. Nelson, known for his journeys through indigenous cultures captured by his camera lens, shared insights into his photography and storytelling, including works such as 'Before They Pass Away' and 'Homage To Humanity.' In a TED-Talk style presentation, Mr. Nelson proclaimed Pakistan among the most beautiful destinations globally, reflecting on his experiences as a young adventurer and photographer in the country. He also hinted at his upcoming project.

Mr. Wilco van Rooijen, the first and only Dutch climber to complete the Explorers

Grand Slam, added his perspective, praising Pakistan, its people, and culture. He shared his experiences, particularly his expedition to K2, chronicled in the book "Surviving K2," available in both English and Dutch. Mr. van Rooijen conveyed his passion for Pakistan through a video message, encouraging Dutch travellers to explore the country.

The Managing Director of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), Mr. Aftab ur Rehman Rana, delivered a comprehensive presentation on the various tourism options Pakistan offers, highlighting investment opportunities in the sector. He underscored Pakistan's unique position where the great mountain ranges of Hindukush, Himalayas, and Karakorum converge in the North. Mr. Rana also outlined the government's initiatives to promote tourism, including the online visa facility for residents of many countries, including the Netherlands.

The presentations were followed by an engaging Q&A session where Dutch tour operators expressed keen interest in learning more about tourism opportunities in Pakistan. The inspirational evening concluded with a delightful Pakistani dinner buffet.

UNVEILING THE MARVELS OF MOCHE ART



Dr. Edward de Bock and the Ambassador of Peru, H.E. Ms. Marisol Agüero Colunga

On October 5, 2023, the Embassy of Peru in the Netherlands, in collaboration with The Arts Society of The Hague, hosted an unforgettable evening at the official residence of the Ambassador of Peru in Wassenaar. This extraordinary event featured Dr. Edward de Bock, a distinguished authority on Moche art, archaeology, and the pre-Columbian history of Peru. The lecture left an indelible mark on attendees, including notable figures such as Ambassador Fernando Arias and his wife Patricia, Ambassador of Greece Caterina Ghini, members of The Arts Society of The Hague, and Helen Sijssling, the visiting Chairwoman of the Nerja Arts Society in Spain.

Dr. Edward de Bock, whose lifelong passion for archaeology and Peruvian pre-Columbian civilizations began at the age of nine, presented a masterful exploration of Moche art. His expertise, honed over years of dedicated research, has positioned him as a global authority on the subject. The event was graciously opened by Her Excellency Marisol Agüero Colunga, the Ambassador of Peru, whose remarks set the stage for an evening of intellectual enlightenment.

Dr. Bock's lecture was hailed as "one of the most complete" ever witnessed, a testament to his profound knowledge and captivating presentation style. The audience was taken on a journey through the intricacies of Moche art, including discussions on cosmic order, regeneration, remarkable archaeological discoveries, and ongoing excavations uncovering new facets of this ancient civilization.

The significance of various elements in Moche art was explored, such as the role of women in regenerating civilization, the functions of priests, and the symbolism of animals like pumas, snakes, and catfish. Dr. Bock highlighted the concept of past, present, and future coexisting in a continuous cycle within Moche art. The audience actively engaged with questions and applause, expressing their collective fascination for the subject.

Throughout the lecture, Dr. Bock skillfully brought Moche art to life with images and drawings showcasing unique handmade portrait-pottery, delicate gold masks, and impressive archaeological remains like the tomb of the Lord of Sipan, a Moche king. The visual feast further enriched the audience's experience, transporting them to a world where the rich history and symbolism of Moche art seemed to come alive.

After the lecture, the Chairman of The Arts Society of The Hague, His Excellency Andrea Perugini, expressed profound gratitude to Dr. Bock for his unwavering dedication and Ambassador Agüero Colunga for orchestrating the conference. The event was recognized as a landmark intersection of art, history, and archaeology, where Dr. Bock's passion and dedication illuminated the profound beauty and mystery of Moche art.

The evening concluded with a reception, where guests enjoyed Peruvian cuisine and the iconic Pisco Sour cocktail. Lively conversations continued for hours, with many expressing a strong desire to visit Peru and explore its museums, temples, and other pre-Columbian archaeological remains.

In essence, Dr. Edward de Bock's conference on Moche Art will be remembered as a pivotal event that showcased the brilliance of a distinguished scholar, leaving a lasting impact on the intersection of art, history, and archaeology.



VIVA MEXICO!

In September, the Embassy of Mexico in The Hague lit up Paard van Troje with a vibrant and unforgettable celebration of the 213th anniversary of the Independence of Mexico.

'Noche Mexicana', as the event was titled, was graciously hosted by His Excellency Mr. José Antonio Zabalgoitia, the Ambassador of Mexico.

The festivities kicked off with a reception, where Ambassador Zabalgoitia, his wife and the dedicated Mexican diplomatic staff warmly welcomed friends from the diplomatic community at large, international organizations in the field of justice, foreign affairs and migration, members of the academic community, as well as Dutch government officials. The guests were so numerous – including ambassadors from Algeria to Uruguay, from Russia to Rwanda, from China to Croatia, from Panama to Ghana, from Azerbaijan to South Africa, from New Zealand to Germany, from Switzerland to Poland, that it is truly impossible to mention all of them.

Guests had the pleasure of savoring homemade Mexican hors d'oeuvres and enjoying a drink in a traditional Mexican atmosphere of camaraderie and friendship. After the reception, the doors swung open to embrace members of the vibrant Mexican Community, who joined in for a memorable 'Noche Mexicana'. The heart of the evening traditionally began with the 'Cry of Dolores' or 'El Grito', a unique ceremony that re-enacts the historic uprising of the Mexican people for independence, which started with the insurrection of Dolores, Mexico on September 16, 1810, when the priest Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla rang his church bell and gave the 'call to arms'.

What made this rendition even more special was the active participation of the audience, who enthusiastically joined in with their own spirited cries of 'Viva Mexico'.

Ambassador Zabalgoitia's remarkable performance infused this pivotal moment with energy and pride. He exclaimed loudly: 'Viva to the heroes that gave us fatherland and freedom', mentioning the names of the fallen heroes who died during the War of Independence and followed by all the guests repeating together with him, in one voice: 'Viva Mexico!'

THE HAGUE'S ANNUAL DIPLOMATIC CORPS RECEPTION: A BLEND OF CULTURE, DIPLOMACY, AND COMMITMENT TO GLOBAL ISSUES

As the night progressed, Paard van Troje swelled with the presence of hundreds of diplomats representing nearly every country in The Hague. Alongside were Mexicans, many of whom proudly adorned in traditional attire, creating a gorgeous kaleidoscope of colors.

The evening was also a culinary delight, as after the official reception, food was available for purchase from three of the best Mexican restaurants in the Netherlands. The flavors of Mexico took everybody on a gastronomic journey through this diverse and wonderful country.

However, it was the mariachis who stole the show, with a repertoire of the most beloved Mexican songs as guests couldn't resist dancing, singing, and clamoring for more. All of this, of course, between cries of "Viva Mexico" from the crowd.

It was the warmest and most festive Mexican National Day we have ever seen.

Until next year: *'Viva Mexico!'*



The Mayor of The Hague, Mr. Jan van Zanen, once again played host to a prestigious annual event that brought together members of the Diplomatic Corps, representatives of international organizations, and distinguished guests from the Royal Household. This tradition, which has become a hallmark of The Hague's diplomatic calendar, showcases the city's commitment to promote international relations and cultural exchange.

Last year's reception at Panorama Mesdag set a high bar for excellence, with its unique venue and Mayor van Zanen's warm accessibility leaving a lasting impression, especially on the new diplomats in the city. This year, the spotlight turned to the contemporary art museum exclusively focuses on contemporary sculpture, *Sculptures by the Sea*, nestled like a hidden jewel in the Scheveningen dunes.

The Diplomatic Corps, representing nearly every country in the world, answered Mayor van Zanen's call, highlighting the international significance of The Hague as the City of Peace and Justice. The city, home to the Dutch government, the king's workplace, and numerous international organizations, including the U.N.'s International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court, stands as a global hub for diplomacy and justice.

Mayor van Zanen, often affectionately referred to as "our Mayor" by the diplomatic community, embodies a perfect blend of warmth, diligence, awareness of international issues, and an effective people-to-people approach. His role extends beyond representing the local population to also being a mayor for the thousands of internationals temporarily residing in the city.

The evening's program began with the arrival of guests at 18:00, followed by speeches from Mayor van Zanen and the museum director, Ms. Brigitte Bloksma, at 18:30. Mayor van Zanen's speech touched on the geopolitical situation, natural disasters, and the importance of maintaining and sustaining monumental buildings in the city.

Reflecting on the corrosive nature of the sea and the impact on historic buildings, the

Mayor emphasized the need for Tender Love and Care (TLC) for embassies, residencies, and international organizations housed in such buildings. He connected the city's ambition to be climate neutral by 2030 to the global effort, inviting diplomats to a round table on climate action on November 28.

Addressing global challenges, including earthquakes in Turkey and Morocco, the situation in Ukraine, and geopolitical developments, Mayor van Zanen urged a commitment to a peaceful and just world. He thanked diplomats for their daily work towards this goal and highlighted the importance of open dialogue and maintaining connections.

The evening also featured the recently opened exhibition of sculptor Tom Claassen, whose collection showcased archetypal characteristics of people, animals, and objects.

Accompanied by music from students of the Royal Conservatoire, the reception created a perfect blend of diplomacy, culture, and art.

In essence, The Hague's Annual Diplomatic Corps Reception, under the leadership of Mayor Jan van Zanen, continues to be a symbol of the city's dedication to international collaboration, cultural exchange, and addressing global challenges. The melding of diplomatic discourse, artistic expression, and the warm hospitality of our Mayor create an atmosphere that fosters connections and promotes the values of peace and justice that The Hague proudly represents on the world stage.



EXPLORING TECHNOLOGY/KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER IN THE NETHERLANDS

By Eleni Vasiliki Bampaliouta

The educational trip for innovation and entrepreneurship in the Netherlands, under the Entrepreneurial University program, involving six Greek universities, has concluded successfully. This educational visit encompassed a series of intensive workshops and networking opportunities in the Netherlands during the summer, specifically tailored for members of Technology Transfer Offices from six Greek universities and research centers. The visit was meticulously organized by the Embassy of the Netherlands in Athens, in collaboration with Preneurz Amsterdam and Orange Grove, as part of their "Entrepreneurial University" initiative for fostering innovation and entrepreneurship.

Themed "Exploring Technology/Knowledge Transfer in the Netherlands," the program centered around the Dutch experience in transferring technology from laboratories to society. It delved into how entrepreneurial thinking is cultivated within academic communities, thereby enhancing the social impact of Higher Education Institutions and Research Centers.

The itinerary featured visits to key locations such as the Starthub of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Amsterdam Science Park/Startup Village, the Humanities Venture Lab of the University of Amsterdam, and the Leiden Bio Science Park at Leiden University. Each day focused on a different scientific field—technology transfer in the natural sciences, humanities and social sciences, and biomedical sciences—providing in-depth insights into corresponding opportunities, challenges, and specificities. These included the design of know-how transfer strategies, infrastructure development, policies, and methodologies, with the aim of offering multidimensional knowledge.

Representatives from Greek universities explored various initiatives and infrastructures, gaining familiarity with programs and synergies between researchers, startups, universities, established companies, municipalities, and the wider state. The overarching goal was to facilitate the dissemination of innovations and research results across a spectrum of scientific fields to society, employing suitable channels and infrastructures.

The Dutch Ambassador to Greece, H.E. Ms. Susanna Terstal, met with participants at the



conclusion of the program and remarked, "In our relationship with Greece, the exchange of knowledge and know-how is important. The 'Entrepreneurial University' program is a good example of cooperation between our countries. The Dutch Embassy facilitates connections between the higher education sectors of Greece and the Netherlands in matters of innovation and entrepreneurship. Over the last two years, the workshops have fostered increased collaboration between universities and centers of the two countries, yielding very positive results."

The program, spearheaded by Erik Boer and Arjan Goudsblom, co-founders of Preneurz Amsterdam, experts in entrepreneurship and technology transfer in Dutch universities, provided international know-how exchange. The "Entrepreneurial University" program commenced in 2021 with a series of workshops (masterclasses) aimed at knowledge exchange between the Greek and Dutch university ecosystems. Speakers shared their experiences, offering advice and addressing challenges posed by participants, grounded in real examples from their universities. The program is set to continue in the next period through targeted actions and further collaborations with the university institutions and research centers of Greece.



GOOD WINES AND DIPLOMACY GO HAND IN HAND

Diplomat Magazine recently talked to Mr. Peter van Houtert, managing director of Verbunt Verlinden which is a leading modern Dutch wine importer, representing a global range of top brands to the Netherlands and part of the Salentein Company, owned by the Mijndert Pon family.

With wines from the more affordable ones to the leading wineries, from the traditional to the innovative and quirky, Mr. Van Houtert emphasized especially on the attention that the company pays to quality of its products. Verbunt Verlinden supplies various customer groups in the Netherlands, different wine merchants, independent liquor stores and wholesalers as well as the catering industry. In addition, Verbunt Verlinden supplies wines to various large parties with national distribution.

'Verbunt Verlinden focuses on wholesale, catering and independent wine specialty stores, called Wijnkring, a select group of wine specialists. There are approximately 110 Wijnkring stores spread throughout the Netherlands, as being the largest and oldest wine retail concept in the country, a partnership of independent liquor stores and

wine merchants, who distinguish themselves by a wide and high-quality range of wines from all parts of the world. In The Hague you can find our wines at Jansen Wijnen, Willem Royaardsplein 6, 2597 GS Den Haag, or by www.wijnkring.nl.

Mr. Van Houtert continued telling us about the company values, 'corporate social responsibility (CSR) is also very important to us. We try to choose wineries that are committed to CSR, with focus on organic or biodynamic and vegan viticulture and/or following (regional) rules, thus obtaining certificates regarding sustainability and Fair Trade.

Verbunt Verlinden also complies with specified qualitative requirements relating to the quality of purchased and delivered wines, transport, environment, purchasing and food safety. This is stated in the license conditions that the KVNW agrees with each Registered Wine Merchant, following high international standards such as HACCP, BRC, IFS and ISO 9001/22000.

When it comes to the special connection to the diplomatic world, Mr. Van Houtert says: 'I



am also President of the Royal Association of Dutch Wine Importers. We have a very good relation with the diplomatic community in The Hague, especially related to the wine producing countries. That is why sometimes we have meetings hosted in the official residences of the Ambassadors of South-Africa, Germany, Australia or Argentina. It is an excellent opportunity to inform our members about new developments in their wine businesses'.

Mr. Van Houtert adds that, among others, because of Bodegas Salentein, the company has a special relation with the embassy of Argentina. Verbunt Verlinden was the supplier of some of the most exquisite wines for the New Year Diplomatic Reception at the Peace Palace and the 10th Diplomats Welcome After-Summer party. 'We regularly support the embassy with our Argentinian wines for special occasions. We will, if possible, continue to do so also for the same event, next year'.

RWANDA AT THE AMSTERDAM COFFEE FESTIVAL

Celebrating the Dutch coffee scene and the privileged coffee market for both local consumption and export, Amsterdam Coffee Festival was born seven years ago after the successful London Coffee Festival.

Rwanda is an expert who already has a history at the festival. Rwanda Coffee export companies participated in the Amsterdam Coffee Festival for the fourth time. This coffee trade show, themed "Pioneering coffee excellence & connecting communities," highlighted the diversity of the global coffee industry, providing over 8,000 attendees with various opportunities to engage coffee business dealers from around the world.

Rwanda's participation in this festival has been organized by the National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB) and the Istituto per la Cooperazione Universitaria Onlus (ICU), with support from the Embassy of the Republic of Rwanda to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The following eight Rwandan companies represented the country at the Rwanda Coffee stand (G45): Baho Coffee,

Kanya Coffee, Kivu Belt Coffee, Mountain Coffee, Mubuga Coffee, Nova Coffee, Nyakizu Coffee, Rwashosco and Sake Coffee.

"The festival is an excellent event for coffee enthusiasts, significant industry leaders and of course many other participants to enjoy the uniqueness of our specialty coffee. On the other hand, it is an excellent opportunity for the country to increase the awareness of the coffee brand Rwanda Coffee – A Second Sunrise and to attract more buyers." said H.E. Olivier J.P. Nduhungirehe, the Ambassador of the Republic of Rwanda to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The Rwanda Coffee brand demonstrated potential for widespread recognition when exhibited in the last three editions of Amsterdam Coffee Festival under the support of NAEB and the Embassy of the Republic of Rwanda in The Hague. It stood out among other specialty coffee origins, leading the way for other origins.

The goal of Rwanda's participation in this prestigious event is to create long-term commercial ties, by piquing the interest of

coffee lovers in the Netherlands and raising the brand's awareness on the global market.

The initiative is part of ICU's Coffee Value Chain Development project that has the goal to improve quality and quantity of coffee produced by smallholder farmers, strengthen coffee processing companies and cooperatives to build more sustainable businesses, facilitate access to finance and increase visibility on the international market. The project is working with more than 12,000 smallholder farmers and 20 coffee washing stations across 12 districts of Rwanda. Since the Netherlands is the third-largest exporter of roasted coffee in the world and the seventh-largest buyer of green coffee in Europe, there is much that Rwandan businesses might learn from the Dutch added value in coffee and secure markets for their green coffee.

Last year Rwanda exported to the Netherlands 466.3 metric tons of coffee valued USD2,330,008. Rwanda aims to increase the export of roasted coffee beans.

RWANDA NATIONAL DAY

The Hague, the 29th anniversary of Rwanda's liberation, was celebrated on the 4th of July 2023 under the theme "Together we prosper". The Embassy of the Republic of Rwanda hosted the Kwibohora29 celebration with an elegant reception at the Marriott Hotel The Hague.

H.E. Ambassador Olivier J.P. Nduhungirehe, his spouse and the Embassy team welcomed more than 150 guests including members of the diplomatic community, high-ranking representatives of the Dutch government, representatives of international organizations, leaders of the Rwandan community and friends of Rwanda.

Ms. Martine Van Hoogstraten, Deputy Director for Sub-Saharan Africa's desk of the Ministry of Foreign The Hague, delivered opening remarks at the Liberation Day festivities, and honoring the victims of the 1994 genocide.

Hoogstraten further expressed, in line with the new Africa strategy of the Netherlands, the importance of reciprocity and bilateral relations between equal nations, an especially important point in working to just solutions to threats to peace and open dialogue between nations.

H.E. Olivier J.P. Nduhungirehe, Ambassador of the Republic of Rwanda, delivered the keynote address.

"My wife Virginie, the whole staff of the Embassy of Rwanda and I wish to thank you all for finding time on your busy schedule to be with us today. I will only take a few minutes of your time to tell you why you were invited and what we are celebrating. This evening, we are not celebrating a national day only. We are celebrating values and principles – actually three sets of values: (1) togetherness and prosperity, (2) friendship and cooperation, and (3) multilateralism and international law."

"We are celebrating togetherness and prosperity on the occasion of the National Day of Rwanda, which is a two-in-one event. Today 4th July 2023 is first and foremost the 29th anniversary of Rwanda's Liberation Day, which marks the day on which the forces of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF-Inkotanyi) overthrew the ethnic regime that was

committing the genocide against the Tutsi for the previous hundred days."

"Today's national day is a two-in-one event as I said earlier, because we also mark the 61st anniversary of the Independence of Rwanda, which was recovered on July 1st, 1962, after more than six decades of colonisation."

"This evening, we are also celebrating friendship and cooperation. Friendship of Rwanda with the Kingdom of the Netherlands, but also with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, to which I am also accredited as non-resident Ambassador. Those three Baltic States have become solid economies since their independence and reliable partners of Rwanda, to which they serve as development models, especially in e-governance, FinTech, manufacturing industry and technology."

"Finally, we are today celebrating multilateralism and international law. This celebration is sometimes necessary in this troubled world; and there was no better city on this planet where we can do that other than The Hague, the international city of peace and justice. Rwanda, as a small country on the map but great in ideas, firmly believes in multilateralism, which is a kind of 'international togetherness.'"

The Ambassador also offered personal congratulations to The Hague Academy of International Law, the Permanent Court of Arbitration, and the The Hague Conference on Private International Law, highlighting the important work they continue to do.

Finally, a toast was offered, "To our togetherness and prosperity, to our friendship and cooperation; and to multilateralism and international law."

A noble goal, one in which guests in attendance heartily agreed. Afterwards, traditional Rwandan dance and music made for a fun and lively atmosphere for guests to celebrate the great achievements of Rwanda now, and into the future.

THE PLACE OF SORROW

The Second World War, deemed the most devastating conflict in human history, reached the territory of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, and was subsequently named the Great Patriotic War. This war inflicted unprecedented economic, military, and human losses upon the countries of the former Soviet Union, particularly affecting nations like Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and Belarus. Millions of Soviet soldiers were captured and sent to various concentration camps established in Europe during the initial months, a consequence of the Wehrmacht's rapid war operations.

Between the cities of Leusden and Amersfoort in the Netherlands, a concentration camp, now known as the Place of Sorrow, was established. The name of the camp derived from the deplorable conditions in which



prisoners were held, the extreme brutality they endured, and their eventual executions.

The fate of Central Asian prisoners of war, notably the one hundred and one prisoners from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan, has piqued the interest of not only Turkic peoples but also Europeans. Journalist-researcher Remko Reyding, in particular, is investigating the history of the appearance of these 101 POWs so far from the front line.

According to available information, a third of the Central Asian prisoners did not survive the winter of 1941-1942. Some fell victim to medical experiments. The remaining 77 prisoners were executed in the forest of Amersfoort on the morning of April 9, 1942, because the "propaganda" of fascism was not disseminated. Their bodies were destroyed using special chemical means to conceal the traces of the crime. At this site where Uzbek, Kazakh, and Turkmen soldiers were executed, the Monument Koedriest has been erected. On the eve of the liberation of Holland, the

Nazis also destroyed prisoners of war and their personal documents, complicating effective investigations.

Presently, regular events are held to commemorate the war victims. Notably, a conference dedicated to the memory of the victims buried in Amersfoort was organized this year. It was attended by 25 representatives of Uzbek, Kazakh, Azerbaijani, and other Turkic-speaking nationalities living in the Netherlands, including official representatives of the embassies of Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan in the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

During the event, the burial sites of the victims were visited, and the Koran was read for their souls. Subsequently, an excursion was organized in the memorial complex "Soviet Field of Glory" and the museum part of the former concentration camp in the city of Amersfoort.

Moreover, in the activists' hall of the Eemland library in Amersfoort city, a lecture was delivered by R. Reiding about the 101 Turkish

victims, detailing the processes and difficulties of clarifying their identity. Journalist and translator Sh. Ahmedov also spoke on the topic "Uzbekistan during the Second World War." In his speech, Sh. Ahmedov highlighted the contribution of Uzbekistan to the victory during the war years, the bravery of the Uzbeks, and the military and food products that the Uzbek people sent to the war fronts.



NATIONAL DAYS

ASEAN@56 CELEBRATIONS

We dare to dream, we care to share, together for ASEAN

By Roy Lie Atjam

The Indonesian Ambassador's residence, Wismar Duta, hosted the 56th anniversary of ASEAN. The celebration began with the hoisting of the ASEAN flag followed by a stunning performance by students from Sekolah Indonesia Den Haag -SIDH.

Indonesia successfully hosted the celebration of the 56th Anniversary of ASEAN (ASEAN Day) on 8 August 2023 at the Ambassador's Residence in Wassenaar. Indonesia is currently the Chair of the ASEAN Committee in The Hague (ACTH) for the second semester of 2023.

The event began with the ASEAN flag raising ceremony by the Flag Raising Troop of the Indonesian School in The Hague (SIDH) accompanied by the ASEAN Anthem, followed by remarks by the Indonesian Ambassador to the Netherlands, Mr. Mayerfas, and the Director for Asia and Oceania of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Ambassador Karin Mössenlechner.

Ambassador Mayerfas said that ASEAN is the most successful and peaceful regional organization in the world despite its diversity and various challenges both internally and externally. Ambassador Mayerfas encouraged ASEAN Dialogue Partners and external parties to continue working together in creating a peaceful, stable, resilient, and prosperous region, and to be optimistic that ASEAN would become the world's major economic power in 2045.

The event was also enlivened by cultural performances and special dishes from each ACTH country. Indonesia presented an angklung performance of Michael Jackson's Heal The World and a folk song, Rek Ayo Rek.

ASEAN Day was attended by around 150 invitees, consisting of ASEAN Ambassadors accredited to the Netherlands and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) both based in the Netherlands and Belgium, Ambassadors and representatives of ASEAN Dialogue Partners



based in the Netherlands, representatives of international organizations based in the Netherlands, representatives of diaspora from each ACTH country who reside in the Netherlands, and Embassy officials of each ACTH country.

ASEAN Matters, Epicentrum of Growth !



ALGERIA TO HOST "CHEMEX AFRICA 2023, CAPACITY BUILDING WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION"

ALGIERS, SEPTEMBER 23RD - OCTOBER 04TH, 2023



Algeria attended, with a large delegation, the 5th Review Conference on the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, held in The Hague from 15 to 19 May 2023.

This participation was rendered even more high-profiled and distinctive by the convening, in close coordination with the Technical Secretariat of OPCW, of a very well-attended side-event, on 15 May 2023 in The Hague, dubbed "CHEMEX Africa 2023, Capacity building within the framework of South-South Cooperation". Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives of Canada, South-Africa, Namibia, Rwanda, Mozambique and Vietnam and other Ambassadors, top officials of the Organization, diplomats and experts of different nationalities attended the event and interacted with the speakers.

In her opening address at the side-event, Ambassador Salima Abdelhak reiterated Algeria's full commitment to disarmament, chemical disarmament included. She stressed also the prominent role of Algeria and its contributions in the implementation OPCW's capacity building activities, especially in Africa. Afterwards, the Permanent Representative of Canada, Ambassador Lisa Helfand reaffirmed her country's support as major donor to CHEMEX Africa 2023 in Algiers

The other members of the Algerian delegation, namely Head of the National Authority and its board members presented this national mechanism designed to ensure full implementation of the Convention on Chemical Weapons as well as Algeria's efforts to promote South-South cooperation within the scope of OPCW's activities.

They also outlined the state of preparations for "CHEMEX Africa", due to take place in Algiers from September 23rd to October 04th, 2023. This landmark event is a pan-African multi-component emergency response exercise and demonstration. It aims at developing counter-chemical capability in Africa in order to mitigate, investigate, respond and recover from chemical incidents or attacks involving chemical weapons and toxic industrial chemicals. It also intends to foster 'South-South' cooperation by encouraging broad participation of African instructors and to check and improve preparedness of African countries to respond to chemical-related incidents.

Representative of the Algerian National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology attended as well the event and gave a presentation on the expertise of this major scientific hub.

For their part, senior officials of the Technical secretariat of OPCW presented "CHEMTECH Centre" and its foreseen contributions in capacity building in Africa.

It is worth noting that "CHEMEX Africa 2023" will run over a period of 02 weeks and comprises 05 phases: Phase 01 - Briefing/pre-exercise Lecture/workshop (TS lead); Phase 02 - Basic Assistance and Protection Course (EAC team/mentors lead); Phase 03 - Specialised Skills Demo and Training (Supporting SP lead); Phase 04 - Field Exercise (TS/Mentorlead); and Phase 05-African stakeholders/VIP Demo and Exercise/Exhibition (TS lead).

In the meeting, attendees thoroughly discussed requirements, criteria and other specifications related to the participation to "CHEMEX AFRICA 2023" such as profile and maximum number of participants each country is allowed to.

In this respect, SADD, ECOWAS and ECCAS countries were strongly encouraged to participate in CHEMEX Africa 2023 Algiers. It is also expected that gender-sensitive policy will be implemented by encouraging more females to apply.

At the end, Ambassadors and other officials present at this side-event commanded Algeria for hosting the upcoming event.

THE AFRICA CLIMATE SUMMIT 2023: A UNIFIED CALL FOR CLIMATE ACTION

In early September 2023, African Heads of State and Government convened in Nairobi, Kenya for the Africa Climate Summit (ACS). This gathering of leaders, alongside global counterparts, intergovernmental organizations, civil society groups, and more, culminated in a shared commitment to address climate change.

Hosted by H.E. President William Ruto, the summit delivered a united African vision that prioritizes both climate action and sustainable development. The leaders emphasized the urgency of implementing COP27 decisions, calling for a 43% reduction in global emissions by the end of the decade, aligning with the goals of the Paris Agreement. Africa's vulnerability to climate change, with its rapidly warming climate and frequent extreme weather events, was a central concern.

The impact of climate change on African nations is profound, from devastating droughts and floods to the humanitarian crises that follow. Furthermore, millions lack access to electricity and clean cooking, and urbanization is on the rise, posing new challenges. Despite Africa's abundant renewable energy resources, investments in this sector have been limited.

The African leaders underscored the vital role of Africa's forests, especially the Congo Basin rainforest, in global climate regulation. They also recognized the importance of oceans in climate action, reflecting commitments made at international ocean sustainability conferences.

Collective action was deemed imperative, including accelerated emission reduction efforts, fulfilling the long-standing promise of \$100 billion annually in climate finance, phasing out coal, and eliminating fossil fuel subsidies. Encouraging investment in green growth and inclusive economies was a priority.

Continental cooperation was emphasized, including regional grid connectivity and the operationalization of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement. Green industrialization,



sustainable agriculture, and drought resilience were also key focus areas.

The leaders called for stronger partnerships with other regions, stressing the need for financial, technical, and technological support for climate adaptation. They highlighted the opportunity for global decarbonization to promote equality and prosperity while urging support for Africa's transition toward low-carbon development.

Addressing the immense funding required for climate action, the leaders proposed a new Special Drawing Rights (SDR) issuance and debt relief measures. They also advocated for international tax cooperation to reduce corporate tax revenue losses in Africa.

Recognizing the inadequacy of multilateral finance reforms, the leaders urged world leaders to consider a global carbon taxation regime, which includes carbon taxes on fossil fuel trade, maritime transport, and aviation. This, coupled with a global financial transaction tax (FTT), could provide accessible financing for climate-positive investments. A new financing architecture responsive to Africa's needs was envisioned, including debt restructuring and a Global Climate Finance Charter.

Finally, it was decided that the Africa Climate Summit would become a biennial event organized by the African Union and hosted by AU Member States. This platform aims to shape Africa's vision while addressing global climate and development challenges.

In summary, the Africa Climate Summit 2023 marked a crucial moment in the fight against climate change. African leaders called for global solidarity, emphasizing the need for swift and decisive action to combat climate change while promoting sustainable development on the continent. This unified call for climate action serves as a beacon of hope for Africa's future and the planet as a whole.

HERRING AT THE LEONARDO

By John Dunkelgrün

The Dutch Fish Authority decides every year when the herring is just right for the catch. It has to be fatty enough, but not yet ready to spawn. The day the first herring catch comes in is a typical Scheveningen festival, "Vlaggetjesdag", during which all the fishing boats are decorated with flags and a symbolic first barrel of herring is auctioned off for charity. Then come the herring parties. Many people and organizations use the occasion to get their friends and relations together for herring and -often- ice-cold old Dutch gin (jenever).

The Leonardo Hotel is host to one of the memorable herring parties in The Hague. Only paused during Corona time, it has gone on for more than three decades. It attracts diplomats, corporate clients, Leonardo partners, and the press. Having started simply with herring, some condiments, and jenever, it has developed into a culinary feast of finger foods.

This year was decidedly different in two ways. The manager of the hotel, Mr. Patrick Aarsman, used the occasion to introduce suppliers, who follow the same sustainable development goals (SDGs) as the Leonardo group. There were delicious vegan bitterballen made from oyster mushrooms that were grown on used coffee grinds by a company called "Ge-zwam". A large charitable organization called Ipse de Bruggen, which also operates the lunchroom in the Resident, the building of the ministries of VWS and SZW, served a very special herring tartare dish. This foundation, among many other things, employs people with a challenge, physical or mental, and endeavors to help them live a productive and social life. A third partner of the Leonardo Group is the "Made Blue Foundation", a non-profit that helps bring clean healthy water to developing countries and promotes the use of sustainable and reusable water bottles everywhere.

The second difference this year was the start of the new group's meeting concept "Now we're talking". Chantalle Kaljee, Leonardo's effervescent events manager, explained that long meetings with only a short pause for a coffee and a sneak outside for a puff, can be numbingly boring. If you cheer them up and make them more playful, people stay

more alert, more inspired, and groups more productive. That is why they have introduced games such as Super Yenga and big red balls to sit on to lighten the atmosphere. The staff is encouraged to interact with the guests during breaks, all with the intention to make boring business baa-blahs into creative and inspirational events.

In this spirit, the afternoon was livened up by the music of a wonderful saxophonist, Mr. Rafael Pereira Lima, whose superb playing warranted more attention than a busy garden party affords.



John Dunkelgrün and Patrick Aarsman



Linda Divon, H.E. Mr. Mark Anthony Pace, Ambassador of Malta and former Israeli Ambassador, Haim Divon



Oscar Izquierdo, Minister Counsellor of Ecuador and H.E. Ms. Beti Jacheva, Ambassador of North Macedonia

KAANDORP CHEESE: A SYMPHONY OF EXCELLENCE



In the realm where passion for excellence converges with unwavering dedication, extraordinary products are born. Kaandorp Cheese stands as a testament to this fusion of passion and hard work, crafting an unparalleled experience for cheese enthusiasts.

Founded in 1929 as a family business, Kaandorp Cheese has evolved under the stewardship of its third generation, helmed by brothers Matthijs and Stefan Kaandorp. From its humble origins as a local Dutch wholesaler, the company has burgeoned into an international sensation, embracing innovation while maintaining a commitment to tradition.

The cheese undergoes a meticulous ripening process in the hands of specially equipped companies, where every detail is attended to with precision. The responsibility of expanding distribution globally rests in the capable hands of Carla Bos, Commercial Director for Europe, and Humphry van Hesse, Export Director for Overseas.

Humphry van Hesse, in a conversation with Diplomat Magazine, delved into the rich history of Kaandorp Cheese and outlined its promising future. He emphasized the familial atmosphere within the organization, where the leadership of the two brothers fosters a sense of unity and dedication among the staff. This cohesive approach, devoid of rigid compartmentalization, is a key factor in the seamless operation of this well-oiled machine.

Discussing the diverse range of cheeses offered, Mr. Van Hesse highlighted the symbiotic relationship between cheese and wine. Different types of milk contribute distinct flavors, with cow cheese dominating the market. However, the rise in popularity of goat cheese, particularly among those with cow milk intolerance, has been noteworthy in the past decade. Van Hesse's enthusiasm for his work is palpable as he extols the pleasure derived from pairing cheese with the right wine, turning a meal into an exquisite experience.

Gouda cheese, a quintessential Dutch product, holds a special place in Kaandorp's offerings. While adhering to tradition, the company remains flexible, adjusting production processes to cater to diverse dietary preferences such as Kosher, Halal, and Organic. Kaandorp's organic cheeses, a significant facet of their repertoire, reflect their adaptability to a changing world.

The company's commitment to quality is evident in its certifications, including IFS, SKAL (organic), Halal, FDA, Cifer, and BPOM. These attestations underscore

Kaandorp Cheese's dedication to meeting international standards and ensuring the highest levels of food safety.

In recent years, Kaandorp Cheese has ventured beyond its Dutch roots, establishing a global presence. Mr. Van Hesse's astute business acumen facilitated the company's entry into the Chinese dairy market. The foray into Florida served as a testing ground for innovative concepts, laying the foundation for future expansions. Despite delays caused by the COVID pandemic, this period provided valuable time to cultivate new relationships and contacts, bolstering the company's prospects for long-term success.

As an export director, Mr. Van Hesse actively seeks novel avenues to introduce Kaandorp's products to diverse markets. Collaborating with embassies, he gains insights into the corporate culture of each country, ensuring a tailored approach to market penetration. This strategic engagement has led Kaandorp Cheese to feature in prestigious events like the 'Diplomat after Summer Party' organized by Diplomat Magazine.

With an invitation to explore their offerings on the website or through regular newsletters, Kaandorp Cheese invites the world to savor the excellence that emanates from generations of passion and dedication. As the Kaandorp Cheese story continues to unfold, one can only anticipate a delectable journey ahead. Bon appétit!



THE DIPLOMAT MAGAZINE'S "GUYS NIGHT OUT"

By Roy Lie Atjam



In a remarkable demonstration of international camaraderie, diplomats and their spouses from nine countries—Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Malta, Philippines, and Switzerland—gathered on the evening of Saturday, November 18. The initiative, fittingly named the "Guys Night Out," assembled a diverse group of diplomats, including the Ambassador of the Philippines, Mr. Eduardo Jose Malaya.

Jens-Volker Ginschel, Armament Attaché at the Embassy of Germany, assumed the role of leading the group. The journey commenced with a lively borrel at Het Plein in Den Haag,

setting the stage for an evening of laughter, bonding, and shared experiences.

The pinnacle of the night was the group's venture to Amsterdam, culminating in an electrifying visit to the iconic Johan Cruyff Arena. The purpose of this adventure was to witness the Netherlands national men's soccer team in action against Ireland in the European Qualifiers. The sold-out arena crackled with anticipation as the two teams battled it out on the field.

The Netherlands emerged victorious with a hard-fought 1-0 win, securing their

second-place finish in the qualifiers. This achievement, trailing only behind France and surpassing formidable contenders like Greece, Ireland, and Gibraltar, granted the Dutch team direct qualification for the European Championship 2024 in Germany, celebrated with jubilation and live music in the stadium after the match.

The majority of the diplomatic group, positioned in a VIP-like setting with their private bar, reveled in the shared excitement of supporting the Netherlands. The unique experience of being surrounded by passionate Dutch supporters added an extra layer of enthusiasm and unity among the diplomats.

As the night drew to a close, a resounding call for a repetition reverberated among the diplomats. The success of the "Guys Night Out" was not solely measured in the victory of the Netherlands on the soccer field but in the enduring bonds and memories created among diplomats from various corners of the globe. The Diplomat Magazine's "Guys Night Out" illuminated the fact that diplomacy extends beyond formal meetings and negotiations—it thrives in the camaraderie of a shared passion for sports and celebration, showcasing the potential for unity and understanding among nations.

CELEBRATING URUGUAYAN NOSTALGIA: A DUTCH DEBUT

The vibrant cultural tapestry of Uruguay, steeped in rich history and musical fervor, finds its quintessence in the annual extravaganza known as the "Noche de la Nostalgia." A cornerstone of Uruguay's nightlife, this celebrated event is poised to make its debut in the Netherlands, courtesy of the dedicated efforts of the Embassy of Uruguay in The Hague, under the leadership of H.E. Mr. Alvaro Gonzalez Otero, Uruguay's Ambassador to the Netherlands.

In Uruguay, the night of August 24 holds particular significance, preceding the Declaration of Independence holiday on August 25. This evening, known as "Noche de la Nostalgia," becomes a nationwide celebration with discos, nightclubs, and tents pulsating to the tunes of the 60s, 70s, 80s, and 90s.

Originating in 1978, Noche de la Nostalgia began with Mr. Pablo Lecueder, owner of CX-32 Radiomundo radio, hosting a party featuring classic hits from his radio program "Old hits." What started as a small gathering evolved into an enduring tradition, with Lecueder annually hosting "La Noche de la Nostalgia," inviting people to dance and relive the musical brilliance of the past. The event showcased iconic tracks from legendary artists like Queen, The Beatles, Elvis Presley, creating an atmosphere of pure nostalgia and joy.

The popularity of Noche de la Nostalgia soared over the years, becoming a thriving entertainment industry, supporting sectors like restaurants, discos, DJs, gastronomy companies, security services, and hotels. Recognizing its potential, the Ministry of Tourism of Uruguay officially labeled it

Nostalgia Night in 2004, promoting it as a tourist attraction.

This year marks a new chapter as the Embassy of Uruguay to the Kingdom of the Netherlands introduces the enchanting allure of Noche de la Nostalgia to a selected group of guests. Beyond a night of music and dance, this event is a unique opportunity to strengthen cultural ties between Uruguay and the Netherlands.

As the inaugural Uruguayan "Noche de la Nostalgia" approaches, anticipation builds. For Ambassador Alvaro Gonzalez Otero, this night is more than a celebration; it's a bridge connecting nations and generations through the universal language of music. The "Noche de la Nostalgia" in the Netherlands promises to be a joyous night, leaving an indelible impression on all attendees.

DIPLOMATIC EVENTS

EXPLORING ECUADORIAN COFFEE: A TASTING EVENT AT THE EMBASSY OF ECUADOR IN THE HAGUE

Coffee connoisseurs gathered on July 5th, 2023, at the Embassy of Ecuador in The Hague for a special tasting event that unveiled the rich and diverse flavors of Ecuadorian coffee. Organized by the Embassy of Ecuador, Pro Ecuador, and Engrano Koffiebranders, this event offered attendees a unique opportunity to savor the distinctive coffee from various regions of Ecuador, shedding light on the country's long history of coffee cultivation.

Guadalupe Sierra, the founder of Engrano Koffiebranders, a dedicated Ecuadorian living in the Netherlands, led the tasting session. Her deep-rooted family connection to coffee in Ecuador, dating back generations, made her the perfect guide for this exploration of Ecuador's coffee heritage. Guadalupe's great-grandfather was credited with introducing coffee to the Galapagos Islands, and today, she is committed to importing, roasting, and marketing Ecuadorian coffee in the Netherlands.

The event welcomed a diverse group of attendees, including key figures from the coffee industry, restaurant owners, baristas, and even diplomatic representatives. Among the attendees were H.E. Andrés Terán Parral – Ambassador of Ecuador to the Netherlands, Guadalupe Sierra – Founder at Engrano Koffiebranders, Juan Carlos Yépez – Commercial Counsellor at Embassy of Ecuador / Pro Ecuador and representatives from Illimani Coffee, LOB's Restaurant, Coffee Works, Tuscany Coffee Beans, Sherlock Holmes Pub, European Climate Foundation and Mayelinne De Lara – Founder of the Diplomat Magazine.

The event commenced with an informative presentation about Ecuador's history of coffee cultivation. Guadalupe then introduced the five distinct coffees that would be tasted, each representing a unique region of Ecuador: Zamora Chinchipe (Amazon), Chimborazo (Andes), Loja (Andes), Manabí (Coast), and the Galapagos Islands.

Juan Carlos Yépez, the Commercial Counsellor and Head of the Commercial Section of the

Embassy of Ecuador, as well as the Director of Pro Ecuador in the Netherlands, emphasized the significance of this tasting event. He stated, "This is the first Ecuadorian coffee tasting that takes place in The Hague, Netherlands and at the Embassy of Ecuador. Not many Dutch people know that Ecuador produces specialty coffee. The purpose of this event is to create a concept of Ecuadorian coffee among baristas and Dutch restaurants."

The presence of H.E. Andrés Terán Parral, the Ambassador of Ecuador to the Netherlands, added a diplomatic touch to the event. The Ambassador engaged with attendees, discussing and exchanging thoughts and opinions with the baristas and restaurants represented.

Statistical Insights:

- In 2022, Ecuador's coffee exports reached a total value of 120 million dollars, with 25 million dollars corresponding to green and roasted coffee, while the remainder consisted of coffee extract used for soluble coffee.

- Ecuador successfully exported coffee worth 1.6 million dollars to the Netherlands in 2022.

Diverse Coffee Production:

Ecuador's unique coffee production capabilities are worth highlighting. It is one of the few countries globally that cultivates both Arabica and Robusta coffee varieties. The country's diverse ecosystems enable the cultivation of coffee across various altitudes and even in the extraordinary setting of the Galapagos Islands.

Ecuador's coffee industry has certainly made a statement with this tasting event, showcasing its potential to offer a wide range of flavors and profiles to coffee enthusiasts around the world. As the aroma of Ecuadorian coffee lingers in the halls of the Embassy of Ecuador in The Hague, it is evident that the journey of discovering Ecuadorian coffee has only just begun.



THE HAGUE'S DEFENCE ATTACHÉS' ANNUAL GALA: A NIGHT OF UNITY AND DIPLOMACY

On October 4th, a notable event occurred in The Hague, where military attachés accredited to the Netherlands gathered in a distinctive and meaningful setting. Hosted by The Defence Attaché Association (DAA) in The Hague, the Defence Attachés' Annual Gala is a prestigious occasion, blending elegance, diplomacy, and a robust sense of unity.

The venue for this event is Madurodam Park, a place that's more than just a Dutch landmark—it's a living miniature of the Netherlands, featuring iconic Dutch structures at a 1:25 scale. This year, on October 4th, Madurodam Park was transformed into a reception great salon, a dining room, and a ballroom, playing host to a record attendance of over a hundred guests representing diplomatic missions.

Military attachés accredited to the Netherlands and their spouses come from various countries, including Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Kosovo, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and the United States of America. This cross-border representation enhances the international flavor of the event, fostering greater collaboration and understanding among military diplomats.

The gala's dress code, a mix of military mess dress and black tie attire, symbolizes the harmonious blend of the military and civilian worlds that this event represents, special mention of the spouses and partners of military attaches in elegant gowns. It is an event where formalities meet festivities, and military traditions intersect with diplomatic camaraderie.

The evening commenced with a reception, during which speeches were given to set the tone for the night. Colonel Piers Strudwick of the UK, one of the evening's hosts, introduced the gala and laid out the agenda. The Mayor of Madurodam, Fresco Mees, provided a warm welcome and shed light on the social vision and charitable work of Madurodam. It is heartening to know that Madurodam Park, plays an important role in supporting causes for children in the Netherlands.

The program then moved on to toasts and speeches. A toast to all heads of states was raised by Colonel Piers Strudwick, while Captain Antoon Hertogs, the Dean of the DAA and Defence Attaché of Sweden, extended a warm welcome to all attendees. The atmosphere was both elegant and relaxed, setting the stage for the gala dinner.

The Head of International Military Cooperation, Rear Admiral Sillevius Smitt, thanked the organizers for their outstanding efforts and highlighted the importance of this gathering. It's a unique chance for attachés posted in different countries to come together, meet new colleagues, and strengthen their ties with the host country.

General Onno Eichelsheim, the Chief of Defence of the Netherlands, emphasized the need for unity during these challenging times, particularly in light of ongoing conflicts like the war in Ukraine. His message was clear: "Stay firm and do not think that we did enough until victory."

The event was an unquestionable success. As the evening wound down, Colonel Mark Sturgeon, Army Attaché of the USA, extended his gratitude to everyone present and officially opened the ball. The festivities continued into the night, creating an atmosphere of celebration and togetherness that was truly unforgettable.

In the current geopolitical climate, with the military playing an increasingly vital role in Europe, events like these help strengthen diplomatic ties, build networks, and create a sense of solidarity among nations.

MAY 20 CAMEROON'S NATIONAL UNITY DAY

NATIONAL DAYS

By Roy Lie Atjam

Cameroon celebrated its 51st National Unity Day, marked by a reception hosted by H.E. Madeleine Liguemoh Ondoua, the Ambassador of the Republic of Cameroon to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The event was attended by a large audience, including a great number of ambassadors, mayors, senior officials of the Netherlands, and members of the Cameroonian diaspora. A delightfully flamboyant atmosphere reigned in the reception room as well as outdoors.

Ambassador Ondoua emphasized the significance of national unity, describing it as the cornerstone of a strong and prosperous Cameroon. She highlighted Cameroon's ongoing efforts to maintain peace, particularly in the face of threats from terrorist and violent movements, such as the Islamic State in the Sahel and Boko Haram.

Cameroon, often referred to as "Africa in miniature," boasts a robust economy with abundant mineral resources, fertile land for agriculture, and a well-educated population fluent in English and French. The country has

outlined its National Development Strategy, aiming for emergence by 2035, offering investment opportunities in agriculture, industry, infrastructure, and energy.

Economic ties between the Netherlands and Cameroon have flourished, making the Netherlands Cameroon's third-largest economic partner. Recent events, such as the "Economic Days" in the Netherlands and an economic visit to Yaoundé, indicate the strengthening economic collaboration between the two nations.

Cameroon celebrated the opening of the first Luxembourg Cultural Centre in Central Africa, laying the foundation stone in the Commune of Lobo. The ambassador also highlighted Cameroon's unique products, such as Penja pepper, recognized as a protected geographical indication, and the renowned Cocoa Valley chocolate.

The celebration featured a showcase of Cameroon's diverse cuisine, by the Cameroonian company "Des Senteurs et des

Goûts." Guests were treated to the rich flavors of Cameroonian coffee and chocolate desserts prepared by Master Chocolatier Serge Ngassa and France's Best Pastry Chef Thierry Court.

The evening was further enriched with cultural and artistic performances, including music by Jay Lou Ava and his orchestra. The vibrant atmosphere, complemented by colorfully dressed Cameroonian ladies, contributed to a festive mood, reinforcing the commitment to a long and prosperous friendship between Cameroon, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg.



SAUDI ARABIA'S 93RD NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATED IN THE HAGUE: A TRIBUTE TO BILATERAL RELATIONS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE



His Excellency Mr. Ziad Al Atiyah, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to the Netherlands

The Hague, the international city of peace and justice, witnessed on September 23 an animated celebration of Saudi Arabia's 93rd National Day. This remarkable event was orchestrated by His Excellency Mr. Ziad Al Atiyah, the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to the Netherlands. The festivities attracted an illustrious gathering, including Dutch officials, ambassadors from brotherly and friendly nations, members of the diplomatic corps, and secretaries-general of international organizations. The occasion not only commemorated Saudi Arabia's rich history and culture but also underscored the burgeoning bilateral relations between Saudi Arabia and the Netherlands.

Ambassador Al Atiyah, in his opening address, extended heartfelt congratulations on behalf of himself, his colleagues, and the Saudi citizens residing in the Netherlands to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, as well as to the Saudi people.

One of the key highlights of the ambassador's speech was the thriving bilateral interactions between Saudi Arabia and the Netherlands. Over the past year, the two nations have witnessed substantial growth in cooperation across various sectors. This includes high-level ministerial visits, engagements with prominent officials, and the signing of agreements and Memorandums of Understanding, particularly in the domains of energy and port management.

However, beyond economic and political ties, Ambassador Al Atiyah emphasized the significance of academic cooperation. A notable example is the partnership between Radboud University Nijmegen and the Saudi Heritage Authority. This collaboration focuses on the study of historical water resources, particularly the Canal of Ain Zubaida, known in Arabic as 'Ain Zubaida. This ancient

aqueduct, dating back to the early Abbasid era, was completed in 801 CE with the primary purpose of supplying water to the city of Mecca. It represents a fascinating engineering feat, with parts of it constructed as a qanat, an underground water channel.

The ambassador's words resonated with the audience as he highlighted the importance of preserving such cultural and historical landmarks. The cultural exchange between Saudi Arabia and the Netherlands, particularly in the realm of academia, enriches both nations by fostering an appreciation for shared history and heritage.

Ambassador Al Atiyah concluded his address by extending an invitation to the guests to partake in a visual presentation. This presentation showcased the collaborative efforts between the two nations in studying for Ain Zubaydah. The Saudi Heritage Authority's tireless endeavors to preserve the historical importance of this aqueduct were on full display, highlighting the enduring commitment to safeguarding the cultural legacy of Saudi Arabia.

The celebration of Saudi Arabia's 93rd National Day in The Hague served as a testament to the growing partnership between Saudi Arabia and the Netherlands. It emphasized the shared commitment to fostering cooperation in various fields, from economics to academia, and underscored the value placed on preserving cultural heritage. The event not only celebrated the Kingdom's rich history but also heralded a promising future of continued collaboration between these two nations.



ANNUAL HIGH TEA HONORING WOMEN OF INFLUENCE DES INDES CELEBRATES A CENTURY OF ELEGANCE WITH EMPOWERMENT



Aguero Colunga, Portugal, H.E. Maria Clara Nunes Pinto, Serbia, H.E. Ksenija Milenković, Switzerland, H.E. Corinne Cicéron Bühler, Tanzania, H.E. Caroline Chipeta, USA, H.E. Shefali Razdan Duggal.

The celebration unfolded with an air of sophistication as the guests were treated to a selection of exquisite teas, a profusion of champagne, and divine hors d'oeuvres. The ambiance echoed the historic charm of Des Indes, creating a perfect setting for a gathering of accomplished women. Ms. van der Klawuw, in her welcome speech, emphasized the significance of the event, declaring that henceforth, it will be an annual fixture to honor women in prominent positions.

Des Indes, an iconic hotel with a rich history spanning more than 132 years, recently opened its doors with a touch of charm, character, elegance, and grandeur to host an exceptional event. Yvonne van der Klawuw, the General Manager of this emblematic establishment and Camilla Vaselli, Sales Manager, orchestrated a celebration like no other—a high tea afternoon dedicated to female ambassadors and leaders of international organizations. The event not only marked a milestone in the hotel's tradition but also paid homage to the influential women who have graced its halls over the years.

Des Indes, situated in Lange Voorhout at the heart of The Hague, has long been a sanctuary for luminaries, dignitaries, and artists. To commemorate its illustrious history, Yvonne van der Klawuw curated a guest list

that included the Director General of the International Commission on Missing Persons, Kathryne Bomberger, Dominique Kuhling, Director of Protocol and Host Country Issues- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Chantal Schrijver from the European Investment Bank, Marielle Vavier, Deputy Mayor of The Hague, Camilla van Kooten, Chief of Protocol at The Hague Municipality, Dr Mayelinne De Lara, Diplomat Magazine's Publisher and an assembly of female ambassadors from various countries, among them: the Ambassadors of Algeria, H.E. Salima Abdelhak, Belgium, H.E. Anick van Calster, Colombia, H.E. Carolina Olarte Bácsares, Croatia, H.E. Dubravka Plejic Markovic, Cyprus, H.E. Frances Lanitou Williams, Greece, H.E. Caterina Guini, Nigeria, H.E. Dr. Eniola Ajayi, New Zealand, H.E. Susannah Hayden Gordon, Panama, H.E. Elizabeth Ward Neiman, Peru, H.E. Marisol

Des Indes not only celebrated the contemporary leaders but also took a moment to pay tribute to the remarkable women who have graced its halls throughout history. From the iconic dancer Anna Pavlova to the dignified Regina Margherita di Savoia, the influential Eleanor Roosevelt, and the timeless Audrey Hepburn, the hotel has been a rendezvous point for trailblazing women whose impact transcends generations.

Des Indes, with its more than a century-old legacy, continues to stand as a symbol of refined hospitality and cultural significance. Yvonne van der Klawuw's vision of an annual celebration reflects a commitment to recognizing and empowering women, ensuring that Des Indes remains a beacon of elegance, tradition, and inclusivity for years to come.



Yvonne van der Klawuw, Des Indes General Manager



URUGUAY WEEK IN THE NETHERLANDS A CELEBRATION OF CULTURE AND DIPLOMACY



H.E. Mr. Álvaro González Otero, Mr. Jules van Eijndhoven, Head Treaties Division, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Dr Christophe Bernasconi, Secretary General of the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH) during the ratification of the Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Judgments in Civil or Commercial Matters at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In a vibrant celebration of history, culture, and diplomatic ties, the Embassy of Uruguay in the Netherlands recently hosted "Uruguay Week" to commemorate the 198th anniversary of Uruguay's Declaration of Independence. This week-long extravaganza, held in Utrecht, The Hague, and Voorburgh, showcased the rich Uruguayan heritage with cultural, academic, and diplomatic events.

H.E. Alvaro González Otero, the Ambassador of Uruguay, played an important role in organizing each of the activities.

The week kicked off with a literary Seminar in collaboration with Chile and Argentina. Titled "Three women, three countries, one language: Alfonsina Storni, Gabriela Mistral, and Juana de Ibarbourou," this seminar held in The Hague set the tone for the week. Ambassadors from Argentina and Chile, Mario Oyarzabal and Jaime Moscoso, joined Ambassador González Otero in presenting opening remarks. Argentinian Professor María de los Angeles "Cuca" Esteves, the Chilean academic Ricardo Cuadros, and the Uruguayan writer Dra. Sylvia Puentes de Oyenard were the speakers.

The literary journey continued in Utrecht with a conference on "Science and Poetry" by Dr. Sylvia Puentes de Oyenard in collaboration with the Cervantes Institute. Attendees were

treated to traditional Uruguayan empanadas and wines.

The grand finale of the literary presentations took place in Voorburg, with a symposium on renowned Uruguayan authors, Juana de Ibarbourou and Mario Benedetti. Organized in partnership with the Hispanic Association of The Hague led by Edith Bergansius, this event attracted Dutch speakers of Spanish and expatriates living in the Netherlands. Dr. Sylvia Puentes de Oyenard and Uruguayan soprano Sara de los Campos left a lasting impression with their eloquent presentations and soul-stirring performances.

Friday, September 1, Uruguay ratified the Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Judgments in Civil or Commercial Matters at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This reaffirmed Uruguay's commitment to international law.

The pinnacle of Uruguay Week was the celebration of Uruguay's 198th Anniversary of Independence, marked by a diplomatic reception at the Uruguayan residence. The event brought together ambassadors, dignitaries, Dutch officials, representatives from international organizations, and members of the Uruguayan community. The national anthems of the Netherlands and Uruguay by the talented soprano, Sara de los Campos, earned admiration for her captivating performance.

As the diplomatic reception concluded, the first "Fiesta de la Nostalgia" ever celebrated in the Netherlands commenced. Despite earlier rain, over 160 invited guests attended both events. The Uruguayan-inspired menu, featuring the well-known natural meat, spinach empanadas, Uruguayan wines, and delectable desserts, was met with delight.

Attendees embraced the Uruguayan "Night of Nostalgia" with music and dancing, recreating the spirit of Uruguayan Independence Day celebrations. The night encapsulated the essence of "Noche de la Nostalgia," a cherished Uruguayan tradition where the melodies of the past unite generations on the eve of Independence Day.

Uruguay Week in the Netherlands was a resounding success.

FAREWELL DIPLOMATIC CEREMONY IN THE HAGUE



This month, the Dean of ambassadors in The Hague, H.E. Ms Adia Sakiqi, ambassador of Albania to the Netherlands, hosted at Leonardo Hotel a farewell ceremony for the six ambassadors who will leave the Netherlands this summer.

On this distinguished occasion, the Dean held a speech, to honor the work and efforts of her colleagues.

‘Today we do not only celebrate the first Bi-Annual Farewell event of 2023, but also, and most importantly, the tenures of our esteemed colleagues here in the Netherlands.’

In her speech, Ms. Sakiqi addressed each of the guests of honor, underlining their special qualities and contributions to diplomatic life during their mission in The Hague:

‘Armenia - H.E. Mr. Tigran Balayan – your energy, your determination and your drive will be remembered. You will be missed in The Hague, and especially in Scheveningen, the North Sea will miss your daily morning dives.

Permanent Representative of Belgium to OPCW and to the International Organizations - H.E. Mr. William Roelants de Stappers – we thank you for all your solid contributions in international organizations.

Your leadership in International law will be remembered.

Brazil - H.E. Mr. Paulo Roberto Caminha de Castilhos França – was lovely to have you among us in The Hague. Special thanks go to your contributions in assisting the Deanship in important matters dear to us all in this room. We wish you and your family every success!

Czech Republic - H.E. Ms. Katerina Sequensová – Katerina, you are not only a professional diplomat, but also a great manager who held 2-3 hats at the same time and never complained. I am positive that we will hear from you and your future successes. Lovely to know that you will assist ICC in the future months and come back to The Hague!

Latvia - H.E. Ms. Aiga Liepina – Aiga, I would like to thank you on behalf of all of us, for your engagement, solidarity and professionalism. It was great to cooperate with such a reliable professional like yourself. Wish you all the best in your future posting, knowing that you will mark your mandate there as it happened here in The Hague.

Luxembourg - H.E. Mr. Jean-Marc Hoscheit – among many high characteristics that you embody, I would like to emphasize your

sense of humor. I do not know if it comes from experience, but I am sure it is a personal characteristics which we so much enjoyed in our circles.

Tunisia - H.E. Mr. Slim Ghariani, I would like to thank you on behalf of all colleagues for your professionalism, your bridge building and your leadership not only for the Francophonie, but for where-ever you were invested’.

The Dean added that although their diplomatic mandate was marked by lock-downs and pandemics, they managed to overcome shortcomings and are leaving a significant mark in the Netherlands, with their hard work and dedication.

She concluded:

‘It has been a joy to work alongside every single one of you with such astonishingly accomplished profiles, to exchange experiences, to cooperate and to learn from each other. These cheers go to you, to all the amazing things you have accomplished, and to all the many amazing things you will continue to accomplish.

On behalf of the Diplomatic Corps we thank you and celebrate you!’

UNDP AND THE OCEAN CLEANUP TEAM UP TO TACKLE PLASTIC POLLUTION

DIPLOMATIC EVENTS

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and The Ocean Cleanup signed in New York a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on eliminating plastic pollution in oceans and rivers around the globe.

The goal of the partnership is to reduce leakages of plastics into marine ecosystems by boosting policies and behavior change aimed at advancing sound plastic waste management systems and reducing overall plastic pollution, and accelerating the deployment of interception technologies in rivers to end marine plastic pollution.

Plastic pollution poses an existential threat to the health of the world’s oceans and the billions of people who depend on marine resources for food and income. Partnerships play a critical role in addressing this complex global challenge.

“Eliminating plastic pollution in all its forms is key to protecting human and planetary health and safeguarding sustainable development,” said Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator. “This alliance is an important step to curb the flow of plastic pollution into oceans and rivers but also to raise awareness, support sound policy making, and trigger behavioral change along the entire plastic value chain.”

“After our valuable experience working with local UNDP teams to tackle riverine plastic pollution in the Dominican Republic, we are excited to partner with UNDP to further promote sustainable ocean health,” said The Ocean Cleanup founder and CEO Boyan Slat. “We believe that, through this alliance, we can help accelerate the deployment of our technologies to eliminate plastics from the oceans and rivers, as well as support broader policies aimed at waste management and reducing plastic pollution.”



This new partnership comes at a critical time as negotiations for an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, are taking shape.



FRUITFUL DIALOGUE ON EVFTA AND EVIPA BETWEEN VIETNAMESE EMBASSY AND DUTCH – VIETNAMESE BUSINESSES

On December 8, 2023, the Vietnamese Embassy in the Netherlands, in collaboration with the Dutch Business Association Vietnam (DBAV), organized the "Meet Ambassador Ngo Huong Nam" event, focusing on "EVFTA: Significant Growth in Bilateral Trade after 3 Years of Implementation" and "EVIPA: A Solid Foundation for Investment Cooperation Activities of Dutch Businesses in Vietnam."

The primary goal of the "Meet Ambassador" gathering was to foster a dialogue between the Embassy and Dutch and Vietnamese businesses. This highly anticipated event, impactful for companies in Vietnam and the Netherlands, drew the participation of Mr. Gabor Fluit, Chairman of the European Chamber of Commerce in Vietnam (EuroCham), along with representatives from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO), NLinBusiness, PUM, and over 50 Dutch businesses currently investing in Vietnam, alongside Vietnamese businesses investing in the Netherlands.

Ambassador Ngo Huong Nam provided a comprehensive review during the meeting, highlighting activities between the two countries in 2023, marking the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations. Notable

events included the visit to the Netherlands by Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh in December 2022 and the reciprocal visit to Vietnam by Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte in November 2023. The Ambassador also announced the upcoming State visit of His Majesty the King and Her Majesty Queen Máxima to Vietnam in March 2024, at the invitation of Vietnamese President Vo Van Thuong.

Reviewing trade and investment cooperation, Ambassador Ngo Huong Nam shared significant achievements after over three years of implementing the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement. Bilateral trade between the Netherlands and Vietnam grew impressively, averaging 22% from 2020 to 2022, making the Netherlands Vietnam's second-largest trading partner and the largest investor in the EU.

Despite positive sentiments among Dutch businesses regarding the favorable impact of the EU-Vietnam Investment Protection Agreement (EVIPA) on their investment activities in Vietnam, Ambassador Ngo Huong Nam noted that the Netherlands is among the ten countries yet to ratify the agreement. He expressed hope that Dutch businesses, through the Dutch Business Association in Vietnam and the European Chamber of

Commerce in Vietnam, would convey their opinions to the Netherlands Parliament and Government for EVIPA ratification.

Supporting the Ambassador's perspective on the benefits of EVIPA for Dutch and EU investors in Vietnam, Mr. Gabor Fluit, representing EuroCham, and Mr. Joost Vrancken Peeters, representing DBAV, emphasized the necessity of timely action from the business community, urging the Dutch Parliament to include EVIPA ratification on their agenda.

The event featured presentations by representatives from the Port of Rotterdam and a Dutch company exporting Vietnamese fresh fruit to Europe, providing additional insights into bilateral trade activities. The journey of VinFast, an electric car producer driving from Vietnam to European countries, impressed participants, who also acknowledged the proactive role of the Vietnamese government in maintaining macroeconomic stability, trade growth, inflation control, and fostering a favorable business investment environment for foreign investors, including those from the Netherlands.

POLAND CELEBRATION CONSTITUTION DAY 2023



Poland marked the celebration of its Constitution Day on May 3, 2023, commemorating the 232nd anniversary of the adoption of the first Polish constitution. The event held in The Hague brought together representatives of the Diplomatic Corps, officials from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, members of international organizations, NATO, and friends of Poland.

Ambassador Margareta Kassangana, in her welcome address, expressed her delight at the significant turnout and proceeded to delve into the historical significance of the day. “In May seventeen ninety-one (1791), the Grand Sejm- Polish Parliament - passed the Government Act of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth known as the Constitution of the Third of May. Poland became the pioneer in Europe to adopt a comprehensive, written constitution, marking a progressive and bold legal step that laid the groundwork for the modern democratic system in the Polish state.

The Ambassador emphasized that the Constitution’s roots lay in a well-established Polish tradition of a free and tolerant state,

acting as a refuge for various ethnicities and religions throughout history. “Our desire for freedom and our historical experience are behind Poland’s absolute and categorical condemnation of the unlawful Russian aggression against the sovereign and independent state of Ukraine.” She drew parallels between the ongoing struggle for freedom in Ukraine and the broader pursuit of peace and freedom in Europe.

Reflecting on the changing landscape of Europe over centuries, Ambassador Kassangana highlighted the sobering reality of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, underscoring the continued relevance of the fight against imperialism and for the right to democratic self-determination.

The Ambassador acknowledged the shared values of freedom between Poland and the Netherlands, emphasizing their collaborative efforts in strengthening European security and fostering economic cooperation in various sectors. She expressed pride in the significant number of Polish nationals contributing to the development and economy of the Netherlands.

As part of the celebration, Ambassador Kassangana invited attendees to explore works by renowned Polish artist Jerzy Nowosielski, celebrating his centenary. Some of his pieces were showcased in the Old City Hall and around the Embassy, providing an artistic backdrop to the event.

Expressing gratitude to sponsors, the Ambassador recognized Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (BGK) as the main sponsor and thanked other contributors, including the Polish-Dutch Chamber of Commerce, Lewandowski law firm, TZMO Benelux, Polish Tourist Organization, and the Marshal of the Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship. Additionally, she acknowledged the support of Lightart Flowerbulbs in beautifying the venue.

Ambassador Kassangana extended her appreciation to Polish companies whose products were featured during the reception, offering attendees a taste of Polish cuisine. The evening concluded with a note of gratitude to all attendees, wishing them an enjoyable experience exploring the unique flavors of Polish cuisine prepared by the Polish restaurant Kleine Zakopane.



HIGHLIGHTING ANGOLA'S PROGRESS



On the occasion of the 48th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Angola, Ambassador H.E. Mrs. Maria Isabel Encoge, hosted a grand Independence Day Reception. Diplomats, Dutch civil servants, friends of Angola, and Angolans gathered at the event, which was both solemn and colorful. Ambassador Encoge, who holds the position of Dean of the African diplomatic corps, delivered an insightful speech that reflected on Angola's journey since proclaiming its independence on November 11, 1975 achieved under the leadership of Dr. António Agostinho Neto, the First President and Founder of the Nation.

Under the leadership of **H.E. President João Gonçalves Lourenço**, Angola has committed to consolidating the Democratic State and the Rule of Law. Ambassador Encoge emphasized the dedication to establishing the foundations of a dynamic, efficient, and inclusive market economy. Several political, economic, and social reforms have been implemented, including the reformulation of private investment laws, which increased tax incentives for national and foreign investors and improved the overall business environment. "This reform included exemption from tourist visas for a period of up to 30 days for citizens of 98 countries, including Europe, the Caribbean and Pacific, America, Africa, Oceania and Asia"

Ambassador Encoge underscored Angola's efforts towards economic diversification,

with programs such as Propriv and Prodesi, as well as the integrated intervention plan in municipalities (PIIM).

"On the other hand," ambassador said "in order to face the difficulties that the world is facing with wars and the food crisis, the informal economy reconversion program (PREI), the integrated program for local development and combating poverty, of panagrão, was implemented." These initiatives aim to contribute to achieving food self-sufficiency, developing agriculture, and creating jobs for the economic and social development of Angola.

Addressing climate change concerns, Ambassador Encoge detailed Angola's initiative to mitigate the effects of drought by constructing the CAFU canal. This water

transfer system, spanning approximately 160 thousand kilometers, reduces transhumance caused by water scarcity and benefits around 235 thousand people, 250 thousand head of cattle, irrigates about 15 thousand hectares of land, and guarantees 3,275 thousand jobs. Highlighting cooperation relations, Ambassador Encoge expressed Angola's openness to establishing new partnerships and deepening bilateral relations with the Netherlands.

In closing, Ambassador Encoge reiterated Angola's commitment to cordial diplomatic relations, defending principles of international law, and advocating for a world of peace, mutually advantageous relations between states, and a more balanced world order.

NETHERLANDS VETERANS DAY 2023

By Anton Lutter



It was a hot sunny day but that didn't stop the 4000 veterans and serving military to parade before **His Majesty King Willem Alexander**. The Dutch Veterans Day, serves as a collective acknowledgment of the dedicated service rendered by the nation's 100,000 military veterans, both present and past. The parade featured representatives from all branches of the military, historic army vehicles, numerous marching bands, and a striking air parade showcasing eighteen modern and historic aircraft.

Prior to the parade Prime minister **Mark Rutte** and the chairman of the National Committee on Veterans Day, **Jaap Smit**, the commissioner (governor) of Zuid-Holland province, addressed the hundreds of veterans in the Koninklijke Schouwburg. This occasion was attended by HM The King, knights of the Military Order of William (highest decoration for valour), members of parliament and other dignitaries. In his speech the prime minister emphasized the importance of our armed forces:

"For a long time, it seemed unthinkable that we would experience a war on our continent. In fact, we felt so secure as a society that we thought we might be able to cut down on Defense. We were wrong. Never since the end of World War II has peace in Europe been under more pressure, than now. And no sooner had the importance of a well-equipped armed force become so clear. But also: never before was everyone so agreed. In politics and in society. And I can only say: that appreciation, that reassessment, is justified".

After the parade the Commemoration Veterans Foundation organized a reception for the Defense Attaches and other dignitaries at the famous Poentjak Restaurant owned by **Tom Tompoel**. Guests - amongst others - included lieutenant-general (ret.) **Jan de Kleijn**, former chancellor of the Dutch Orders of Knighthood and defense attaches Colonel **Thomas Heim** (Austria), Colonel **Geert Leeman** (Belgium), Colonel Christian **Bachmann** (France), Navy Colonel **Mohamed Wirda Prayogo** (Indonesia), Colonel **Toshiyuki Aso** and his successor (Japan), Colonel **Piers Strudwick** OBE (United Kingdom) as well as the military representative of Poland. Next to that former deputy member of The Hague and member of Parliament **Ries Smits** and **Jens-Volker Ginschel** of the German Embassy attended the reception. An unexpected surprise visitor was Ambassador **I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja** is currently the Executive Director of ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR).

Also participating in the parade was veteran, current Interior Minister **Hanke Bruins Slot**. As platoon commander of an armored howitzer, she provided fire support to Dutch, British and Australian troops during the Uruzgan mission in 2008. Minister Bruins Slot:

"Veterans make an important contribution back in the Netherlands in the context of cherishing and appreciating freedom. After all, they have seen in other countries how things can go wrong and what that means for a society. Together, you must ensure that people can continue to live in freedom in the Netherlands as well. Veterans are the best interpreters of that message."

More than 90.000 persons visited the event.

CELEBRATING THE PERUVIAN NATIONAL DAY WITH TOP DELICACIES

The Embassy of Peru to the Netherlands together with Hilton's BlueBlood Restaurant in The Hague, celebrate Peru and its culinary tradition through a delicious food marathon, under the direct supervision of Chef Luis Rojas.

As Diplomat Magazine is supporting the event, we talked to Chef Rojas about his passion for food, vast experience and love for Peruvian traditions.

As he recalls, some of his warmest childhood memories in Peru are related to food, to going to the market with his mother and choosing fresh ingredients for their family.

He says: 'I started cooking when I was only 14 year old and I remember being especially inspired by how my mother managed to make

the most savory and delicious dishes with the simplest ingredients.'

After he completed his studies in culinary school in Peru, he started working as a professional cook in different countries, and the list is quite impressive: Chile, Brazil, Qatar, Dubai, Abu Dhabi and now, The Netherlands. He has fond memories from everywhere, he worked in a Michelin-Star restaurant in Brazil, worked for Marriott in Dubai and Abu Dhabi and he is now the Head Chef at the BlueBlood Restaurant at the prestigious Hilton The Hague.

He traveled the world looking for inspiration, always learning new techniques and discovering 'secrets' about fine cuisine. He also experienced cooking fusion Indian-Peruvian foods, as both usually use lots of spices.

'Coming to Europe offered me additional opportunities to learn new cooking techniques and experience high quality local ingredients', he mentions.

At Hilton he is managing a professional team where, he says, 'good atmosphere is everything. I need to feel comfortable in the kitchen, I am not the boss; I am part of my team. We cook together, make authentic food together and always add a little bit of magic to it'.

He says his favorite dish is Peruvian Ceviche, a spicy food which he prepared even for royal guests at Blueblood restaurant.

He is proud of his national heritage. He says: 'one of my main goals is to present Peruvian food to the world because it has a lot of history and it is so rich in ingredients. Peru has more than 2000 different kinds of chilly, 200 different types of potatoes, there is a lot to discover and experiment'.

Because of that, he had the idea of a Peruvian Food Festival at Hilton. He has done similar projects in Abu Dhabi, in cooperation with the Peruvian Consulate.

'In The Hague, I presented the idea to the Peruvian Ambassador, H. E. Marisol Flavia Aguero Colunga, who was very receptive and immediately agreed to participate to it. We planned the event together'.

The culinary event, with more than 20 different traditional Peruvian and Nikkei inspired dishes on the menu, was attended by over 170 guests, hosted by Hilton's exquisite BlueBlood Restaurant.

Chef Rojas hopes that this will become an established annual event which will attract many people and will bring Peruvian food to everyone's attention.

It surely deserves that!



A NIKKAE FEAST

By John Dunkelgrün

A great dining experience requires a careful balance between flavours, quality of the ingredients, presentation, ambiance, and a welcoming service. Blue Blood at the Hilton has managed to get it all just right. Entering through a huge hippodrome-shaped bar that wouldn't be out of place in New York or Hong Kong, you come into a low-key dining area where, if you are lucky, you get a table with a view of the canal. While the bar is big, bright, and lofty, the restaurant proper is intimate and restful. You can hear your footsteps, you can hear your companions talk. The staff is proficient and warmly welcoming. Being guided to our table, we passed a sushi-bar that made our mouths water. We lucked out with a table at the window. It was a balmy evening and we saw the Ooievaart boat slide by and watched people canoeing and paddle boarding. We were totally relaxed, even before the drinks arrived.

The real secret behind this restaurant is its chef. Hilton The Hague has managed to lure Chef Luis Rojas away from Abu Dhabi, where he wore the Toque at the Hilton restaurant on Yas Island in Abu Dhabi. Chef Rojas has worked all over the world, but was trained in Lima, which has become the epicenter of great cuisine in Latin America. Blessed with a long coast teeming with fish and seafood, its cuisine was inspired by a large Japanese immigrant population that has thrived in the country for well over a century. The fusion of Japanese and Peruvian cuisine became known as Nikkae Cuisine blending the many varieties of corn, potato, and chillies with local herbs, fish and seafood. The development of Nikkae was helped by the Cordon Bleu School of Cooking in Lima, which has produced hundreds of top chefs for restaurants all over the Americas. Chef Rochas, a big amiable teddybear of a man, exuded enthusiasm about the Nikkae tradition. We had ordered the tasting menu, which was organized in waves of dishes rather than in courses. Each 'wave' was a feast to the eye and its individual dishes were a true taste sensation. I am not a restaurant critic and will not give a dish-by-dish description. You must really try for yourself the spectacular presentation and WOW-delicious flavors of each successive wave. I have been lucky to dine in in top restaurants all over the world, but this evening just blew our party of four completely away. The experience was so special, that I just had to share it with you.

Meeting Chef Rojas is a pleasure in itself. He is very good at describing his creations vividly and clearly, while charming you with obvious pride in his creations.

The Hague has really gained a dining experience of international standard. Chapeau

(or perhaps 'toque') to the chef, his kitchen brigade, and the wonderful restaurant staff.

Dining at Blue Blood with Chef Rochas' Nikkae cuisine, is something you really must not miss.





SALSA WORKSHOP FOR DIPLOMATS

Once again, the Embassy of Cuba and Diplomat Magazine presented the annual Cuban Salsa Workshop for diplomats in The Hague, which attracted more than 150 amateur dancers who came every Thursday of March to learn the secrets of the world-renowned dance.

All continents were well-represented - diplomats from India, Kenya, Guatemala, China, Vietnam, Canada, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Kosovo, and Japan among others all came to enjoy and relax after a long workday.

"We welcomed all diplomats to share their passion for dance and music in this exciting class. Everyone enjoyed this vital element of Cuban culture regardless of fitness or dancing level", affirmed Professor Cala.

Cuban salsa instructor Rafael Cala guided the group for four weeks through the ins and outs of this famous dance; basic steps of salsa, mambo, and rumba, and even some advanced techniques. A group of dancers from Cala School also came to support the participants, giving them the opportunity to practice with professional dancers.

The event ended with a celebration, where dancers had the opportunity to practice what they had learned in the past few weeks in a free-dancing mode with Mildred Latin show. Mildred came with a selection of the best Latin songs to make the participants feel like they were on a real Cuban dancing floor. Tasty Cuban food and drinks were also provided by the Embassy for the participants to truly experience Cuban culture.

"For Cubans, dancing salsa is like riding a bicycle for the Dutch; Cuban people dance while walking and live through dance. It is a distinctive social element of our culture that we want to share with all of you. What you have learned in these classes is a part of us, it is a bond of friendship, a legacy of happiness", claimed H.E. Ms. Anet Pino Rivero, the Ambassador of Cuba, before presenting every participant with a certificate of accomplishment.



The Ambassador of Cuba, H.E. Ms. Anet Pino Rivero presenting the certificates of participation to Yuchun Song and Mengxi Guo from the Embassy of China.



DISCOVERING KOSOVO'S VINICULTURAL GEMS: A TOAST TO EXCELLENCE AT THE DIPLOMATS WINE EXTRAVAGANZA

By Rob Nout, Wine Specialist

I had the pleasure of attending the Diplomats Wine Extravaganza, flawlessly orchestrated by Diplomat Magazine. It proved to be an ideal setting not only to acquaint oneself with wines from lesser-known wine countries in the Netherlands but also to cultivate meaningful personal connections.

My visit held particular significance for me. Since August, I have been actively distributing premium wines from Albania in the Netherlands and am contemplating the addition of wines from Kosovo to my repertoire. Thus, it was truly gratifying that the Embassy of Kosovo extended the opportunity to several Kosovo wineries to showcase their offerings.

The esteemed Ambassador of Kosovo to the Netherlands, His Excellency Dr. Dren Doli, expressed his optimism that more Dutch enthusiasts would discover and appreciate the unique wines from Kosovo.

At present, Kosovo boasts approximately 3500 hectares of vineyards, dispersed across five regions, primarily situated in the southwest of the country. The Rahovec wine region stands out as the largest. The conditions for viticulture are optimal, characterized by a mild continental climate with Mediterranean influences, diverse soil types, and a range of microclimates thanks to numerous valleys. Blue grape varieties dominate, constituting over 65% of the plantings.

During the Wine Extravaganza, I was delighted to encounter exceptional wines crafted from indigenous grape varieties such as Vranç and Prokupa, as well as international favorites like Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Chardonnay, Welschriesling, and Muscat.

I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Bejtullah Hahimurati and Mr. Haziz Tafaj, representing the Kosovan wineries in attendance. I look forward to maintaining a connection with



them to stay abreast of developments in the Kosovo wine industry.

Convinced of the potential of Kosovan wines to complement my selection, I invite you to monitor my website, www.noutswijnwereld.eu, for updates on the enticing wines from Kosovo that will soon be available to Dutch wine enthusiasts.

GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT



The Ambassador of Ireland H.E. Brendan Rogers

The 25th Anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement was commemorated through a panel discussion hosted jointly by the Irish and British Ambassadors in the Netherlands, Ambassador Brendan Rogers and Ambassador Joanna Roper, along with Leiden University - Faculty of Humanities. The event aimed to reflect on the achievements and impact of the Good Friday Agreement, a crucial peace agreement signed in 1998, and featured speakers intimately involved in its negotiations or with direct experience of Northern Ireland.

The panel included David Cooney, former Secretary General of Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs and a key member of the negotiation team for the Good Friday Agreement; Bronagh Hinds, a prominent participant representing the Women's Coalition during the negotiations; Dr. Katy Radford, Chair of British Council Northern Ireland's Advisory Committee and UK Electoral Commissioner; and Dr. Joost Augusteijn of Leiden University, who served as the moderator.

The Good Friday Agreement, also known as the Belfast Agreement, is not only a peace accord but also the foundation for a reformed and inclusive government in Northern Ireland. Embodying principles of hope, inclusion, power-sharing, and reconciliation, the Agreement has not only fostered enduring peace in Northern Ireland but has also served as a model for addressing entrenched conflicts globally.



British Ambassador, H.E. Joanna Roper. Picture by Leiden University

The 25th anniversary provides an opportune moment to reflect on Northern Ireland's progress over the past quarter-century. The region has evolved into a more diverse, prosperous, and outward-looking society. Despite challenges, the Good Friday Agreement remains a cornerstone for a hopeful future, laying the groundwork for peace and prosperity. It challenged preconceptions about what was possible, offering a transformative pathway for a better future.

The Irish Ambassador, Brendan Rogers, shared personal reflections, recounting his experiences as a "child of The Troubles." Growing up during a tumultuous period marked by violence and conflict, he emphasized the significant positive impact of the Good Friday Agreement in bringing an end to the hostilities that claimed thousands of lives. He stressed the need to continue working towards peace, prosperity, and well-being for future generations.

The British Ambassador, Joanna Roper, echoed these sentiments, emphasizing the historic and shared achievement of the Agreement. She underscored the enduring commitment of the UK and Irish governments to uphold the Agreement in all its dimensions, fostering peace and prosperity in Northern Ireland. The bilateral relationship and ongoing dialogue between the countries were deemed vital to maintaining the unique nature of life on the island of Ireland.

Both ambassadors recognized that while substantial progress has been made, there is more work to be done. They expressed a shared commitment to the Agreement's goals of reconciliation, tolerance, and mutual trust, reiterating its continued importance in the present day.

The commemorative event concluded with the screening of a short film from the British Council, featuring twenty-five young people from Ireland and the UK. The film captured the voices and sentiments of those impacted by the Good Friday Agreement, reflecting on the past 25 years and expressing hopes for the future. Diplomats from various countries and representatives from academia and civil society also attended the event, highlighting the international significance of the Good Friday Agreement and its ongoing relevance in promoting peace and reconciliation.



DE GOUDWAAG: A TROVE FOR TURNING OLD TREASURES INTO CASH

Nestled amidst the charming streets of The Hague Benoordenhout lies De Goudwaag, a haven for those seeking to exchange their unused precious metals for fair and honest prices. This reputable establishment has been a trusted name in the gold and silver trade for over a decade, its history intertwined with the world of diplomacy.

The story of De Goudwaag began in 2011, when Naomi Weststrate-Irak, the spouse of a Dutch diplomat, returned from an overseas posting. "Coming from a family tradition in the trade of precious metals, I recognized the need for a reliable and transparent gold buyer in The Hague", Naomi says. Her vision gave birth to De Goudwaag, a place where customers can exchange their unused old gold and silver for cash, while feeling at ease knowing their valuables are being valued with care and expertise.

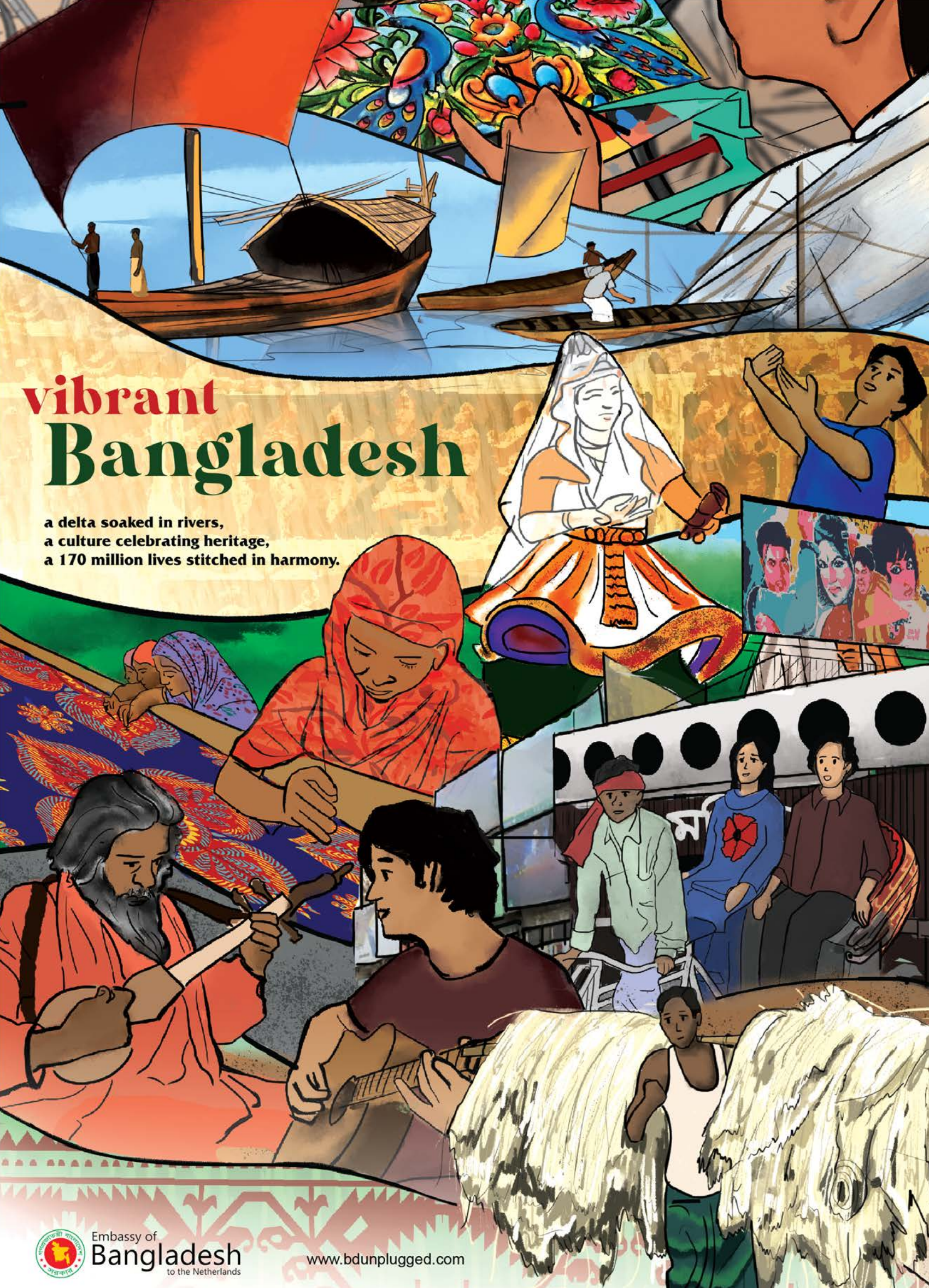
Over the years, De Goudwaag has evolved into a cornerstone of the local and diplomatic community, providing invaluable services to a diverse clientele. Whether it's inherited jewelry, scrap gold, or gold and silver coins, or even extracted gold teeth and moles,

De Goudwaag takes pride in offering fair valuations based on the current market value and offers a fair amount to those who want to sell their items.

In addition to her family tradition in the business, also Naomi's longstanding connection to the diplomatic world has undoubtedly shaped De Goudwaag's ethos of integrity and professionalism. Naomi: "For me it is important to value the customers' trust, and to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere where individuals can feel confident while selling their valuables."

Today, De Goudwaag stands as a testament to Naomi's pioneering spirit and her commitment to providing exceptional service. Its success is a reflection of its deep-rooted values and its dedication to upholding the highest standards in the gold and silver trade.

Whether you're a seasoned collector or a first-time seller, De Goudwaag welcomes you with open arms, ready to guide you through the process with expertise and compassion. And a good cup of coffee is always available...



vibrant Bangladesh

a delta soaked in rivers,
a culture celebrating heritage,
a 170 million lives stitched in harmony.



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