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Embassy of Switzerland
Swiss Business Hub South Africa



Swiss Business Hub South Africa Review

January 2009



Neel Jani in Taupo/New Zealand

A1 Team Switzerland on top down under Victory and second place for Neel Jani in New Zealand

Switzerland scored 26 points in the A1GP races at Taupo, New Zealand, which means that they moved from sixth position to second in the World Cup rankings.

Starting from 4th position on the grid for the 25 lap sprint event, Neel Jani overtook the Dutch and Portuguese and managed to finish only 1.4 seconds behind the Irishman Adam Carroll in a well deserved second place.

The 50 lap race proved to be even more exciting and a magnificent start from Jani moved him from fifth place to second at the first bend. The race was decided in the pit stop where the Swiss crew managed to beat their Irish counterparts and Jani passed Adam Carroll in the pit lane and went on to win the race.

The next event is to be held at Kyalami, Johannesburg, from the 20 - 22 February 2009. So, don't forget to come down and support the Swiss team!

The Swiss Business Hub is organising an event by which you will have the opportunity to meet the Swiss A1 team. Please see the box above in the next column. **There will also be a chance to win one of twenty grandstand tickets to the races. So, don't miss this exciting opportunity!**

Join us for a panel discussion and unique networking event!

Global Financial Crisis: Motor Sport's Doom?

In the past three years Durban hosted successfully the A1 Grand Prix on its city round course. This year the A1 Teams will compete on the famous Kyalami Grand Prix Circuit, previously the home of the South African Formula One Grand Prix. The exciting world of motor sport racing underwent significant changes in the past, traditional race courses were replaced with purpose built tracks in China, Malaysia, UAE or with the introduction of night racing in Singapore last year. The A1 Grand Prix formula pitches individuals against each other to compete on level grounds. Each A1 Grand Prix team drives the same car, fitted with identical equipment, tyres and engines. Success is focused on drivers ability rather than technological advantages and financial means. Individual drivers are not in the spotlight but rather the whole team as organised by nations. Switzerland, last year's champion, currently faces stiff competition to defend her title.

The current financial and economic crisis which hit the automotive industry particularly hard led to the provocative title: "Global Financial Crisis: Motor Sport's Doom?" Well known industry brands are on the brink of bankruptcy and corporate sponsors have cancelled or are considering withdrawal of support. Thousands of jobs are at stake. Will global warming and dwindling oil reserves force a paradigm change of the whole automotive sector and the future of motor sport? Are biofuels or hybrids, even electric cars eventually the answer to sustain individual transportation as we have known it since the first car rolled off an assembly line a century ago? Individuals, will they use public transportation more widely? These and many more questions will be discussed by an expert panel. So don't miss this opportunity and join us at this event which is followed by networking opportunities with the Swiss A1 Grand Prix team as well as the panellists!

- **Venue: The Theatre on the Track, Kyalami**
- **Time: 18h00 to 20h30 on 18 February 2009**
- **Price: ZAR 150, payable cash at the entrance**

Please book your seats by Friday, 13 February 2009!

pre.sbhsa@eda.admin.ch

Fax 012 346 2621 / 6605 / 2605

Business trips to Southern Africa March 2009

Rainbow unlimited gmbh will take representatives from companies interested in partnerships and individual investors to these countries and bring them in contact with business people, support institutions and branch organisations from the most promising sectors: Agriculture, Manufacturing, Tourism, Mining, Energy and Services.

Mozambique, 8-11 March 2009

Tanzania, 15-18 March 2009

South Africa (Gauteng), 22-25 March 2009

Thomas Seghezzi, Partner rainbow unlimited, on Africa

Q You are planning business trips to South Africa, Tanzania and Mozambique in March this year. Why have you selected those three countries in particular?

A The choice of South Africa is evident. The country is and remains the economic powerhouse of the continent. And Gauteng province is the powerhouse of South Africa. Our next South Africa trip focuses on Gauteng province. The Johannesburg economic promotion office has proposed to us the sectors they see much potential in. It's those sectors we will target during the next business

trip (for more information see the detailed programme on our website).

www.rainbow-unlimited.com.

Concerning Tanzania and Mozambique, these countries have had growth rates of 6-10% p.a. over the past decade. The Governments of both countries have recognized the need to open their economies and to attract foreign investors. They have introduced a series of reforms intended at making business easier. Both countries have large and often still untapped opportunities in a variety of sectors including agribusiness, manufacturing, infrastructure, energy, tourism and mining.

I would like to add that it is part of our business model to expand our activities to other countries of Southern Africa (basically the SADC area). South Africa has an exceptional position within this region and has marketed itself very well in the last years. We think, however, that there lies an enormous potential in many of the other SADC countries, which is at present often still underestimated by European investors.



Thomas Seghezzi rainbow-unlimited gmbh

Q Could you give us an overview of the contacts that you have made in these countries that have convinced you of their positive potential to investors?

A Contacts in all countries always develop along two axes: on the one hand we establish contacts with all government and parastatal organizations / entities involved in business promotion, in order to learn more about the general trade and investment climate and environment, the actual business opportunities and the incentives on offer. Those entities include government ministries, trade and investment promotion agencies and regulatory authorities. On the other hand we get in touch with members of the local and international business community who have already been doing business in the respective country for a long time. These include individual companies across the high potential sectors as well as chambers of commerce and industry and sectoral chambers (e.g. Chamber of Mines). Our discussions with business people also help us to put everything we have learnt from the official authorities into perspective.

Q Given the United Nation's Economic Commission for Africa forecast that although it had been relatively immune from the current global financial crisis the growth rate could slow down to 4.1% in 2009 – do you still believe that this is a good time to look at investing in Africa?

A Africa's time has come, and we believe in that. Don't forget that even the relatively low growth rate you mention for Africa for 2009 is still reasonably comfortable compared to (what other reputable institutions) forecasts for certain competing emerging markets, not to speak about own countries in Europe. Plus, Africa has the great advantage of possessing vast assets (natural resources being just one of them) which in time will again be sought after. Investors from other parts of the world (China, Australia, etc.) recognized this a long time ago and are currently positioning themselves strategically all over the continent. Every crisis brings opportunities for forward-looking investors, as the economist Michael Porter from Harvard University recently rightly emphasized: ***"It's times like these when tremendous competitive success can be achieved. It's times like these where companies can shift positions in the marketplace."***

Q The 2010 FIFA World Cup to be held in South Africa initiated a massive investment in infrastructure which has resulted in a boom in the construction industry generally involving the creation of many new projects and the upgrading of numerous others. Do you believe that that investment will continue after the euphoria of this renowned sporting occasion has departed?

A Yes, absolutely. The reason is simply that contrary to the majority of other countries which have hosted such big sporting events in the past years, South Africa as the first African country to do so has started from a far lower level of infrastructure development. Most of the infrastructure would have had to have been built anyway, with or without the FIFA Football World Cup 2010. In this sense, the World Cup merely acts as an accelerator for necessary investments into the future. This is true for basically all infrastructure (transport, hospitality, ITC, etc.) with maybe the exception of the stadia which in certain cases would possibly not have been built at all or maybe not as big as they are being constructed now. Most infrastructure projects – a good example is the Gautrain – have been projected from the outset to go beyond the Games. I am convinced that the FIFA World Cup 2010 in South Africa will be a great success, and that the event will give Africa another big push forward towards a bright future.

www.rainbow-unlimited.com
info@rainbow-unlimited.com



The benefits of membership

Interview with Mr Yves Manghardt, CEO of Nestlé South Africa and Board Member SwissCham Southern Africa - South Africa Chapter

Q Mr. Manghardt, you have been active in SwissCham Southern Africa – South Africa Chapter since its inception. What made you decide to become a member?

A We at Nestlé are proud to be associated with SwissCham Southern Africa – South Africa Chapter. As a Swiss company with over 92 years in South Africa, we not only feel that we have an obligation to play a role in furthering trade and cultural relations between our two countries, but it is a privilege to be part of the many networking opportunities that SwissCham offers to its members. These events are most informative for members from small and large companies whether these are on economic issues, the impartation of know-how and/or the experiences of successful business and government leaders.



Yves Manghardt CEO Nestlé South Africa

Q Some small companies are of the opinion that membership at SwissCham is only for the big players.

A We have been talking about the networking opportunities at events organized by SwissCham which are relevant for both members of the bigger and the smaller companies. For SMEs in particular, these events present a networking opportunity with the members of larger

companies and to meet with potential business partners which they would not otherwise be able to do.

Q Apart from networking, are there other advantages to being a member at SwissCham?

A Yes, there are a host of other services that are available to the SwissCham members. SwissCham can assist with the setting up of new companies, focused searches for location partners, suppliers and customers, as well as import/export logistics, market research, legal advice and so on. At SwissCham they also have many members who are experts in their fields who will consult to other members.

Q What is your message to Swiss and South African businesses interested in becoming members at SwissCham?

A I would like to encourage Swiss companies in South Africa as well as South African companies with business interests in Switzerland to network within the Chamber and thus broaden their contact base and business opportunities, whilst making a valuable contribution to Swiss-South African trade relations.

SwissCham Southern Africa - South Africa Chapter

For membership information contact:
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Third party events¹

SwissCham Southern Africa - South Africa Chapter
in cooperation with

Nordic South African Business Association
Joint cocktail presentation

Thursday, 19 February 2009
17h30 for 18h00

Grayston Sun Hotel Conference Centre
Corner Rivonia Road and Grayston Drive
Sandton

Speaker: **Tito Mboweni**, Governor,
South African Reserve Bank
ZAR 300/Members, ZAR 400/Member
Guests

This is a member only event! For membership see info box above!

Please pay directly into account:
Standard Bank, Sandton Branch
Account Nr 42 103 857 8
Branch code: 019205
Reference: company name

R.S.V.P.

Suzanne Howitt
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Trade Fairs in Switzerland and South Africa

February - April 2009

13.02.2009	Midrand - South Africa
15.02.2009	BHS - BEELD HOLIDAY SHOW
13.02.2009	Basel - Switzerland
15.02.2009	muba - As colourful as life
15.02.2009	Cape Town - South Africa
16.02.2009	Professional Beauty Cape Town -Exhibition for Beauty Products, Services and Equipment
25.02.2009	Sandton - South Africa
27.02.2009	Meetings Africa - Incentives, Conference, Business Travel and Meeting Industry Expo
05.03.2009	Johannesburg - South Africa
08.03.2009	HobbyX - Exhibition of Materials, Equipment and Supplies for the Hobby and Craft Industries
05.03.2009	Geneva - Switzerland
15.03.2009	SALON INTERNATIONAL DE L'AUTO - Geneva International Motor Show
07.03.2009	Zurich - Switzerland
08.03.2009	BFS - BEAUTY FORUM SWISS - International Cosmetics Trade Fair
15.03.2009	Sandton - South Africa
18.03.2009	Hostex Gauteng - International Hospitality and Catering Exhibition
18.03.2009	Johannesburg - South Africa
21.03.2009	Automechanika South Africa - South Africa's International Trade Fair for Automotive Parts, Equipment and Service Suppliers
19.03.2009	Durban - South Africa
22.03.2009	Decorex Durban - Interior Design and Decor Expo
19.03.2009	Zurich - Switzerland
26.03.2009	expovina-primavera - Wine Exhibition of Zurich
26.03.2009	Lausanne - Switzerland
29.03.2009	MEDNAT Expo - International Fair of Natural Medicines, Health and Prevention
26.03.2009	Basel - Switzerland
02.04.2009	BASELWORLD - The Watch and Jewellery Show
27.03.2009	Johannesburg - South Africa
29.03.2009	Gardenex & Green Living Fair - Horticulture, Floriculture, Eco-Gardening and Outdoor Leisure
01.04.2009	Bern - Switzerland
02.04.2009	topsoft - Business Software Trade Show
01.04.2009	Zurich - Switzerland
02.04.2009	Swiss Online Marketing - Swiss Expo for Digital Marketing
01.04.2009	Geneva - Switzerland
05.04.2009	INVENTIONS - Int Expo of Inventions

¹ These events are published for information purposes only. Please contact the organisers mentioned for booking and payment directly.

Austrian Business Circle

Business lunch

Thursday, 5 March 2009

12h00 for 12h30

Michelangelo Hotel, Sandton

Speaker: **Daniel Mminele**, Executive General Manager, South African Reserve Bank

ZAR 250/Members, ZAR 280/Non-Members

Please pay directly into account:

Nedbank Rosebank

Account Nr 1958 469777

Branch code: 195-805

R.S.V.P.

Martina Stuhl

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South African Institute of Race Relations

in cooperation with

The Weekender

is organising a series of business breakfasts featuring South Africa's most prominent leaders:

Mr **Mosiua Lekota**, president of the Congress of the People (COPE)
25 February 2009

Mrs **Helen Zille**, leader of the Democratic Alliance (DA)
3 March 2009

Mr **Jacob Zuma**, president of the African National Congress (ANC)
31 March 2009

All three briefings will take place at the Johannesburg Country Club.

07h30 for 08h00 until 09h30

Institute members and Weekender subscribers pay ZAR 150 per briefing or ZAR 400 for all three events. Guests pay ZAR 200 per briefing or ZAR 500 for all three events.

To reserve your place at one or all of these briefings please **R.S.V.P.** to Mapeete Mohale, mmohale@sairr.co.za and supply your name and contact number and the names of your guests. Your places, the necessary billing details, and directions will be confirmed by e-mail. Places are limited and the Institute expects that demand for places will exceed supply.

SwissCham Southern Africa, Zürich

"Football for Health in Africa"

Professor **Jiri Dvorak**, FIFA Chief Medical Officer

Thursday, 26 March 2009

11h25 Registration

11h50 Presentation and Q&A, followed by Lunch

14h00 End of Event

Zunft zur Saffran

Limmatquai 54, Zürich, **Switzerland**

R.S.V.P. by Friday 20 March 2009 to bmoeckli-schneider@chambersservices.ch

CHF 110/Members, CHF 150/Non-members

You will receive an invoice after registration.

Cancellations will be accepted until Wednesday, 25 March 2009, 10h00; otherwise a full no-show charge applies.

www.scsa.ch

Less than 500 days

There are now less than 500 days left to the 19th **FIFA World Cup** to be held from the 11th June to the 11th July 2010. Preparations are well underway and South Africa and the world have been assured that the stadiums and the essential infrastructure will be ready for this massive sporting occasion. A recent survey has shown that over 75% of South Africans now believe that their country will be ready and the whole country is looking forward to the event with great excitement.

The **2009 FIFA Confederation Cup** to be held from the 14th June to the 28th this year will serve as a useful exercise (though on a much smaller scale) to show the state of preparations to date. Eight teams will be contesting for the trophy: South Africa, Italy, USA, Brazil, Iraq, Egypt, Spain and New Zealand. The games will be played in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Bloemfontein and Rustenburg.

The South African Wine industry is coming up for its 350th birthday

The South African wine industry dates back to 1659, 7 years after Jan van Riebeeck landed at the Cape. The first vines were imported from France, the Rhineland and Spain in 1655. The first wine was pressed from Cape grapes in van Riebeeck's gardens on the 2nd February, 1695.

Van Riebeeck strongly encouraged farmers to plant vineyards although initially they were most reluctant. There were many setbacks as the Dutch had little or no wine tradition. It was only in 1679, when Simon van der Stel succeeded van Riebeeck, that the industry began to improve. He planted a vineyard on his farm Constantia. This was later acquired by the Cloete family and their wines have become famous worldwide.

Today, South Africa has 101,957 hectares under vines for wine production. The 2008 harvest is estimated at 787.2 million litres which is 56.8 million more litres than the 2007 figure of 730.4 million.

South Africa currently produces 3.0% of the world's wine and ranks as number nine in overall volume production (2005)

The Schengen Visa

As most people are now aware, Switzerland joined the Schengen visa scheme on 12 December 2008. Although Switzerland is not a member of the European Union it is closely associated with it through bilateral agreements that cover aspects of mutual interest. The integration of the EU is an ongoing process and nearly all member states have joined the Schengen agreement abolishing internal frontiers and border control, thereby facilitating the movement of people. Switzerland lies in the middle of Europe, surrounded by Schengen member states and until two months ago regulated the arrival of foreign nationals according to Swiss laws and principles. Common sense prevailed and Swit-

zerland's people accepted the Swiss government's proposal to join the Schengen area in a public vote. Negotiations with Schengen member states proved successful and Switzerland was formally admitted. The consequence for South Africans is that from 12.12.2008 they require a visa to enter Switzerland.

Specifically this means that applications for visas need to be supported by the same documentation as requested by the EU states that are members of the agreement.

The general requirements for applications are:

- Visa application form completed and signed by the applicant
- 2 recent photographs
- original valid passport
- proof of funds, invitation letter, tour or hotel reservation
- flight itinerary and travel insurance

Please go to the link at the end of this article for detailed information on the visa application process at the Embassy of Switzerland in Pretoria.

Due to the fact that the final acceptance of Switzerland into the Schengen agreement had to be decided in Brussels the introduction of the visa scheme unfortunately fell into the main holiday season of South Africa. This meant that some South Africans were caught off guard and advertisements informing of the new Swiss travel requirements placed by the Embassy in various South African newspapers went unnoticed.

This is most likely the main reason why the Swiss visa offices are extremely busy at the moment. A phenomena, even preceding Schengen, is that travelers prepare their trips abroad with great diligence and well ahead of departure time. As experience shows, the entry requirements for visiting foreign countries do not enjoy the same priority as finding accommodation and searching for affordable air fares and must then be resolved in a last minute operation, stressful for all involved in sorting out the visa problem.

A good piece of advice to all travelers, business and leisure alike is to inquire early with the relevant authorities about entry requirements of the country you intend to visit and apply early for the necessary visa.

[Visas for persons living in South Africa](#)

Swiss approve labour accord with EU

59.6 per cent of the electorate voted for a proposal to continue a labour accord with the EU and at the same time extend the agreement to the newest EU members Bulgaria and Romania.

It was pointed out during the campaign that the experience of the last six years had shown the importance of open labour markets for Swiss companies.

Additionally, the EU is Switzerland's most important trading partner with a market of 490 million potential consumers.