



EVENT REVIEW

SwissCham Year-End Dinner

Date : 13th November 2008

Venue : The Grace Hotel, Rosebank



On November 13th, 2008, our first year-end dinner with partners was held at The Grace Hotel in Rosebank.

Our President, Jürg Schalch, welcomed the members and our guests of honour, Ambassador of Switzerland to South Africa, HE Rudolf Bärffuss and Mrs Bärffuss. A special welcome was extended also to our newest members ADS Engineering, Barbara Wickli & Ass., Hilti, Logitech, Mobile Merchant, Peregrine Holdings, Prosono Timbers, Prowork Project Management, Simon Organ, SM Business Consultants, Swisscontact, Telfree Group, V-Tech, William Tell Industries and Xstrata. Unfortunately not all of these members were able to attend.

The President then gave a short overview of the Chamber's activities to date which included our membership drive, the production of the Chamber Profile, advertisements and editorials placed in the Swiss Review as well as the Swiss Business Hub Review.



Our successful membership luncheon with Dennis Dykes, Chief Economist from Nedbank which was held in September and our linkage to the main website with our parent organization SwissCham Southern Africa in Zurich.

He then went on to say that a number of exciting events were being planned for 2009, including a Formula A event with the Swiss Business Hub in February and a possible joint event with the Nordic Chamber.

The President also reminded us to diarise SwissCham's first AGM which will take place on the 2nd of April 2009.



Jürg Schalch then had the pleasure of introducing our new Swiss Ambassador designate to South Africa, HE Mr. Rudolf Bärffuss.

Mr. Bärffuss gave us a short background of his career.

He was born in 1947 in Arbon, Canton of Thurgau and holds citizenships of Eggwil and Hombrechtikon. He studied at the Universities of St.Gallen and Zurich and holds a Masters degree in economics.



In 1977, Mr. Bärffuss entered the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and held short assignments in Bern and Lisbon. Back to Bern in 1979, he was detached to the Division of Commerce at the Ministry of Economy.

In 1982, he was transferred to the Embassy of Switzerland in Brasilia as Deputy Head of Mission. In 1986, he was posted to the Swiss Mission to the European Communities in Brussels, where he was promoted to Counsellor in 1987.

Back to Bern in 1988, Mr. Bärffuss was appointed Head of Section at the Bureau of Integration DFAE/DFE. In 1993, the Federal Council appointed him as Vice-Director (with the title of a Minister) for International Affairs at the Federal Office for the Environment, Forestry and Landscape (Ministry of Interior). In 1996 he was appointed Ambassador and Head of Political Division V (Political Direction, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs).

In 2001, Mr. Bärffuss was appointed Ambassador of Switzerland in Mozambique and Angola, with residence in Maputo. Between 2004 and 2008 he was Ambassador of Switzerland in Brazil.

SwissCham welcomes our new Ambassador HE Rudolf Bärffuss and Mrs Bärffuss to South Africa and we wish them a very pleasant and enjoyable stay.





The guests were entertained by Dieter Uken who played the saxophone, guitar and keyboard during the excellent 3-course dinner. His impersonation of “Satchmo” and Frank Sinatra gave rise to much applause.

Nestlé spoilt the guests with a Swiss chocolate gift box for each person. All agreed that it was a very pleasant and enjoyable evening.

