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From the Embassy

Ambassador's speech continued

Swiss love New Zealand, not only to come here and set up a new life, but also for tourism. On a per capita basis, there are two and a half times more Swiss tourists coming to NZ than from Germany or Italy, and two times as many compared to France.

This love for New Zealand is reflected when we look at investments: Switzerland constantly ranks among the top ten investors in New Zealand.

[There are about 45 Swiss companies in New Zealand. These Swiss companies create about 5,000 jobs, mainly for skilled workers.]

Switzerland is – you might be surprised to hear this – a big country. Why big? It is certainly a big country when we talk finances: Switzerland is the seventh largest financial centre worldwide. But Switzerland is also a medium-sized country. Medium-sized, if we talk about the economy: Switzerland, with its population of 8 million is the 19th biggest economy worldwide, only a few places away from Indonesia with its 240 million people. But Switzerland is above all a small country. Small in size, both in geography and population, but also small with regards to political influence.

New Zealand is a big country, too. It has the 5th biggest EEZ in the world. But above all, like Switzerland, it is a small country.

As small countries, we have much in common. For small countries, the rule of law is extremely important, as we cannot engage in power play. It is therefore crucial for both our countries that there is a legal system that is binding to all, and this is what both our countries fight for.

It will therefore not come as a surprise when I tell you that both New Zealand and Switzerland would like to see a UN Security Council that is more effective, more transparent, and more democratic. That both our countries would like to see a world with less weapons in the wrong hands. Just a few weeks ago, on 3 June, New Zealand and Switzerland signed the Arms Trade Treaty; a treaty that was incredibly hard to negotiate. Both our countries also want to see nuclear weapons delegitimised, and we work hand-in-hand to decrease the level of alertness of nuclear weapons.

I could mention many more initiatives and topics, in which our two countries work together, [the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases, the Friends of the Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform, the Nansen Initiative on disaster induced cross-border migration, and so on.]

But let me finish with a topic that I had started with: multiculturalism. Both New Zealand and Switzerland are, as the greetings have shown, multilingual countries. And to showcase

this multiculturalism as well as to celebrate our 50th anniversary, the Embassy together with the Victoria University did a translation of the opening paragraph of Margaret Mahy's "The Three Legged Cat" into the four official Swiss and the two official New Zealand written languages. You will find a sample of the booklet in your goodie bag on your way out and I hope you enjoy it.

I would now like to propose a toast to Her Majesty Elizabeth the Second, Queen of New Zealand. To the Queen!

By Marion Weichelt Krupski, Swiss Ambassador

Swiss Kiwi Stories

A celebration of outstanding personalities

The Swiss Embassy in Wellington has begun production of a series of YouTube videos on the occasion of this year's anniversary of 50 years of diplomatic relations between New Zealand and Switzerland. The videos showcase outstanding Swiss Kiwis in the fields of the arts, sport, design and business.

Our first video about Oceania player of the Century, Wynton Rufer, is proving a big hit, with over 700 people already watching it. So if you too would like to find out about Wynton's Swiss dad and Maori mum and watch those incredible goals that secured the All Whites a World Cup spot, please follow the link below.

Please put your YouTube settings to HD (high definition:) to see the video's full effect.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGgSs3osK-o>

By Sarah Bradley, Event Manager, Embassy of Switzerland

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