



Vancouver , 21.06.2011

Dear President and Executives,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you as the new Consul General of Switzerland in Vancouver. At the beginning of June my spouse, Martina Feil, and I arrived in Western Canada, and have already begun to feel very much at home.

In 1981, my very first posting with the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs was in Algeria. After this, I moved to Harare, Zimbabwe, and stayed in the southern regions of Africa for four and a half years before heading back to Europe where I was posted in Düsseldorf. Two years later, I returned to Switzerland for a time before heading off to the Consulate General in Sydney. After this posting, I returned once more to Bern. In 2002, I moved to Los Angeles where I stayed for nearly four years before I found myself travelling back to Africa, and this time to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as the Deputy Head of Mission.

In 2006, I was promoted to Consul General and called on by the FDFA to travel to St. Petersburg where I opened the Consulate General. Later, I was once again transferred to Düsseldorf, but this time as Head of post.

Over all these years, the needs and desires of the local Swiss community have always been close to my heart, and over time I have developed many important acquaintances as well as some very close friendships. I hope that it will be no different here in Western Canada and I look forward to having regular contact with you.

I am very impressed with all the many activities and events that are being organized by the Swiss clubs in our district, not the least of which is the upcoming 27th Pacific Coast Swiss Singing and Yodeling festival in Vancouver which is a wonderful example of how Swiss culture and traditions have found their place abroad.

It goes without saying that I would like to get to know you personally and will take part in your local club's activities whenever possible, and I hope you will also allow my colleagues at the Consulate to take part in your cultural events.

Please feel free to visit our website, where you will find my official welcome message.

www.eda.admin.ch/vancouver

I wish you all the best, and look forward to meet with you.

The Consul General of Switzerland

Urs V. Strausak