

DIPLOMAT AFFAIRS

IN TOUCH WITH THE DUTCH



5TH ANNIVERSARY



Diplomat Club Wassenaar
The Netherlands



**KASTEEL DE
WITTENBURG**

AUDACIA AMICITIA FIDES

Landgoed De Wittenburg 1, 2244 BV Wassenaar



Your Excellencies, dear members and readers,

It is with deep joy and gratitude that I present you with the latest edition of Diplomat Affairs Magazine – *in touch with the Dutch*, celebrating the 5th Anniversary of both Diplomat Club Wassenaar and our Magazine. We celebrated this joyous moment with our new partners, CHIO Rotterdam and PortClub Rotterdam during the European Horse-riding Championships and I thank the board of CHIO, especially Mr. Peter Goedvolk, an inspiring visionary, for the warm reception and hospitality. Looking back on all we have accomplished together in five years since my vision of a Club which would be a ‘home away from home’ for the Ambassadors here in the Netherlands, facilitating a more informal contact with Captains of Industry, and the worlds of Dutch Art, Sport, Culture and Charity. A neutral space where religion and politics could be put aside in order to focus on the business world in the Netherlands and the common humanity we share.

I am grateful to all of you for being part of this, for

creating the synergy at our events, for collaborating with your articles and for holding your national days in collaboration with the Club at Kasteel De Wittenburg. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank our partners: the municipality of Wassenaar, Mr. Ralf Meppelder of Kasteel De Wittenburg; TenRande Foundation and in particular my husband Peter Blik; the Royal Conservatoire The Hague Director, Henk van der Meulen and the Dean of the Honorary member Ambassadors of Diplomat Club Wassenaar, H.E. Mr. Fernando Arias. Thanks also go to the honorary advisors, Mrs. Lisette Goedvolk, Dr. Marjolein de Bois and Mr Hans Slingerland van Bemmelen. Last but not least, to my team for their unconditional dedication: Nadia van Gaalen, Anton van der Riet and Julie Kennedy. I hope you enjoy this edition of Diplomat Affairs and I look forward to pursuing collaboration in the years to come, also with our new partners, CHIO Rotterdam and CHIO PortClub Rotterdam.

Shida Blik (diplomataffairsnl@gmail.com)

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Royal gala dinner for the Diplomatic Corps 2019: encounters between cultures

His Majesty King Willem-Alexander and Her Majesty Queen Máxima held their annual gala dinner for the Corps Diplomatique at the Royal Palace Amsterdam. This year under the theme of Art and Culture.

BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTO MISCHA SCHOENMAKER

His Royal Highness thanked the Diplomatic Corps for their work and commitment and embracing their lives in Holland as was shown in the many messages of support he received after the Utrecht attacks.

His Majesty the King, in his warm and humanistic speech, stressed the importance of cooperation and collaboration, not as sign as weakness but as a sign of strength stating: “The Kingdom of the Netherlands has always attached great importance to international cooperation. We believe it’s the best, and perhaps only, guarantee of a good life for people here

and all over the world. That’s why our Kingdom is an active participant in countless international organizations. And that’s why we – together with you – are doing our best to strengthen the international legal order.”

Collaboration was to the fore during the Netherlands term as member of the Security Council where progress was made on many important issues such as fighting poverty, creating equal opportunities for women, health, international law and this focus on collaboration will also be celebrated next year with the 75th anniversary of the United Nations.

His Royal Highness emphasized the need for creativity, empathy, and daring to step outside of one’s comfort zone as the skills needed to cope with the challenges of our present day.

Amongst the guests were also many Dutch cultural Ambassadors, in line with this year’s gala theme. This year is also the Year of Rembrandt, as it marks the 350th anniversary of the death of perhaps the greatest of all Dutch artists.

The speech concluded with a toast: “To encounters between cultures; to friendship and cooperation.”

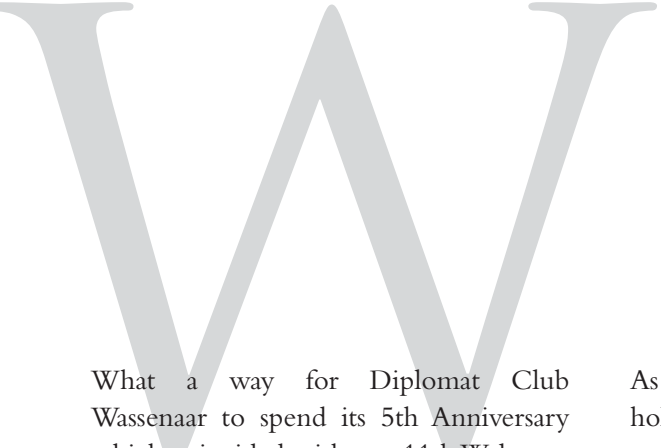


First row from left to right: H.E. Mr. Alireza Kazemi Abadi (Iran), H.E. Mr. Fernando Arias (Director-General OPCW), H.E. Mr. Xu Hong (China), H.E. Mr. Abdul-Rahman Al-Otaibi (Kuwait).
 Second row from left to right: H.E. Mrs. Laura Dupuy Lasserre (Uruguay), Mr. Frank Koen (Mayor of Wassenaar), Mrs. Shida Blik (Founder DCW), Mr. Peter Blik (President TenRande Foundation) H.E. Dr. Hissa Abdulla Ahmed Alotaiba (UAE).
 Third row: Mr. Henk van der Meulen (Director the Royal Conservatoire The Hague) Ms. Ketevan Ratiani (spouse Georgia), H.E. Mr. George Sharvashidze (Georgia), Mrs. Patricia van Oordt de Arias (spouse OPCW).

Ambassadors, Welcome to The Netherlands!

Celebrating our 11th Welcome Ceremony for newly arrived Ambassadors and the 5th Anniversary of Diplomat Club Wassenaar and *Diplomat Affairs Magazine*.

BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET



What a way for Diplomat Club Wassenaar to spend its 5th Anniversary which coincided with our 11th Welcome Ceremony, meaning we have welcomed 82 Ambassadors so far! By a sweltering midsummer evening of June, we had the honour of welcoming the six new Ambassadors of:

- China:** H.E. Dr. Xu Hong
- Georgia:** H.E. Mr. George Sharvashidze and Mrs. Ketevan Ratiani
- Iran:** H.E. Dr. Alireza Kazemi Abadi
- Kuwait:** H.E. Mr. Abdul-Rahman Al-Otaibi
- UAE:** H.E. Dr. Hissa Abdulla Ahmed Alotaiba
- Uruguay:** H.E. Mrs. Laura Dupuy Lasserre

So many of our cherished guests, members and honorary members turned out to share this joyous moment with us. They were greeted in the gardens by Mr Frank Koen, Mayor of the Municipality of Wassenaar; TenRande board members, Peter Blik (President) Dr. Marjolein de Bois, Honorary advisor Mr. Hans Slingerland van Bemmelen and Mrs Shida Blik, Founder of Diplomat Club Wassenaar, who welcomed the newly arrived Ambassadors to the Club and decorated them with a Dutch flag pin, a tradition we delight in. Once seated in the concert room, the Mayor of Wassenaar highlighted the wonderful Mhe represents, before handing over a bouquet of flowers to Mrs Blik as appreciation for all her work and achievements as founder of Diplomat Cub Wassenaar and *Diplomat Affairs Magazine*. Mrs Blik thanked him in return for his support and wished him farewell as he steps down this summer.

As spokesperson, I had the privilege of holding a rapid presentation on the occasion of our 5th anniversary, summarising our goal and achievements:

- DCW was founded by Mrs. Shida Blik with the support of her neighbours on Embassy row near the Peace Palace, where TenRande Foundation is based. Diplomat Club Wassenaar is part of this Foundation.
- The concept was to create a neutral environment where politics and religion would play no part and where all could meet and be in touch with the Dutch.
- The emphasis is on Art (we are actively

WE ARE ALWAYS
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ATTENTION

involved in the heritage of a Cobra artist), music (through our collaboration with the Royal Conservatoire the Hague), charity (MC Thorax Foundation/ SOS children village), and Sports/ business (partnership with CHIO Rotterdam and Port Club Rotterdam). - TenRande Foundation is also the official representative and special Delegate to the Netherlands of the Flame of Peace foundation. (Dr. Ben Bot, Chairman of Carnegie Foundation and the former Portuguese Ambassador, H.E. José de Bouza Serrano were awarded in 2016). - We thrive thanks to the wonderful

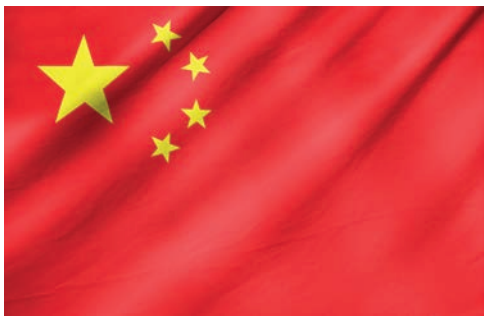
cooperation with the Municipality of Wassenaar, the Embassies, Kasteel de Wittenburg, not to forget the Ambassadors Spouses Association. - All our activities and more are highlighted on our website and in our magazine *Diplomat Affairs - in touch with the Dutch*, which also celebrates its 5th Anniversary. This edition is our 11th. We are always delighted to showcase what you, our members, do here in The Hague, announce your events and bring Art, Business, Sports and Charity to your attention as we help keep you ‘in touch with the Dutch’. We thank you all for the wonderful articles you have collaborated in and look forward to many more to come.

Director of the Royal Conservatory the Hague, Mr Henk van der Meulen announced the musical interlude: a tenor, Mr Hao Wang (from China) and on the piano Mrs Shintaro Kawahara (from Japan). It was exquisite and distracted us from the heat of the moment, though the breeze did its best to filter through the billowing curtains.

After the traditional photo, guests partook in the delicious buffet, settling at the round tables in the garden, relishing in the evening breeze and the wonderful atmosphere.

No one was in a hurry to leave from this warm and friendly evening in idyllic surroundings, which was for us the best birthday present we could imagine.

For more photos, please visit our website: diplomataffairs.nl



AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA:

H.E. DR. XU HONG

His Excellency holds a PhD in Law and served extensively within the Department of Treaty and Law of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, rising to Director-General. He has also served as Assistant Mayor of Mianyang City, Sichuan Province, as Counsellor at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Kingdom of Thailand.

His Excellency equally served as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China in Barbados.

Ambassador Xu Hong is married, with a daughter.

AMBASSADOR OF GEORGIA:

H.E. GEORGE SHARVASHIDZE

His Excellency holds an MBA from the University of Science and Technology of Shanghai, China; a Master of Science in International Management from ICN Business School in Nancy-France and Milan-Italy; a Master of International



Relations from Tbilisi State University, Georgia where he also obtained a Bachelor of International Relations.

Before taking his post in the Hague, Ambassador Sharvashidze was Deputy Minister. Previous to that, he has served in many capacities for JSC Sarajishvili in Tbilisi, Georgia such as Deputy Executive Director – Chief Operating Officer, Commercial Director and Head of Purchasing and Logistics. He has also served as Representative of the Georgian party in the Georgian-Chinese joint venture and in International Relations.

Ambassador Sharvashidze is married with two children.

AMBASSADOR OF THE ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAN:

H.E. MR. ALIREZA KAZEMI ABADI

His Excellency holds a PhD in International Law from Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran and a PhD in International Law from King's College, London. He also holds a LLM in International Law from the University of Tehran and a BA in International Relations.



Mr Abadi has served in many functions at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and at the Ministry of Justice, rising to Deputy Head of the JCPOA's Implementation Task Force in the MFA and Advisor to Minister of Justice. He also served as Head of many delegations to the UN such as the UN convention against corruption or for the rights of the child, and also served at the Embassy of Iran in the Hague from 1997-2001.

Ambassador Abadi is married with two children

AMBASSADOR OF THE STATE OF KUWAIT:

H.E. MR. ABDUL-RAHMAN AL-OTAIBI

His Excellency holds a Bachelor's in Political Science & Economics from the University of Kuwait.

Since joining the Diplomatic Corps, the Ambassador has served at the Embassy of the State of Kuwait in the United Kingdom, in the Netherlands (1993-1998), as Counsellor in India, in the Arab Republic of Egypt and to the Permanent Mission of the State of Kuwait to the League of Arab States.



His Excellency has also served as Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the Yemeni Republic and non-resident Ambassador to Eritrea and Djibouti.

He has been promoted to the rank of Minister and Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary. His Excellency was awarded the Medal of Merit of the Republic of Djibouti and the Medal of the Republic of Yemen.

Ambassador Al-Otaibi is married and has six children.

AMBASSADOR OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES:

H.E. DR. HISSA ABDULLA AHMED ALOTAIBA

Her Excellency, Dr Hissa Abdulla Ahmed Alotaiba holds a Doctorate in Business Administration from the University of Lausanne in Switzerland; and a Master's degree in Computer Data Management from Webster University in Geneva, as well as a Bachelor's in Business Administration from Cairo University.

Mrs Alotaiba has participated and attended a large number of delegations, and international congresses held in the United



Arab Emirates, in the Kingdom of Spain, Cuba and was Advisor to the Department of Planning and Economics in Abu Dhabi.

Involved in a variety of economic, diplomatic, social and security activities, she has made significant achievements, in creating cooperation with many institutions and was instrumental in the signing of numerous MoU's.: Her Excellency was awarded "The Grand Cross of the Order of Civil Merit" by H.M. Felipe VI, King of Spain in recognition of her position as UAE Ambassador to Spain, the first Arab Lady Ambassador and of her role in strengthening the bilateral relations between UAE and Spain.

Her Excellency has also served as Ambassador to the Holy See.

Ambassador Alotaiba is married and has lived in Egypt, North Africa, Europe, South America and North America.

AMBASSADOR OF THE ORIENTAL REPUBLIC OF URUGUAY:

H.E. LAURA DUPUY LASSERRE

Her Excellency, Ambassador Dupuy has a Degree (License) in International Relations



from the University of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay – UDELAR –, as well as legal studies at the same University.

She is a career Diplomat and has served in numerous capacities such as the Director General of Technical and Administrative Affairs at the MFA of Uruguay, and also as the Responsible of information security and the MFR Representative at the National Council on Gender. Ambassador Dupuy also served as Director in the areas of Environment and HR and Humanitarian Law.

She co-chaired the Global LGBTI Human Rights Conference, co-organized by Uruguay and the Kingdom of the Netherlands and chaired various other panels promoting gender parity and international representation.

She was President of the United Nations Human Rights Council, first woman nominated by the GRULAC) and the Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the Office of the United Nations and other Specialized Organizations in Geneva. Ambassador Dupuy is married with one son.



Left, Ms. Ingrid Sachumsky, Advisor cabinet, Representation and organization Municipality of Wassenaar.



Mayor Koen, thank you also on behalf of the honorary members for your support to DCW. We wish you all the best in your future career.



Tenor, Mr Hao Wang (from China) and on the piano Mrs Shintaro Kawahara (from Japan).



Mr. Henk van der Meulen.



Left, the Ambassador of South Africa, H.E. Mr. Bruce Koloane.



From left to right: H.E. Mr. Magzhan Ilyassov (Kazakhstan), H.E. Mr. Agustín Vázquez Gómez (El Salvador), H.E. Mrs. Soraya Elena Álvarez Núñez (Cuba), H.E. Mr. I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja (Indonesia), H.E. Mr. Fernando Arias (OPCW), H.E. Mr. Yun Young Lee (Republic Korea), H.E. Mr. Abdel Bellouki (Morocco), H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Belal (Bangladesh), H.E. Mr. A.M.J. Sadiq (Sri Lanka) and H.E. Mr. Michail Barysevich (Belarus).

Time to say goodbye and bid farewell to the Ambassadors of Belarus, Morocco and Sri Lanka

While Diplomat Club Wassenaar’s June 2019 Welcome Ceremony for newly arrived Ambassadors, and the 5th Anniversary celebration of Diplomat Club Wassenaar and *Diplomat Affairs Magazine* were in full swing, the founder Mrs. Blik, drew the guests together in order to highlight a special few.

BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET



From left to right, Mrs. Meekyong Oh (Republic Korea), Mrs. Akmaral Aidarbekova (Kazakhstan), Mrs. Linda Zin (Malaysia), Mrs. Najat Bellouki (Morocco), Mrs. Tatsiana Barysevich (Belarus), Dr. Dilruba Nasrin (Bangladesh), Ms. Viviane Mironko Uwicyeza (Rwanda), Mrs. Mirella Pocasangre de Vázquez, Mrs. Patricia van Oord de Arias (OPCW), Mrs. Ntokozo Koloane (South Africa), H.E. Mrs. Laura Dupuy (Uruguay), H.E. Mrs. Rosa Batoréu (Portugal).



Left, the Ambassador of Sri Lanka, H.E. Mr. A.M.J. Sadiq.

With emotion, she explained how wonderful it is to welcome new Honorary Members to our Club, and indeed we have welcomed 82 Ambassadors over our five year existence, but stressing also how difficult it is to say goodbye to our members who mostly

become dear friends over the years. One of which is H.E. Mr. Abdel Bellouki, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco with his charming spouse, Mrs. Najat Bellouki, a highly-appreciated committee member of the Ambassadors’ Spouses Association.

They have been present from the foundation of Diplomat Club Wassenaar and *Diplomat Affairs Magazine*, and we have shared such wonderful memories together. The Ambassador of South Africa, H.E. Mr. Bruce Koloane gave a humorous address highlighting special moments

shared with their colleague Ambassadors. “We are not saying goodbye but tot ziens”, Ambassador Bellouki replied. Another friend who had just come from His Majesty, King Willem-Alexander for the official departure, was the Sri Lankan Ambassador, H.E. Adam M.J. Sadiq.

Last but definitely not least the Ambassador of Belarus, H.E. Mr. Mikalai Barysevich and his lovely spouse Tatsiana Barysevich also committee member of ASA, who was warmly addressed by the Ambassadors Spouses’ Committee member Mrs. Linda Zin, the spouse of

the Ambassador of Malaysia. We will miss you all, thank you for sharing these years with us. Farewell dear friends, you are now Alumni of Diplomat Club Wassenaar and always welcome to stay at Kasteel De Wittenburg.

Mr Leendert de Lange inaugurated as new Mayor of Wassenaar

The Diplomatic Corps and Wassenaar residents pull out “en masse” for the official swearing in ceremony of Mr De Lange as new Mayor.

PHOTOS FRED VAN DER PLAS

Mr De Lange was sworn in during an extraordinary council meeting by the King’s Commissioner, Mr Jaap Smit, following the approval of his nomination by the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations.

The inauguration took place on July 18th, 2019 at De Wittenburg Castle and the official ceremony was followed by a reception. The 370 guests could get personally acquainted with Mr De Lange and his wife, Mrs De Lange-Heldens and also say farewell to the departing Mayor, Mr Frank Koen.

Born in Wassenaar, Mr Leendert de Lange is an old acquaintance of the municipality. In 2013 he became councillor for land-use policy as well as Deputy Mayor and is said to be well-acquainted with the issues in the region.

The council of the municipality of Wassenaar had decided upon Mr Leendert de Lange on June 11th, out of

**Gemeente Wassenaar**

THE SEARCH WAS FOR AN EXPERIENCED PERSON WITH INTEGRITY, WHO WOULD STAND ABOVE THE PARTIES AND REPRESENT ALL INHABITANTS OF WASSENAAR.

a panel of 14 candidates. The search was for an experienced person with integrity, who would stand above the parties and represent all inhabitants of Wassenaar. One other pre-requisite was to have enough authority to look beyond Wassenaar and address regional issues, such as the traffic queues on the N44.

Mayor Leendert de Lange is looking forward to getting to work, with, and for, all “Wassenaarders”.



From left to right, Mayor Frank Koen, Mr. Leendert de Lange and King’s Commissioner Mr. Jaap Smit.



Right, Prof. Dr Jan Anthonie Bruijn, President of the Senate of the Netherlands.



5th Anniversary Celebrations with partners CHIO Rotterdam and Port Club Rotterdam under the flagship of bridging nations through sport

As announced during our 11th Welcome Ceremony last June, Diplomat Club Wassenaar and Diplomat Affairs Magazine are delighted to count as official partner CHIO (Concours Hippique International Officiel), the oldest sports event in Rotterdam (equestrian sport) which celebrated its 70th edition in 2018 and is now linked with Port Club Rotterdam, a Club uniting companies active in the Port of Rotterdam. BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTOS ARASH NIKKHAH/MIRJAM LEMS



From left, H.E. Mr. Fernando Arias (OPCW), Mr. Peter Goedvolk, Mrs. Patricia van Oordt de Arias, Prof. Dr. Jan Peter Balkenende.



H.E. Mr. Alexander Shulgin (Russia) and Mrs. Natalia Shulgina.



H.E. Mr. I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja (Indonesia) and Mr. I.G.A.G. Genta Puja.



Right, Mrs. Esther Lenayapa (spouse Kenya).



Left, H.E. Mr. Lawrence Lenayapa (Kenya).



H.E. Mr. George Sharvashidze (Georgia) and Ms. Ketevan Ratiani.



From left, Mr. Peter Bliet, Prof. Dr. Jan Peter Balkenende, Mrs. Shida Bliet, Mr. Peter Goedvolk.



H.E. Ms. Mirsada Čolaković (Bosnia and Herzegovina), H.E. Mr. Amgad Ghaffar (Egypt).



From left, Mrs. Sara Keuzen (CA Sweden), Mr. Mark Keuzen, Mrs. Ilse van Zeist, Mr. Tinus Krikke (AON).



From left, H.E. Mr. Amgad Ghaffar (Egypt), Mr. Peter Goedvolk, H.E. Mr. Alireza Kazemi Abadi (Iran) and Mrs. Abadi.



H.E. Mr. Vsevolod Chentsov (Ukraine).



Right, H.E. Mrs. Laura Dupuy (Uruguay).



H.E. Mr. Yun Young Lee (South Korea), Prof. Dr. Jan Peter Balkenende.



Mr. Hans Slingerland van Bemmelen and Mrs. Joan McNamara.



'As Diplomats, you are representing your countries in a world with a lot of tensions. In such a world, the key question is: how can we unite countries, people, businesses, universities, societal organizations? How can we communicate? I am a big supporter of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. It's about the improvement of quality of life for all people on this planet. This requires cooperation. Goal number 17 is 'Partnerships'. We need common goals, common language and common strategies. This will make the world stronger.

This event - European Championship Dressage, Jumping and Para Dressage - is an example of meeting and uniting. The organization CHIO Rotterdam is not only organizing horse-riding events, but is stimulating cooperation in agriculture and food, the circular economy and mobility as well. We highly appreciate your attending this event, and we wish you a great day!'
QUOTE BY FORMER DUTCH PRIME MINISTER, PROF. DR. JAN PETER BALKENENDE



SPEECH PETER GOEDVOLK

Thank you, Julie, I greatly admire the activities of Diplomat Club Wassenaar and am always impressed by the ambition and drive of Shida, yourself and your team. Thank you for being here.
Dear Ambassadors, Mr. Balkenende, Mr. De Jager, dear guests, it is really an honour to give you a warm welcome on behalf of the Board of CHIO and we appreciate the time you have taken to visit us.
Many of you attended the event last year, this year the event is much bigger due to being the European Championships. Like last year, AON, the largest global insurance company is hosting, we at CHIO are very grateful to have them as a sponsor and especially AON Director, Mr. Tinus Krikke, Tinus

thank you!
A few words from my side regarding the brand CHIO. As board member I am responsible for the CHIO Port Club as well. All these clusters and cooperation with the city of Rotterdam in the arenas of education, science, and all the other stakeholders, will help us take CHIO from a local to a global brand. And dear Ambassadors, we believe our relationship with you plays a large part in this transformation.
I really look forward discussing this with you. But before we do, I am honoured again to give the floor to a very impressive Ambassador of CHIO, also of the metropolis of Rotterdam and of the Netherlands: former Dutch Prime Minister, Mr. Peter Jan Balkenende.



Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina, H.E. Ms. Mirsada Colakovic: "History may at times separate us but where events like this unite."



Ambassador of Russia, H.E. Mr. Alexander Shulgin: "Here today we have a unique opportunity to talk with people from various horizons."

To celebrate the occasion and the 5th Anniversary of the founding of Diplomat Club Wassenaar and *Diplomat Affairs Magazine*, we invited our honorary member Ambassadors to the viewing of the European Championship in three disciplines: show jumping, dressage, and para-equestrian dressage. CHIO won the bid to host in Rotterdam after fierce competition with France.

The Ambassadors and their spouses joined us on a beautiful sunny day in the Kralingse bos in Rotterdam, for the occasion. Another 7000 spectators turned up for day 5 of the 7-day event.

Our celebrations kicked off with a delightful lunch in Restaurant Schoufour

where guests were greeted by Mrs Shida Blik, founder of Diplomat Club Wassenaar; Mr Peter Goedvolk, CHIO board member and President of PortClub Rotterdam; former Dutch Prime Minister Prof. Dr. Jan Peter Balkenende; former Dutch Minister of Finance, Mr. Jan Kees de Jager; Mr. Tinus Krikke, sponsor AON; and Mr. Hans Slingerland van Bemmelen from the DCW Advisory Board. As guests, we also counted members from CHIO's Advisory board and the Dean of the honorary members of DCW, H.E. Mr. Fernando Arias who attended last year in his capacity as Spanish Ambassador and now as the Director-General of the OPCW.

As spokesperson I had the honour of welcoming the guests in the name of Mrs Shida Blik, before Mr Peter Goedvolk added his warm words of welcome, before introducing former Dutch Prime Minister and member of CHIO Advisory Board Prof. Dr. Jan Peter Balkenende.

The beautiful location, the excitement of the competition, the delicious lunch added to the goodwill of all present, created that wonderful synergy of trust and friendship which results in the best of spirits, in animated conversations, in laughter and also in meaningful connections.

At one point, the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina, H.E. Ms. Mirsada

Čolaković made a spontaneous speech, thanking Mrs Blik for organising this special event and expressing gratefulness for her friendship, her knowledge of the differences, backgrounds and history which may at times separate us but where events like this unite.

H.E. Mr. Alexander Shulgin, the Ambassador of Russia then reinforced this message in his own impromptu speech, expressing his gratitude for occasions such as this, which open channels of communication and our need to cooperate in the unstable world we live in. He mentioned the reality of the arms race threat, and that it was up to Ambassadors to find ways of keeping the channels of communication open

'IT IS UP TO AMBASSADORS TO FIND WAYS OF KEEPING THE CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION OPEN AND TO FACILITATE CONTACTS'

and to facilitate contacts. Here today we have a unique opportunity to talk with people from various horizons. He then offered a warmly received toast to: "Friendship and Peace between people of the world".

Looking at Mrs Blik, I could see what all these statements meant to her, and how they endorsed the vision she had for this Club when she founded it 5 years ago. The vision of creating a neutral space where Ambassadors of the world could meet on the common ground of our humanity. A place where we recognise and respect differences and share a common drive for a better world, for each of our nations independently, yet under the common umbrella of respect and friendship; a place for heart-led Diplomacy. We thank you all for having given her the most perfect of presents for our 5th Anniversary, by recognising that this is indeed what our Club has become.



Internationalisation is good for CHIO Rotterdam

THE TOTAL ECONOMIC VALUE OF THE INTERNATIONAL EQUESTRIAN SPORT AMOUNTS TO 300 BILLION EURO

This 2019 European Championship in Jumping, Dressage and Para-dressage is the biggest equestrian sport event ever hosted in the Netherlands after the World Equestrian Games in 1994. For Rotterdam, it was the biggest equestrian event ever organised after the successful EC Dressage in 2011 and a turning point in the area of internationalisation in regard to the 75th anniversary in 2023.

It was a week full of elite sport on the highest level at a beautiful location, surrounded by a diverse side-event program. An event of global scale that connects and puts Rotterdam and the CHIO Rotterdam in the spotlights globally.

The equestrian sport is flourishing, growing and internationalising. The total economic value of the international equestrian sport amounts to 300 billion euro. But that isn't surprising if you know that globally, 750 million people are equestrians, which brings the level

up. More professionalisation generates more media-attention and more fans worldwide.

The CHIO Rotterdam, which will celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2023, is immensely proud that equestrian sport is gaining more attention internationally.

One of the countries that is developing strongly is China. Mr. Ralph Straus, commercial director of the FEI (International Federation for Equestrian sports), is happy with the way that acknowledged horse-sport countries, such

as the Netherlands and Germany, get involved to help the process along. "The Netherlands is a very strong country; it can be proud of that. It's nice that, together with other countries, it is embracing professionalisation elsewhere. The experts don't keep their knowledge to themselves." The equine sector is an export product for the Netherlands.

The equestrian sport is an economy on its own and for this reason alone benefits from tapping into new markets. Mr Straus: "The economic value of the sport amounts to 300 billion euro. Almost

nobody realises this, even potential business partners are surprised when I mention that number. It isn't just the sport, but also the feeding, medicine, logistics. The equestrian sport is extremely big. Under the flag of the FEI there are 4.500 events, divided among seven disciplines. Every year it becomes more."

Sport and commerce often go hand in hand. Such as around the CHIO Rotterdam. The organisation pays a lot of attention to the network aspect. In turn, this attracts investors that strengthen the sport. Mr Straus is enthusiastic

about the Rotterdam approach. "The organisation works closely together with the city and the businesses. If the sport becomes more international, it surely will bring additional business opportunities. Contacts that are made during the CHIO event lead to trade delegations. In that light, it is amazing that we can tap into new markets with the sport. We already named China, but we also see big developments in the Middle East, India and South America."

A next step in the further development of the CHIO Rotterdam platform is to

take the global development of the equestrian sport even more into consideration. With the addition of Peter Goedvolk to the board, it is a subject on the board's agenda. As entrepreneur, he is used to thinking big and globally and that fits the ambitions of the CHIO Rotterdam, but also the vision of Rotterdam to join the level of global cities. One of the things the CHIO will do concerning the subject of globalisation is the structural cooperation with Diplomat Club Wassenaar. A number of joint events per year will be taking place.

Facts & Figures

Global horsesport

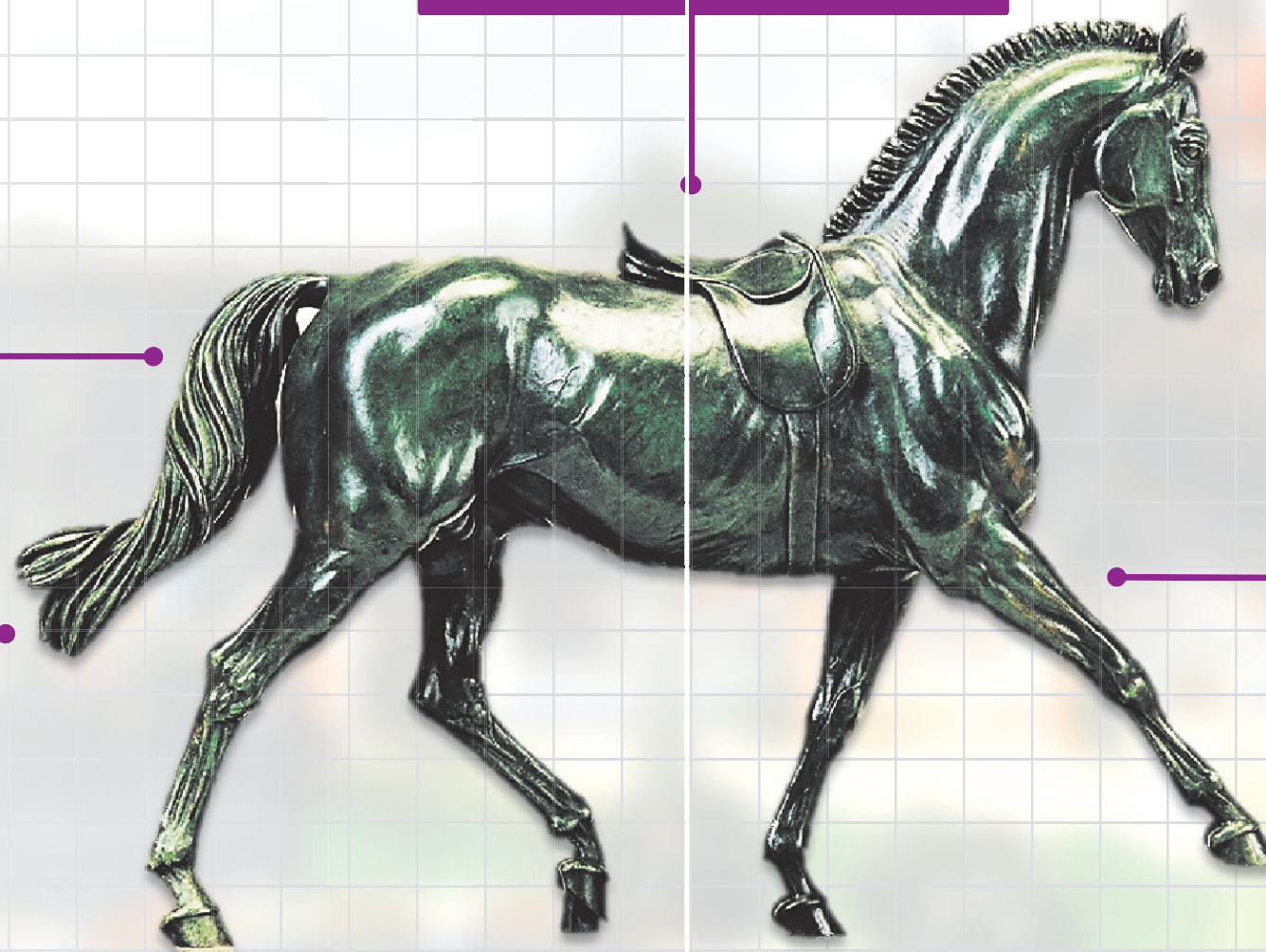
economic impact of
€ 300 billion a year

37 billion active
riders

2 billion jobs in the
equestrian industry

750 billion
equestrian fans

worldwide 60 billion
horses and ponies





Holland : Horse Country

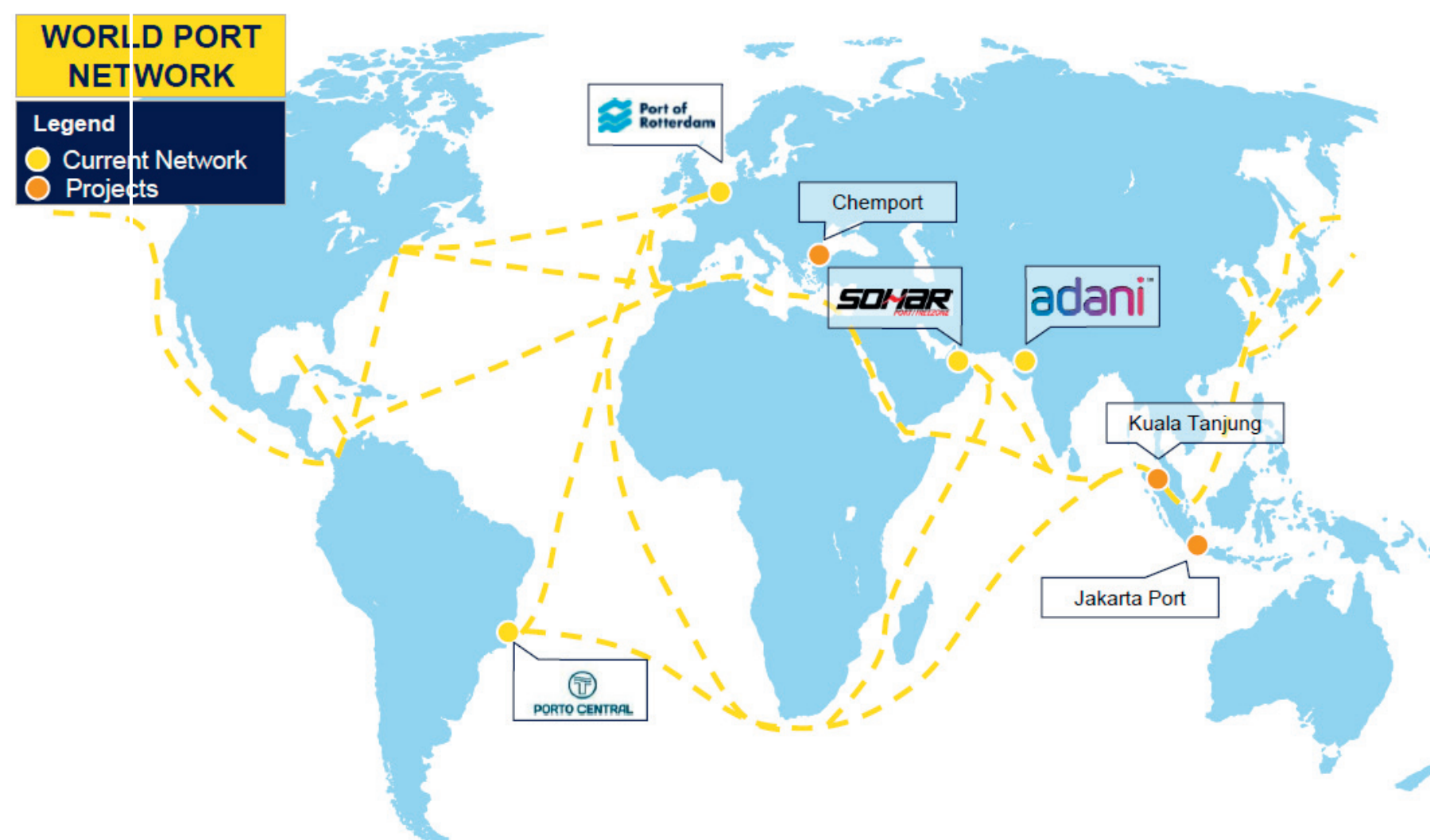
- The Dutch horse industry has a total turnover of 2 billion euro
- 10.000 (elite) horse companies
- 450.000 horses
- 1,2 million horse fans
- 500.000 frequent riders
- 200.000 members, including 135.000 owning one or more horses
- 3.000 equestrian centres and riding clubs
- Host of FEI EC Jumping, Dressage, Para Dressage 2019

CHIO Rotterdam Port League

- Possible countries from the equestrian sport:
 - Brazil (Santos)
 - China (Hongkong/Shanghai)
 - India (Chennai)
 - Oman (Sohar)
 - Qatar (Doha)
 - South Africa (Capetown)
- Possible countries/harbour cities from the Port of Rotterdam

WORLD PORT NETWORK

CONNECTED PORTS. A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES. **MAKE IT HAPPEN**





CHIO Port Club Rotterdam

Concept:

The CHIO Port Club Rotterdam is a networkclub with members who are active in the marine & offshore industry.

Target:

Organise the World Port League worldwide

In each city a Port Club to work with





Tribute to Australia's ancient art

Under the title 'Gender Justice – Women's Business', the Ambassador of Australia to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, H.E. Matthew Neuhaus and Mrs Angela Neuhaus opened the exhibition at the Australian Residence on 27 May 2019.

BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET

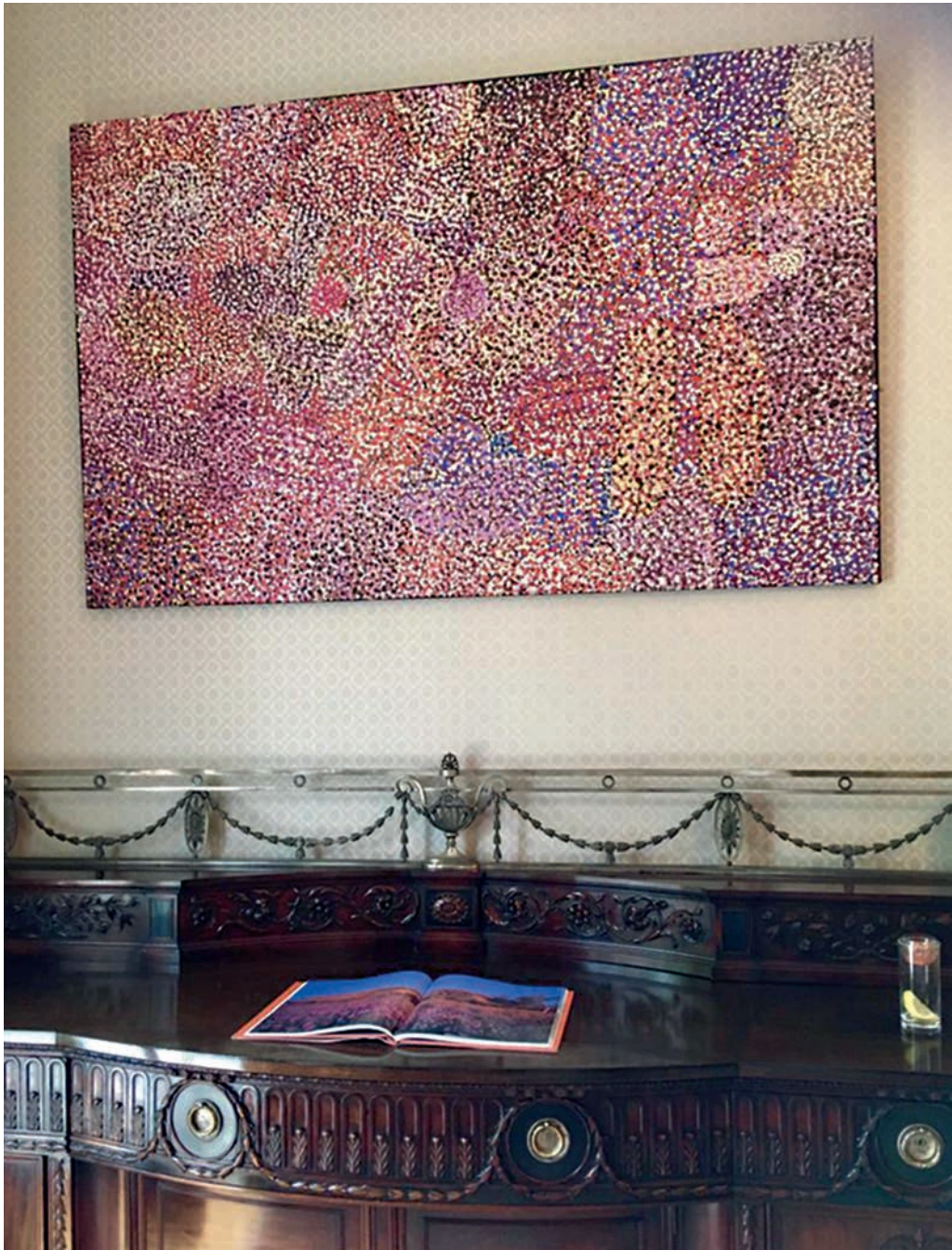
Australian Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands,
H.E. Matthew Neuhaus and Mrs. Angela Neuhaus.

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The exhibition is centred around Australia's national gift entitled Ngayuku Mamaku Ngura (My Father's Country) 2017, by artist Wawiriya Burton (Pitjantjatjara, born c. 1928), to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and was held to mark National Reconciliation Week – 27 May to 3 June – with a tribute to the ancient art of Australia's indigenous people.

The International Criminal Court's President, H.E. Chile Eboe Osuji, showed appreciation for the painting by Wawiriya Burton. This important painting by a senior Aboriginal woman artist speaks about the importance of law and justice

AUSTRALIA IS PROUD
OF ITS ABORIGINAL
ART, WHICH
UNDERLINES THE
LONG HISTORY OF
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to a safe and peaceful society. All the selected artworks of the exhibition are by senior women artists of the central and western deserts of Australia with an overarching subject of the Dreaming or the Tjukurrpa as it is known in most of the desert languages. Australia is proud of its Aboriginal art, which underlines the long history of Australia. Their designs are ancient even if rendering them in paint is new. The exhibition, curated by Dr Georges Petitjean, assemble twenty-four paintings from the former Aboriginal Art Museum Utrecht (AAMU) collection, now part of the Nationaal Museum van Wereld-



Ngayuku Mamaku Ngura (My Father's Country) 2017, by artist Wawiriya Burton (Pitjantjatjara, born c. 1928).



culturen and held by the Museum Volkenkunde Leiden. Ambassador Neuhaus: "It gives me great pleasure as Ambassador to introduce this exhibition of Australian indigenous women's art, centred around our gift to the ICC in The Hague and drawing on the treasures of the Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden. It makes the point that in a culture as ancient as that of the Australian Aboriginal people women had a central role in law and justice. This is a point we still need to ensure is fully incorporated in our modern societies. The need to anchor our laws governing human behaviour in the natural environ-

ment which sustains us all is also of increasing relevance today. Let us reflect on these images of the Dreaming rendered by these inspired women artists, and the message it sends to our contemporary world".

Guests enjoyed the warm hospitality of the Ambassador and Mrs Neuhaus at the opening reception, the superb appetizers and stunning Residence contributing to a delightful atmosphere.

For the full article and photos on 'Tribute to Australia's ancient art', please visit our website: www.diplomataffairs.nl/tribute-to-australias-ancient-art/

The Australian Residence

BY H.E. MATTHEW NEUHAUS, AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

The Australian Residence dates back to 1913, when it was commissioned by a wealthy Dutch merchant, Pierre Eschauzier and built by architect Leonardus Falkenburg. The house was known locally as the “Sugar House” because the Eschauzier family was active in the sugar industry. Pierre himself spent much of his early life in Indonesia – then the Dutch East Indies. When he returned to the Netherlands in 1910, he built the house for his family – his wife and three children. They lived here until the outbreak of the Second World War.

The war brought change for the house, and after Pierre’s death, it was requisitioned by the German occupying forces. The Australian government leased the house in 1946, after the war, when they established an Embassy in the Netherlands. In 1951 they purchased the house and we’ve been here ever since.

A special room, is the drawing room, called “the tapestry room”, with four beautiful large tapestries on the wall. The tapestries are made for the space and are most likely French 19th century based on Louis XIV designs.

Interestingly, when the Australian government bought the house, these tapestries were not here. In fact, they were only discovered later when we undertook a renovation of the building.

They were found under the house, hidden in long metal tubes – probably put there to protect them from being taken during the war. The family asked that they stay with the house and they remain an important feature to this day.

The Residence also has an excellent collection of old Dutch maps of early Australia and Aboriginal art.

We are so lucky to have this beautiful house as our representational platform in The Hague. It provides a sophisticated image of Australia and is a treasure trove of the history of our two connected nations – whether in the Dutch craftsmanship, the old maps of New Holland – Australia or the stunning indigenous art of Australia’s oldest inhabitants.



From left to right:
 HE Mr Jean-Pierre Karabaranga: Ambassador of Rwanda, HE Ms Irene Florence Mkwawa-Kasyanjui: Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania, HE Mr Abdelouahab Bellouki: Ambassador of Morocco, HE Mr Oji Ngefa: Ambassador of Nigeria, Mr Pieter-Jan Kleiweg de Zwaan: Deputy Director General for Political Affairs at the MFA, HE Mr Million Samuel Gebre: Ambassador of Ethiopia, HE Vusi Bruce Koloane : Ambassador of South Africa, Mr Alle Dorhout: Director Africa MFA, Ms Halima Fonda Haga: Chargé d'Affaires of Cameroon, HE Ms Vistine Nahimana: Ambassador of Burundi, HE Mr Amgad Abdel Ghaffar: Ambassador of Egypt, Mr Mourad Amokrane: Chargé d'Affaires of Algeria, HE Mr Elyes El Ghariani: Ambassador of Tunisia, HE Mr. Hassan Ali Hassan: Ambassador of Sudan, Ms Rose Sumbeiywo: Chargé d'Affaires of Kenya, Ms Ana Carla Sousa: Chargé d'Affaires of Angola, HE Ms Sophia Horner-Sam: Ambassador of Ghana.



Africa day 2019

Reaping the fruits of the efforts made 56 years ago by the
 Founding Fathers of the Organisation of African Unity.

BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET



HE Mr. Jean Pierre Karabaranga, Ambassador of the Republic of Rwanda and Dean of the African Ambassadors.



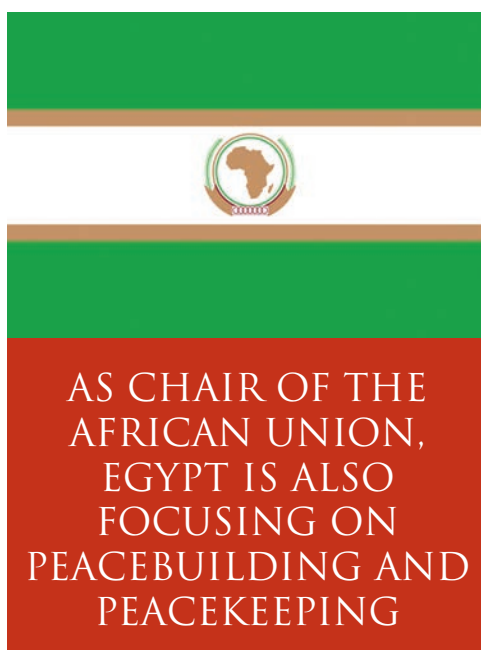
HE Mr. Amgad Abdel Ghaffar, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt, representative of the Chair of the African Union.



Mr. Pieter-Jan Kleiweg de Zwaan, Deputy Director-General for Political Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

What a pleasure to once again welcome the celebration of Africa day 2019, at Diplomat Club Wassenaar – Kasteel De Wittenburg. Fifteen African countries were represented this year, illuminating the castle as usual with their radiance, vitality and good spirit, their stunning national dress in a myriad of styles, colours and fabrics with artful embroidery and intricate headgear.

H.E Mr. Jean Pierre Karabaranga, Ambassador of the Republic of Rwanda, who recently became Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps, warmly welcomed the four hundred guests present, stressing it is indeed becoming a tradition to celebrate this special event at Kasteel De Wittenburg, in close collaboration with Diplomat Club Wassenaar. Ambassador Karabaranga thanked his colleagues for the close collaboration in organising this successful event.



H.E Mr. Amgad Abdel Ghaffar, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt, delivered the keynote speech as representative of the Chair of the African Union. Ambassador Ghaffar expressed his gratitude

at so many attending the celebration of “African History, accomplishments and culture” and for the efforts made by the founding Fathers of the OAU 56 years ago, which are now showing their fruit.

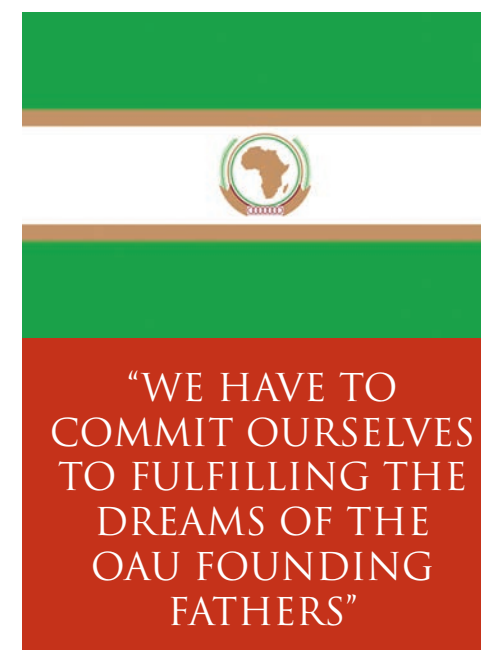
Highlights of the speech were the implementation of the ambitious 2063 agenda and the importance of also making use of the private sector in developing, amongst other things, infrastructure. As Chair of the African Union, Egypt is also focusing on Peacebuilding and Peacekeeping and will be hosting an International high-level forum for Sustainable Peace and Development coming December, and during the next months will launch the African Union Centre for Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (AUC – PCRD).

Ambassador Ghaffar also mentioned the role of African women in the continent’s development process, and the importance of

preparing the continent’s youth for their future role. Sports plays a role in this and Egypt is proud to host the African Cup of Nations, which will kick off on the 21st of June 2019.

His speech ended with a quote from H.E. the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Abdelfattah Al Sissi, on the commemoration of Africa Day 2019: “We have to commit ourselves to fulfilling the dreams of the OAU Founding Fathers and the aspirations of the great peoples of Africa to build a stable and prosperous continent that is capable of ensuring a decent life for all its people and serving the entire human civilization through its culture of tolerance and love.”

Next to take the floor was Mr. Pieter-Jan Kleiweg de Zwaan, Deputy Director General for Political Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, who delivered a warm address



highlighting how he too feels African. His youngest daughter, named Aminata, was born in Africa. Looking at the beautiful photos on display he added how, beyond the clear attractions, he also appreciated the

digital aptitude of the continent, as well as their progress in achieving the millennium development goals, their involvement in Peacekeeping with African soldiers shoulder to shoulder with Dutch troops and – regarding the recent issues in Sudan – complimenting them on taking responsibility for human rights abuses made there.

Thereafter it was time to enjoy the sumptuous buffet as 44 dishes were presented, prepared in close harmony with the staff of the 15 African Embassies. The room vibrated to the sound of drums, of laughter, of connections being made and renewed. The assembly was also entertained by a street dance performance by a group of gifted artists and children from the Ivory coast and Tanzania. The African sunshine shone till the last of the guests had left. For more information and photos on “Africa Day 2019”, please visit our website.

Peace discussions and more at TenRande Foundation

What an exquisite gathering to welcome their Imperial Royal Highnesses and Honorary Members of Diplomat Club Wassenaar Archduke and Archduchess Sandor and Herta Margarete Habsburg-Lothringen of Austria, Prince and Princess of Tuscany, on their annual visit to The Hague to open the 51st Vienna Ball in Noordwijk.

BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET

The President of TenRande Foundation, Mr Peter Blik and Mrs Shida Blik, were delighted to host a lunch in their honour with as guests, their neighbours: the Ambassador of the United States of America, H.E. Mr Pete Hoekstra and Mrs Diane Hoekstra; the Ambassador of India H.E. Mr Venu Rajamony and Dr Saroj Thapa; the Ambassador of Indonesia H.E. Mr I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja and Mrs Rusidjana Puja, our dear friend the Nuncio Mgr. Aldo Cavalli, Ambassador of Vatican City and last but certainly not least, board member of TenRande Foundation, Dr. Marjolein de Bois.

The wind was blowing up a gale outside, delaying the flight from Vienna to Amsterdam but the sun was streaming into the TenRande residence, highlighting the delicate mauve tints and the abundance of tulips.

The atmosphere was relaxed and friendly as befits a Saturday, with guests enjoying a welcoming tumbler of traditional Dutch pea soup around the fireplace. Conversations abounded, all very much linked by Peace as the Embassies of India, Indonesia and United States had held not long ago the celebration of the Gandhi March for Peace.

Peace was certainly a common interest. HRIH Herta Margarete Habsburg-Lothringen devotes her life to Peace through ‘The Association for the furtherance of Peace’ which she founded and over which she presides. At *Diplomat Affairs Magazine* we covered her June 2016 visit where the ‘Flame of Peace Award’ was bestowed upon H.E. Mr Ben Bot, former Chairman of the prestigious Carnegie Foundation and H.E. Mr José de Bouza Serrano, then Ambassador of Portugal, at the Peace Palace. To quote her Imperial Highness: “The flame of Peace is a symbol for Global Peace and should remind us of our mission to work for peace in our thoughts, words and deeds.”

During the lunch meeting HRIH Herta Habsburg Lothringen and HRIH Sandor Habsburg Lothringen awarded Mr and Mrs Blik with the ‘Uniting Friendship Award’ which she designed herself, incorporating all flags of the world. A token of appreciation for their long-standing role as representatives and special delegates to the Kingdom of the Netherlands for The Association for the Furtherance of Peace.

Another area of activity of their Royal

Highnesses as mentioned above, is the annual Vienna Ball held in Noordwijk, which they attend as Guests of Honour. This spectacular event, involving ball gowns, orchestras, debutantes, values and tradition, enhanced with a lot of fun, is also significant as fundraiser for SOS Kinderdorpen, an Austrian Foundation dating back to 1949, dedicated to providing a stable and loving home to thousands of children; some of them orphans, some in hardship families, in 134 developing countries. Diplomat Club Wassenaar is proud to support SOS Kinderdorpen.

It was time for a group photo to mark the occasion before their imperial Royal Highnesses set off to prepare for the ball, before dashing back to Vienna the next day. A fruitful twenty-four hours in the Netherlands.

At Diplomat Club Wassenaar we are proud and grateful to count amongst our members so many who strive for Peace and a better world.

I will finish with some words from HRIH Herta Margarete Habsburg-Lothringen of Austria talking about peace: “The simplest things in life are the most precious”, as is indeed friendship among nations as was exemplified here today.



First row, HE Mr Pete Hoekstra (USA), Nuncio Mgr Aldo Cavalli (Vatican City), HRIH Herta Margarete Habsburg-Lothringen, HRIH Sandor Habsburg-Lothringen, Mrs Diana Hoekstra.
Second row, Mr Peter Blik, Dr Marjolein de Bois, Mrs. Shida Blik, HE Mr I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja (Indonesia).
Third row, HE Mr Venu Rajamony (India), Dr Saroj Thapa, Mrs Rusidjana Puja.

A new Palace for Culture

Royal Conservatoire The Hague joins forces
with top cultural partners.

PHOTOS COURTESY ROYAL CONSERVATOIRE THE HAGUE



If all continues as planned, the building of the OCC (Educational Cultural Centre), the new landmark centre for performing arts in The Hague, which you can see rapidly rising at the Spuiplein right next to City Hall; will open its doors at the beginning of the 2021/2022 season. At this point in time, the building which started in 2017, is somewhere halfway. In October, the name of the new centre will finally be revealed.

It was well over a year ago, that the four partner institutions: the Residential Orchestra (RO) the Netherlands Dance Theatre (NDT) the Royal Conservatory (KC) and DMC (the Dance and Music Centre, responsible for the overall programming and organization), joined forces to make this building an artistic and public success, publishing their policy paper ‘A House for all The Hague’. For the past 6 months, the directors of these four institutions have been meeting regularly, like a ‘war cabinet’ to discuss the vision and practicalities of this unique and ambitious project.

Their different marketing and educational departments have gradually come together and a special committee, under joint leadership, is already planning the opening season, now still two years away. So, even though much still needs to be built, discussed, decided and done, it is looking very good indeed!



Spui overview.

In other cities one can find music and art schools, orchestras, opera and/or dance companies grouped together, like the New York Philharmonic, The New York City Ballet, The Metropolitan Opera and the Juilliard School at the Lincoln Centre, or in London the Barbican, the London Philharmonic and the Guildhall School for Music and Drama; but practice shows that close proximity does not necessarily lead to

close collaboration. The design of the OCC being one single building for all partners, is what has made all the difference.

As Henk van der Meulen, Director of the Royal Conservatory The Hague said: “Teaming up also benefits our educational program which is a big plus, bearing in mind that the program largely determines the attractiveness of the course.”



Of course, each of the institutes will have their own domain, but will also be able to use each other's space. This will lead to not just space being shared, but also and more importantly, ideas and the practice that these ideas will generate. Just as there will be room for others, be it professionals or amateurs, to perform in the OCC. The overall program-

THE OCC PROMISES
TO BE A POWERHOUSE
THAT WILL HELP SHAPE
THE FUTURE OF THE
PERFORMING ARTS

ming will range from local productions, to the work of the NDT, the RO and the KC, all the way to international top productions in all genres and the cross fertilization between them all. The OCC promises to be a powerhouse that will help shape the future of the performing arts, right here in The Hague.



Left, Mr VK Arora, Chairman and Managing Director of LT Foods Ltd.
Right, Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, H.E. Mr. Venu Rajamony.

LT Foods – a company built on trust, from ‘Farm to Fork’

We had the pleasure of welcoming Mr VK Arora, Chairman and Managing Director of LT Foods Ltd and Associate Director Mr Rajan Datta at the heart of Diplomat Club Wassenaar in the library at Kasteel De Wittenburg, for an exclusive interview.

BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET

Before going to the main topic of our interview, namely the choice of Rotterdam for establishing the first European headquarters of this renowned Global rice processing specialist. We, at Diplomat Affairs Magazine, were interested to know more about LT Foods.

Founded 50 years ago in India, LT Foods is now operational in more than 65 countries, with offices in India, North America, Europe and the Middle East and more than 21 manufacturing facilities. A public listed company, it is 60% owned by the family, and growing at 10 – 12% per year.

Basmati rice is the primary business. Their operations range from working with the farmers in India, providing



advice on the food and safety regulations per country they export to, to harvesting, storing for maturation (Basmati rice needs to mature for a minimum of one year to lose its starch which is crucial for non-sticking rice), milling, segregation and packaging.

They have various brands, of which Daawat is one of the flagship brands, and they also acquire brands, such as Royal

Basmati in USA (15% market). They were awarded the ‘leading brand’ award by Taste of America Kitchen.

After the huge success in North America, the next focus was Europe. As Mr Arora explained, most Indian companies decide on the UK due to the existing strong links, however he “did not want to go where every Indian goes” (the added factor of Brexit was not yet on the agenda).

Which brings us to the choice of the Netherlands for the first European Headquarters:

I understand there were many other contestants such as Hamburg and Antwerp,

what were your decisive reasons for choosing Rotterdam?

The initial interest came straight from the heart. To quote Mr Arora: “I came to Holland 20 years ago on a business trip and got a bit lost. I found the people here very cooperative, very helpful, and this stayed inscribed in my mind. I wanted to settle our European Headquarters in a country where people are cooperative.” Then of course followed the fact that Rotterdam is such a significant port. The plant on the Maasvlakte deals mostly with distributing imported, already matured rice, hence the significance of being close to a Port.

Another instrumental factor was human yet again with the close and direct contact Mr VK Arora had with both the Ambassador of India here and the Ambassador to the Netherlands in Delhi. They lay out the red carpet and were heart-warmingly open and straightforward in their personal contact, providing him for example with a list of Indian companies settled here to gather first hand feedback. Hence the decision was made.

It has now been two years; how has it been going so far and were there many challenges?

Before we got into the challenges, Mr VK Arora wished to mention another instrumental person in actually making it happen, Mr Rajan Datta, also present at the interview. Mr Datta has been wor-

king and living in the Netherlands for the past 32 years, masters both Dutch and Indian languages and cultures and is the person who basically made the plant operational by navigating the challenges. Mr Datta still remembers his first meeting with Mr VK Arora and the intensity of their contact. One genuine handshake

**“THE FOUNDATION
OF LT FOODS IS THE
PEOPLE. BY PEOPLE
WE MEAN
RESPECTING
CULTURES, FAITH,
AND WAYS OF
LIVING”**

and all Mr VK Arora said was: “Just say yes”, and there has been no looking back.

“Of course, there have been challenges”, replied Mr Datta, “cultural differences always emerge when you go deep. You need to match their culture.” Mr VK Arora mentioned for example the difference in labour regulations with issues such as ‘burn out’ which do not exist as such in India.

The 70-80 members of staff at the Rotterdam plant are mostly Dutch.

Mr Datta highlighted what he sees as the three most important characteristics of LT Foods:

First of all, the strong importance of values within LT foods. “The foundation

of LT Foods is the people. By people we mean, respecting cultures, faith, and ways of living. Mr Arora, himself a vegetarian, from day one ensured there was non-vegetarian food brought for the plant. That demonstrated our beliefs and how we nurture that and implement it in our organisation.”

Secondly the state of art manufacturing plant on the Maasvlakte, an example of circular economy (with no waste).

Thirdly, the importance of empowering the farmers with knowledge, technology and the seeds. Indeed, their slogan is: ‘From Farm to Fork’.

Two years on, they are very much operational with the regular challenges faced by a growing business.

What advice would you give other foreign companies considering Rotterdam as their base?

They would most certainly recommend the Netherlands, the people, the fact English is mostly spoken but also the excellent infrastructure, the digital highway and the fact most important hubs are here too.

I understand it all started in 1990 Mr Arora, when you opened the company in a small village in India? Now you are in over 60 countries, a recognised brand name in the US and growing consistently, is this what you had envisaged back then in 1990?

Mr VK Arora replied: “I never imagined



this. I didn't even know how to get a visa for any country, I had never travelled before. I just wanted to create a product people could trust. Now I travel all the time, business is booming, we have many joint ventures, and a partnership with a Japanese company on the way (manufacturing a rice snack in India). We deal with many other large companies. Trust runs through your brands. I need to trust my partners too; we should have equal footing.”

Values, and in particular trust is what has not changed since the first plant in India 50 years ago. In the USA and India operations, every morning starts at 9am with a ‘cheers meeting’, where the values of the company are read out. (This is not yet done in Europe).

Where do you go from here? What is your vision globally? And for the Netherlands?

“Our goal”, replied the Chairman, “is to be a Global Trusted Speciality Food Company with a growth of 10-15 % per year, acquiring more businesses, and investing more and more.”

For Holland, the ambition is to double capacity over the next 2 years and acquire more plants in Holland or nearby countries.

Mr VK Arora likes Holland so much that he actually moved here with his wife 6 months ago. As he says: “Here I can connect both worlds: India, US and in-between”.

They have many friends here accumulated over the past 20 years and their children and grandchildren (located in the USA and Germany) enjoy their visits.

I shall leave the concluding statement to

Mr Datta as we were discussing single product businesses. He said: “There are not many companies which have reached the horizons through a single-product approach. One is Apple we all know, the other is LT Foods. Mr VK Arora brought up the company to such a height, with one product in a short span of time, becoming no 1 in the US and one of the leading brands in India and now putting a foothold in Europe, reducing time to market etc.”

My conclusion is that businesswise they are indeed huge, yet what emanated the most from the interview were warm humanistic values of delivering a trustworthy product, loyalty, honest hard work, family and a desire to empower the farmers.

From “Farm to Fork”, and I would add: from heart to mouth....

United Arab Emirates: trendsetting

This year, 2019, we celebrate 45 years of increasingly strong and successful formal bilateral relations between the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the United Arab Emirates.

The UAE is a trend-setting country and increasingly important for The Netherlands in terms of Economics – the UAE is one of the Netherlands main export partners in the Middle East; in terms of Politics and in terms of Security with a strong cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism in the region.

The last 56 years have produced impressive results in line with the UAE’s ambitions. The UAE is the largest export partner of the Netherlands in the GCC (The Gulf Cooperation Council), and after Turkey is the largest export partner in the whole MENA region (Middle East and North Africa).

The Netherlands’ top ranking worldwide in a number of sectors, such as water management, the agro-food industry, logistics and energy, makes it one of the partners of choice to fulfil the UAE’s growth ambitions.

Another key driver of cooperation between our countries is innovation. One of the achievements is a signed Memorandum of Understanding on Innovation between the UAE and the Dutch government.

Hence the Dutch pavilion at the upcoming World Expo Dubai 2020. This will be the first World Expo to be held in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia, and there are many reasons for it to

go down as one of the most important in the Exposition’s history.

Her Excellency Dr. Hissa Abdulla Ahmed Alotaiba, Ambassador of the UAE to the Kingdom of The Netherlands, which Diplomat Club Wassenaar had the pleasure of welcoming in June 2019, commented on World Expo Dubai 2020:

“In October 2020, Dubai will host the most spectacular event on the year’s agenda, Expo 2020. An event that manages to get more than 192 countries under one roof and happy to be received as guests in The United Arab Emirates.

We are proud to have sustainability, opportunity and mobility as themes for this event.

Opportunity to shape the future, mobility to enable smarter movement of knowledge, ideas and goods and sustainability to live in balance with the world we inhabit.

For the United Arab Emirates, sustainability was a right, but difficult choice. Nevertheless, it was the responsible choice to make. Being a rich oil country, did not stop our leadership from doing the right thing for the future generations.

We are also pleased with The Netherlands participation with an outstanding contribution showcasing their expertise to Expo theme through ‘Uniting water, Energy and Food’. This reflects the prosperous bilateral relation we share with our Dutch partners, where there are more than 250 Dutch businesses operating in the United Arab Emirates, and with Dutch



Her Excellency Dr. Hissa Abdulla Ahmed Alotaiba, Ambassador of the UAE to the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Mrs. Shida Blik, Founder of Diplomat Club Wassenaar and publisher of *Diplomat Affairs Magazine*.



From left to right: Mr. Hans Slingerland van Bemmelen, Advisory Board DCW; Dr. Marjolein de Bois, Advisory Board TenRande Foundation; Mr. Peter Blik, President of TenRande Foundation; H.E. Dr. Hissa Abdulla Ahmed Alotaiba, and Mayor Frank Koen.

“FOR THE UAE,
SUSTAINABILITY WAS A
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CHOICE TO MAKE”

exports to the region totaling more than €14 billion. Still, there are so many more opportunities, and Expo 2020 will make that possible.”

The Dutch pavilion focuses on what the Netherlands does best: The Water-

Energy-Food Nexus, believing that only an integrated approach, both within and amongst countries, will allow sustainable solutions to resolve the problems of this nexus.

During the Diplomat Club Wassenaar luncheon held at CHIO Rotterdam – European Championships 2019, Former Prime Minister Mr Balkenende spoke indeed of the UN article 17 sustainable goals it committed to in September 2015. Seventeen sustainable goals to fight poverty and support sustainable development. The majority of these goals are directly related to the use of scarce resources such as water, energy and food.

The Dutch pavilion has achieved these here.

EXPO2020 DUBAI

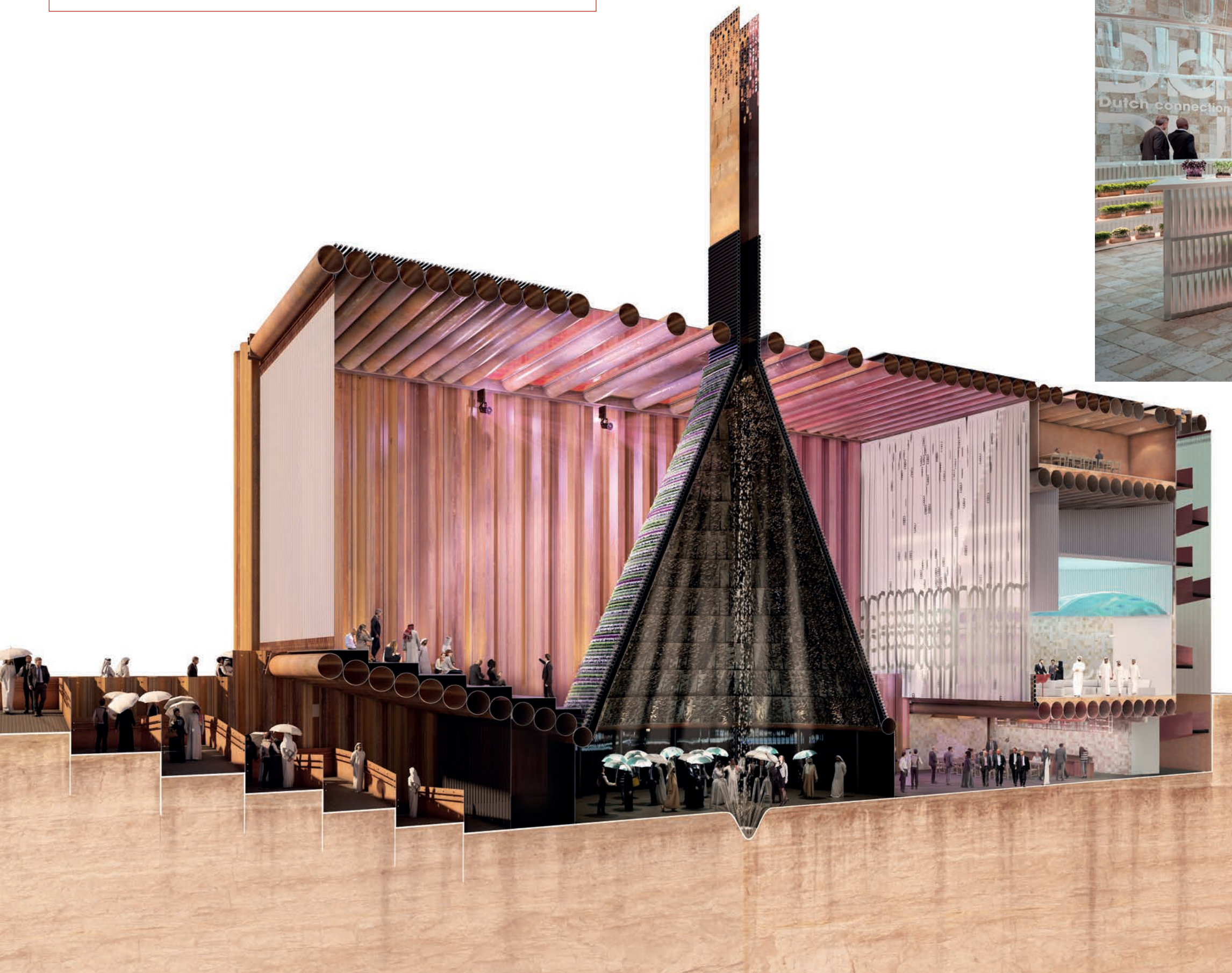
Uniting water, energy and food

The 35th Universal World Expo will be held in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, from 20 October 2020 to 10 April 2021. In keeping with the theme 'Connecting Minds, Creating the Future' a record-breaking 190 countries will present ideas, innovations and technologies with a strong link to the Sustainable Development Goals. Expo 2020 is expected to attract 25 million visits, with 70% likely to be international. This global platform offers Dutch organisations the opportunity to significantly raise their international profile among target groups from the business community as well as tourists.

COURTESY OF THE DUTCH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE NETHERLANDS ENTERPRISE AGENCY, V8 ARCHITECTS, KOSSMANN.DEJONG, WITTEVEEN+BOS AND THE SWISS-BASED FIRM EXPOMOBILIA.



The Dutch Pavilion – a biotope – connects water, energy and food in a circular way. The production of water from desert air powered by solar is one of the impressive inventions that will be on display.



T

The World Expo provides a platform for the global community to share innovations and to engage in debates about the key issues facing the world today and in the future. The theme of the EXPO2020 Dubai is ‘Connecting Minds, Creating the Future’, a concept that is built around three pillars of ‘Mobility’, ‘Sustainability’, and ‘Opportunity’. The Dutch pavilion at Expo2020 Dubai – located in the Sustainability thematic district – is an opportunity to showcase the innovative and sustainable solutions the Netherlands can provide in the areas of water, energy and food and specifically the links that connect them. Strengthening cooperation between the Netherlands and the Gulf region in these areas will also set the stage for further cooperation on other issues.

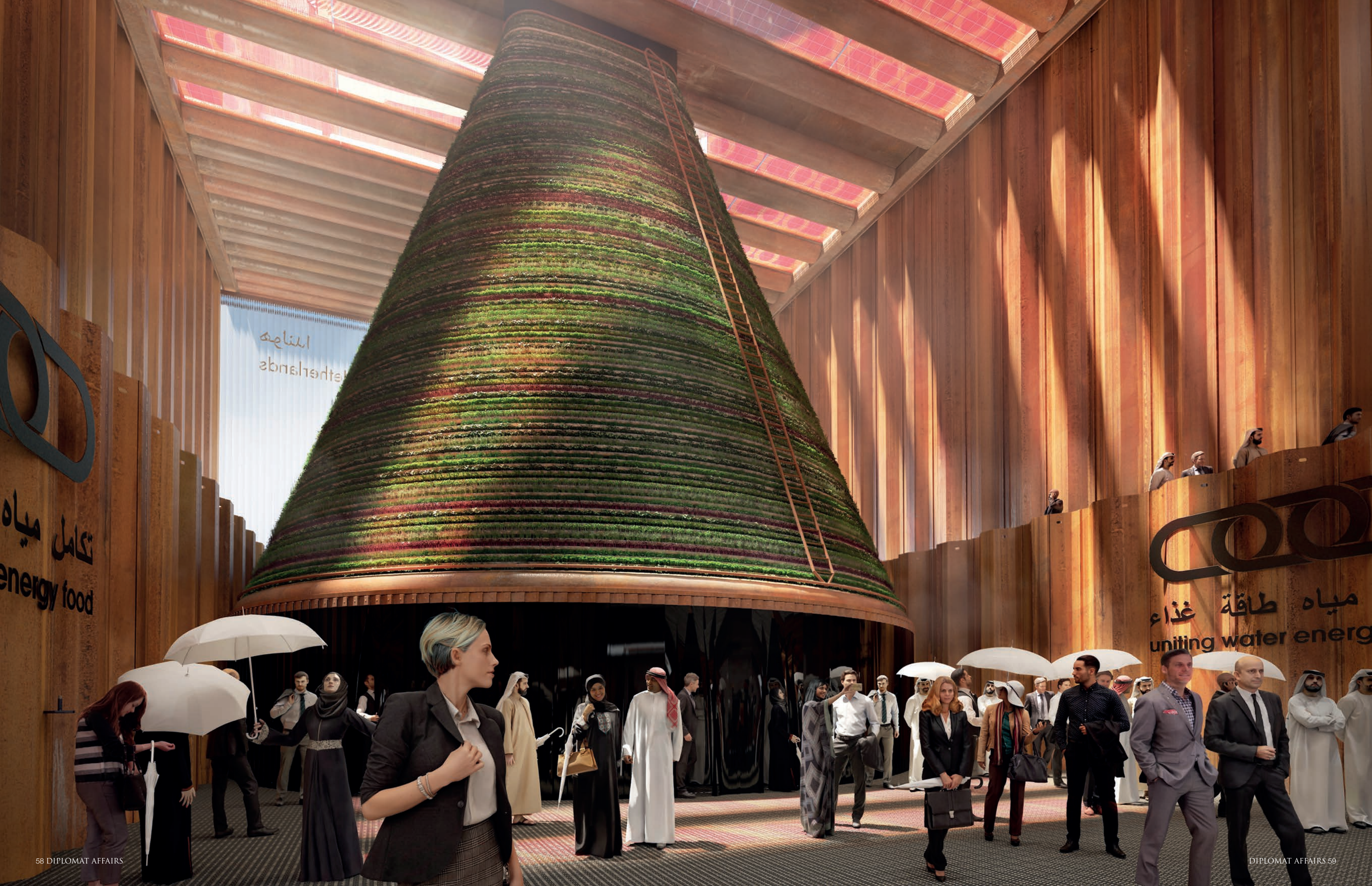
DUTCH PARTICIPATION

In 2015 the Netherlands’ exports of

goods and services to the Gulf region amounted to more than €14 billion. UAE companies have shown a growing interest to explore opportunities in the Netherlands. Economic ties between the Netherlands, the UAE, and the rest of the Gulf region are strong. The Dutch government therefore decided, in February 2017, that the Netherlands will take part in the World EXPO2020 Dubai. The Expo2020 Dubai provides the Netherlands and Dutch companies with the opportunity to present itself to the UAE and the wider region both economically and culturally. It also provides a platform to discuss global challenges with partners from around the world.

WATER, FOOD & ENERGY NEXUS

After consultations with various Dutch businesses, knowledge institutions and governmental bodies, it was decided to choose ‘Uniting water, energy and food’



المناخ
sbmherlands

تکامل میاه
energy food

مياه طاقة غذاء
uniting water energy



as the theme of the Dutch participation to the Expo2020 Dubai. The Gulf region is among the most water stressed areas in the world. At the same time, it is also one of the highest water consuming areas. Agriculture is by far the largest water consumer in the Gulf region, consuming around 85% of fresh water almost uniquely coming from non-renewable underground sources. As is the case in other countries in the region, water scarcity limits the UAE's domestic food production. The UAE is therefore to import most of its food products. Nonetheless, the ambition to pursue domestic production remains. Today the majority of the government revenues in the region come from hydrocarbons. The UAE is making great efforts to diversify its economy and focus on energy efficient technologies. Combined with the UAE's ambition to ensure its food security and its need for potable water, this creates many opportunities for cooperation in the water, energy and food sectors. Expo2020 Dubai offers an exciting opportunity to drive positive change. This is where the Netherlands is keen to contribute. By showcasing home-grown solutions that link the issues of water, energy and food – and by working closely with Gulf countries to develop sustainable solutions appropriate to their local ecosystems – we can use our innovation, knowledge and expertise to help the region create a greener, more sustainable future.

DUTCH MULTI-ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

The Dutch government is mounting a long-term campaign entitled 'Dutch Dubai: Dutch connection in the Gulf'

for the runup to Expo2020 Dubai. Before and during the event, businesses, knowledge institutions, civil society organisations and government bodies will work together to organise a wide range of activities. In the EXPO2020 participation the Netherlands will invest EUR 19,4 million. The central focus will be on the multiyear strategy; 'uniting water, energy and food'. The highlight of the campaign will be the Dutch pavilion. Besides attracting tourists, it will serve as a platform that brings businesses, knowledge institutions and government bodies together to think about solutions for the future.

DUTCH PAVILION

The Dutch pavilion at Expo2020 Dubai is an opportunity to showcase the innovative and sustainable solutions the Netherlands can provide in the areas of water, energy and food and specifically the links that connect them. The pavilion was designed in close collaboration between the Dutch firms V8 Architects, Kossmann.dejong, Witteveen+Bos and the Swiss-based firm Expomobilia.

CLIMATE-GENERATING PAVILION

The Dutch pavilion features a circular climate system – a biotope, essentially – which provides visitors (tourists and businesspeople alike) with an intense sensory experience. The pavilion's unique design gives visitors a powerful sense of the connection between water, energy and food. The Netherlands is also setting a sustainable example in terms of the building itself. Construction materials will be rented locally, eliminating the need to produce in the region or ship them from Europe. The interior, too, will consist only

of rented materials. When the pavilion is dismantled, all materials will be returned or repurposed at a new destination in the UAE, so as to minimise its ecological footprint.

PLATFORM FOR BUSINESSES

The pavilion is a meeting place where businesses, knowledge institutions, government bodies and civil society organisations can come together to network, share knowledge and show what

the Netherlands has to offer with respect to 'Uniting Water, Energy and Food'. Given the international character of the EXPO, it serves as a global platform. The pavilion's business lounges, exposition room and boardroom can be used to host business events. Both inside and outside the Dutch pavilion, the Netherlands offers opportunities for connecting supply and demand. The Pavilion can also be used to organize events of your company.



Uruguay celebrates National Day and official visit of Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs

The reception for the National day of Uruguay, combined with the official visit to the Netherlands of Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs H.E. Mr. Ariel Bergamino, was held on Monday August 26th, 2019, by a beautiful summer day, at Diplomat Club Wassenaar/ Kasteel De Wittenburg.

BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTOS ARASH NIKKHAH

The Ambassador of Uruguay, Mrs. Laura Dupuy welcomed representatives of the Royal House, of the Dutch Government and International Tribunals and Organizations.

In her speech, she expressed her gratitude for the presence of so many guests on this occasion to celebrate “The Anniversary of the Independence of our country, in The Hague, (...) a city symbol of peace and justice”. Vice-Minister Bergamino stressed that; “Independence, in addition to being a status, is a process that interacts with the construction of a nation. Because nations are historical constructions.” She explained that the process went back to 1811, with the ‘Orientales’ (Orientals) expressing their feeling of being as 'one and different', and that 194 years later, “We continue to be 'one and different' not by comparison with others, but because of our own identity.”

Vice-Minister Bergamino continued: “We are not a model country, we are a country that works to be better every day; we are



a stable and reliable country, with a solid democratic/republican institutionalism, we are a country with sustained economic growth for the last 16 years, but our main wealth are the Uruguayan people. We are a country of citizens, as a system of rights and responsibilities that we must improve. Because we can always do more for others, we are a country with a desire for peace and committed to international law and multilateralism, we are a grateful and hospitable country.” His Excellency concluded expressing the excellent level of the long-standing relationship with the Netherlands, on many multilateral and thematic areas, for example: Human Rights.

A very hospitable country as was seen by the wonderful reception. The castle gardens were decked out with Uruguayan flags on the tables and the enticing smells of roasted prime beef from Uruguay, drew us to the traditional Barbeque, where charming staff in national attire carved the meat. The guests enjoyed delicious ‘chivito’s’ (tenderloin sandwiches) and the amazing Tannat wine.

Not only were our palates delighted, but also our ears were charmed by the beautiful voice of singer Mrs. Silvia Mancuso, who sang some ‘candombe’, ‘tango’ and ‘milonga’ songs such as ‘A la ciudad de Montevideo’, ‘Niño bien’ and ‘Vieja viola’.

With temperatures of 28°C, it felt as if Uruguay and the Netherlands melted into one, embracing our ‘keeping in touch with the Dutch’ motto.

For more information on Tannat wine, we refer to our online article: <https://www.diplomataffairs.nl/uruguayan-tannat-wine-celebration-week-a-story-to-tell/>



From left to right, Dr. Felipe Michelini (ICC), the Ambassador of Uruguay: H.E. Mrs. Laura Dupuy and H.E. Mr. Ariel Bergamino, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uruguay.



The Ambassadors' Spouses Association in The Hague

Still going strong

Founded in 2008, this remarkable association is dedicated to organising events and outings in the Netherlands, enabling members to discover in depth the people and the culture of The Netherlands.



Mrs Linda Zin, spouse of the Ambassador of Malaysia.

Mrs Uzma Shujjat, spouse of the Ambassador of Pakistan.



Mr Thongvut Pinaruchi, spouse of the Ambassador of Thailand.



Mrs Gioconda Mirella Pocasangre de Vásquez, the spouse of the Ambassador of El Salvador.

So many have benefitted from the warmth and friendliness of this group, as well as the wonderfully organised events and lectures which enrichen us so and greatly contribute to the pleasure of the postings here in the Hague. All of this would not be possible without the dedication of their board which works relentlessly to create these occasions.

Recently we said goodbye to two of these exceptional board members: Mrs Tatiana Delvalle, spouse of the Ambassador of Panama, and also Mrs Tatsiana Barysevich, spouse of the Ambassador of Belarus.

Luckily the board still has four remarkable committee members to pursue ASA's mission:

Mrs Linda Zin, spouse of the Ambassador of Malaysia, holds a bachelor's degree in information studies from the MARA University of Technology in Shah Alam, Malaysia and a master's

degree in International Business from the University of Nottingham, England.

Mrs Zin has worked in Banking and Insurance before discovering her taste for corporate marketing and real estate.

She still follows her lifelong passion for dancing, be it traditional dancing that she performed, or now as licensed Jazzercise teacher.

She is currently the Chairperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia Ladies Association, and the Secretary of the Ambassadors Spouses' Association.

Mrs Uzma Shujjat, spouse of the Ambassador of Pakistan, holds a M.Sc. Master of Science in Marketing and Management from the University of Birmingham- England and an M.B.A. from the Institute of Business Administration in Karachi Pakistan.

She has over 20 years of experience teaching and mentoring students from 30 different nationalities in independent schools in Syria, Indonesia, United Kingdom, Pakistan, United States and China. Mrs Shujat also has extensive experience in the IB world, as certified Business and Management teacher, head of IB Diploma programme, certified examiner and administrator.

Mrs Shujat has lived in Pakistan, England, Syria, Indonesia, France, China and the United States.

Mr Thongvut Pinaruchi, spouse of the Ambassador of Thailand, holds a Bachelor of Business Administration (Major in Marketing) from the University of Thai Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok, Thailand and a Master of Science in Business Administration from Strayer College, Washington, D.C., USA. He has worked as Marketing Executive, and as Assistant Vice

President for the International Branch Department of Siam Commercial Bank. Alongside his role on the ASA board, he is still active in the business world and leads his family business in Thailand.

And last but not least, **Mrs Gioconda Mirella Pocasangre de Vásquez**, spouse of the Ambassador of El Salvador. Mrs de Pocasangre holds a Law Degree from the Central American University of San Salvador. In her extensive career as Lawyer, she has held different positions within the Ministry of Justice, gained experience as Notary of the Republic and held positions as Professor at the Judicial Training Centre and the Technological University of San Salvador. Mrs de Vasquez has also lived in Washington DC.

We wish them luck and look forward to their next event!

Entranced by Ecuador

Ambassador Fernando Bucheli, Chargé of Affairs a.i. of the Embassy of Ecuador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands presented the beauty of his country, depicted by the Ecuadorian artist Luis Millangalli, at an exhibition at the World Trade Centre, in the heart of the Hague.

The Ambassador's address was passionate and genuine as he praised his countryman artist for capturing the essence of Ecuador in this authentic fashion. At Diplomat Affairs in the Hague, we have one of his masterpieces 'Campanula Colgante', hanging on the wall, which brightens up our day. The vividness and colours of these paintings were truly entrancing.

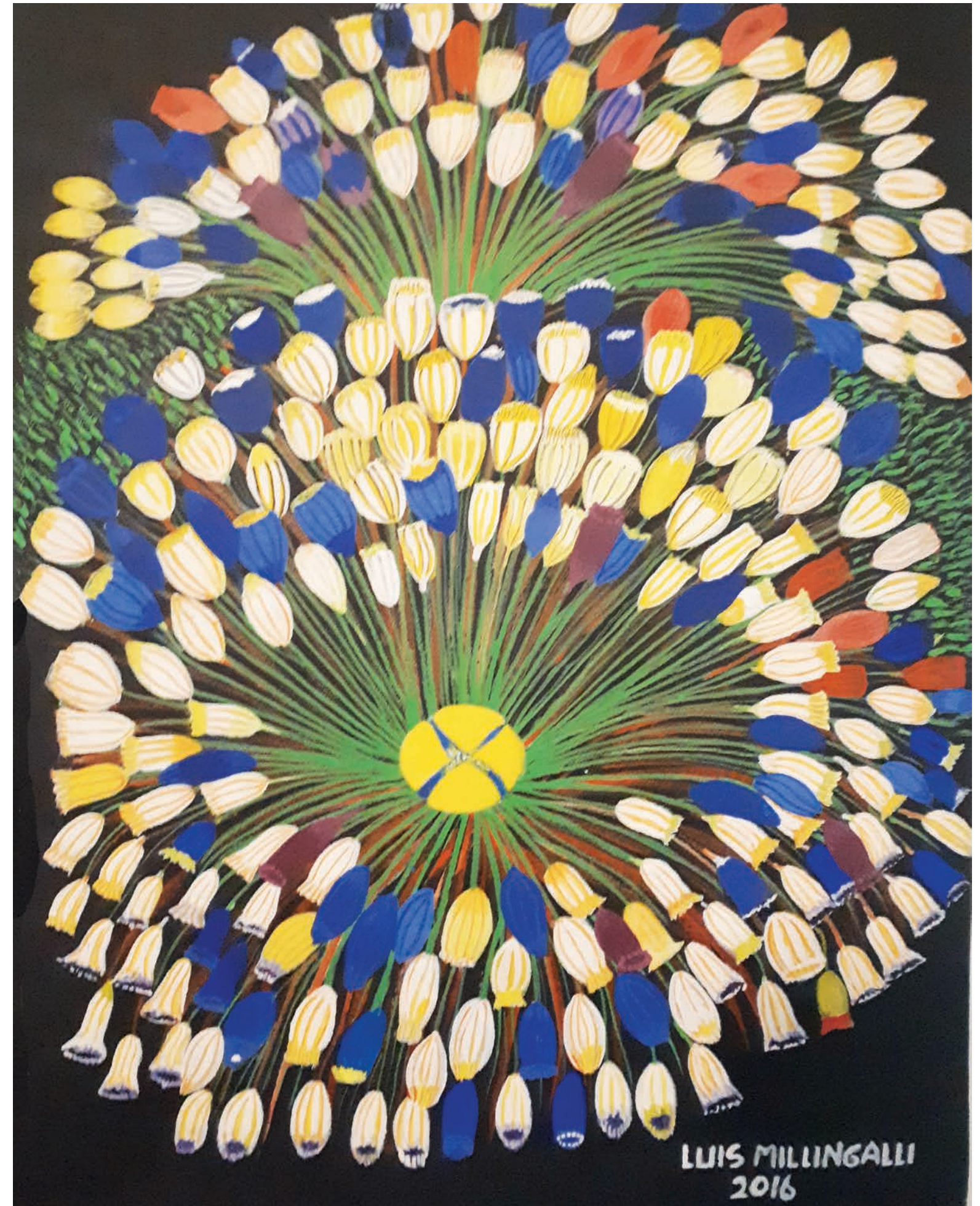
We are delighted to highlight the words of Luis Millangalli:

"It is an honour for me to present my paintings to this splendid public in The Hague. My work seeks to present and make known to the world the life in the heights of the Andes, the customs and traditions that have been maintained over time, which are daily life events for my people. For instance: crops, harvests, grazing, dancing parties, the Feast of Corpus Christi, bullfights, ribbon dance, among other manifestations. In the second stage of my work, I capture the natural beauty of my country, which for me is the greatest wealth we have. Its native forests, its virgin vegetation, its orchids – with their infinity of shapes and colours –, the ground cherries, Datura, Magnolia, linden flower, the



chiquiraga jessieu in the moorland, the ceibo tree, with its hanging arms sheltered from cotton and flowers, and the greatness and majesty of its mountains. All full

of life. These flowers are found in the Andean moorlands from 3,500 to 4,000 meters above sea level. I devoutly try to capture all this magic and transmit it in my work to the observer, to awaken in him the responsibility to protect, conserve and take care of our roots, culture and ecology, which for me is the natural treasure."



A most charming Ambassador for Wassenaar

Deputy Mayor of Wassenaar and Alderman Caroline Klaver-Bouman attended our latest Welcome ceremony for newly arrived Ambassadors at Diplomat Club Wassenaar. We wanted to find out more about the woman behind the function, the function itself and the reasons that led her to be involved with the Municipality where so many of our Honorary Members Ambassadors reside.

BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET

Alderman Bouman’s passion for Wassenaar, and heartfelt commitment to her role of hostess to all the foreign residents of ‘her village’, were evident from the very first sentence. Fiercely proud of being Dutch, Mrs Bouman was brought up in international circuits, moving from the Rotterdam area to Wassenaar when she was aged 11 as her Swedish Mother was looking for a more international environment. Caroline studied at prestigious Nyenrode (then only 30% girls) before taking off, with her degree, at the tender age of 21, to follow an MBA at George Washington University, before also living in New York City and London, where she took a career break to follow her lifelong passion for History, taking a degree in Modern European history at King’s College. When, in 1999 they decided after a year in Switzerland to return to Holland, she knew where she wanted her three children to grow up: Wassenaar. “Not many places in the world have all the



Gemeente Wassenaar

“I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE OUR NEW AMBASSADORS, THEIR FAMILIES AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL PEOPLE FEEL WELCOME IN WASSENAAR.”

advantages that the Netherlands, and in particular Wassenaar have,” she said. Whilst teaching high level Economics at Luzac College Mrs Bouman’s love for Wassenaar incited her to take a more active role and join the municipality, first as council member, and since summer 2018 as Alderman. She briefly explained how the Municipality works: “The power is with the people”, she explained, and the 21 chosen members (proportional to the

parties in power) who form the Council. They decide on policy and control the budget. Their policy decisions are executed by the Aldermen who form the “College”. These Aldermen, chosen for 4 years, sometimes also have another job. At the moment for example there are 5 Alderman, covering the 4 parties on a 0.6 fulltime basis. The Mayor is appointed for a period of 6 years by the Kings Commissary and approved by the Council.

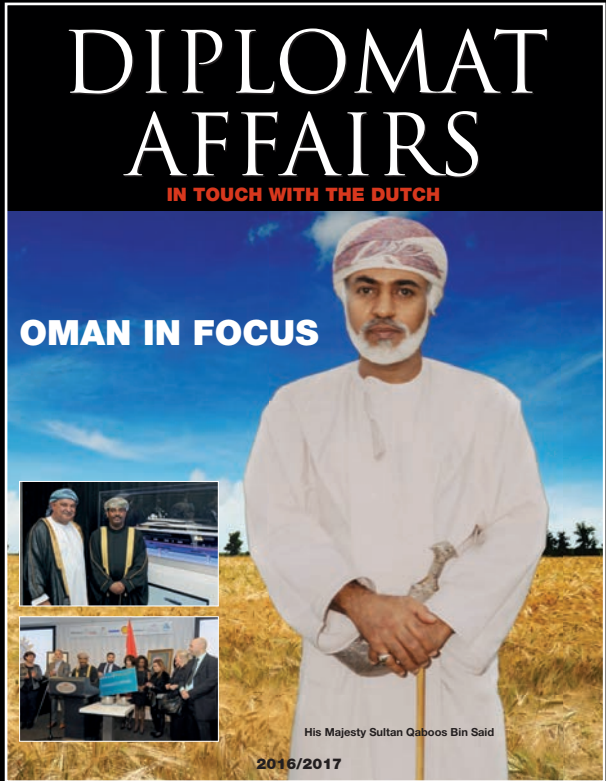
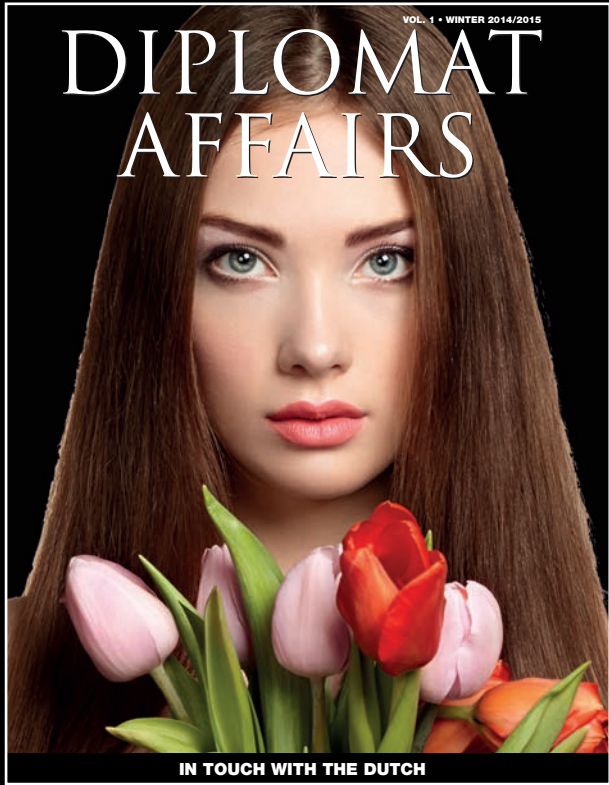
We got talking about the 5th Anniversary of Diplomat Club Wassenaar and Diplomat Affairs Magazine and how much we enjoy our cooperation with the Municipality as co-host of our Welcome Ceremonies. Deputy Mayor Bouman mentioned how much she had enjoyed attending and how delighted she had been by the open and relaxed atmosphere where the Ambassadors clearly felt a warm connection to Club Founder and President Mrs Shida Blik, as if they were indeed ‘home away from home’. She herself is clear on her role: “I am proud to be Dutch and to live in Wassenaar and I would like to share that with our guests here. I know what it is like to live abroad and the need to feel welcome and appreciated by the host country, I would like to make our new Ambassadors, their families and other international people feel welcome in Wassenaar.” She looks forward to continuing the link and increasing the cooperation between the Municipality and DCW.



To finish I asked the Deputy Mayor, what she hopes the resident Ambassadors will get out of their stay here. She replied: “To enjoy our green oasis of tranquillity and nature within the bustling metropolis, while at the same time being so close to the big hubs. You can be carefree and safe, and at the same time very much connected to the rest of the world, and you get to meet so many interesting people.” The council and the Aldermen’s official place of work is the townhall, ‘De Paauw’.

This beautiful building is the former residence of Prince Frederik of the Netherlands (1797-1881) who was the second son of King Willem I. The exterior of the Paauw is currently being renovated, as is also the surrounding parc. The renovation is expected to be finished by the end of 2019. The interior of the building also needs to be updated. Plans for these renovations are currently being made. In the meantime, municipal business is conducted from Johan de Wittstraat 45, 2242 LV Wassenaar.

Five years In Touch With The Dutch





WIENER BALL

THE 52nd WIENER BALL

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 1st 2020

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For more information and admission tickets:

www.wienerball.nl

or contact the Ballbureau

Mrs. Marianne van den Berg:

06-24348656 or info@wienerball.nl

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