

DIPLOMAT AFFAIRS



**AMBASSADOR INOMATA
bestows significant praise**

**DIPLOMAT CLUB WASSENAAR
welcomes 17 new Ambassadors**

**CHIO ROTTERDAM
and Port Club Rotterdam thriving**

**FAMILY BUSINESS
J. de Jonge Group**

**MALAYSIA HOSTS ASEAN
50th anniversary celebration**

IN TOUCH WITH THE DUTCH



Diplomat Club Wassenaar
The Netherlands



**KASTEEL DE
WITTENBURG**

AUDACIA AMICITIA FIDES

Landgoed De Wittenburg 1, 2244 BV Wassenaar



ROLAND SMULDERS

“FOR THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR WE HAVE WELCOMED 17 NEW AMBASSADORS TO DIPLOMAT CLUB WASSENAAR IN THE FIRST HALF OF THIS YEAR ALONE WHICH IS TRULY HEART-WARMING”

*Your Excellencies,
dear members and readers,*

May I present to you the latest edition of our Club magazine: Diplomat Affairs 2017/2018.

At the most recent Welcome Ceremony for newly arrived Ambassadors at Diplomat Club Wassenaar, the King's Commissioner in the Province of Zuid Holland Mr. Jaap Smit, spoke with great passion about the business development and opportunities in this province and encouraged the newly arrived ambassadors to visit all the cities.

We have highlighted some noteworthy companies and businesses in and around the vibrant city of Rotterdam. There are some exciting developments with worldwide connections. We are proud to present to you these Dutch entrepreneurs and family businesses and to highlight their unique companies and their CEO's, all members of Diplomat Club Wassenaar.

For the third consecutive year we have welcomed 17 new ambassadors to Diplomat Club Wassenaar in the first half of this year alone which is truly heart-warming.

All ambassadors to the Kingdom of the Netherlands are highly appreciated honorary members of our club and we

are delighted to welcome so many of you at the ceremony and other events. A home away from home is what we aspire to give you at Kasteel de Wittenburg.

We are delighted to see more and more of you organising national days and various events at the castle and feel sincerely privileged to be able to share these very special moments with you.

In this way you enable us to accomplish our mandate to contribute to strengthening the links between our countries through music, art and business. A continuous inspiration and motivation to pursue our common endeavours in 2018, as we strive to 'keep in touch with the Dutch'.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of Diplomat Club Wassenaar: Diplomats, Heads of Mission, the staff of the club and the magazine, and all those who have contributed their time and effort to making this edition a varied and inspiring one.

Shida Blik (diplomataffairsnl@gmail.com)

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WIENER BALL

THE 50th WIENER BALL

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 9th 2018

GRAND HOTEL HUIS TER DUIN
NOORDWIJK

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Top, first row: Romania; H.E. Mrs. Brîndusa-Ioana Predescu, former Mayor of Wassenaar; Mr. Jan Hoekema, Pakistan; H.E. Mrs. Iffit Imran Gardezi, the King's Commissioner in the Province of Zuid-Holland; Mr. Jaap Smit. Second row: Portugal; H.E. Mrs. Rosa Batoréu, Founder/Director Diplomat Club Wassenaar; Mrs. Shida Bliet, Tunisia; H.E. Mr. Elyes Ghariani. Third row: Greece; H.E. Mr. Dimitrios Chronopoulos, Hungary; H.E. Dr. András Kocsis, Israel; H.E. Mr. Aviv Shir-On, Director Royal Conservatoire The Hague; Mr. Henk van der Meulen, Kazakhstan; H.E. Mr. Magzhan Ilyassov.

Left, top; Mr. Peter Bliet Chairman TenRande Foundation, Ambassador H.E. Mr. Ronaldo Edgar Dunlop (r). Left, middle; The King's Commissioner in the Province of Zuid-Holland, Mr. Jaap Smit. Left, bottom; Ms. Linda Mao, Mrs. Rajiv Mehra, Mr. Lasé Hu, Mr. Rajiv Mehra.

Ambassadors, Welcome to The Netherlands!

For the third consecutive year, the Diplomat Club Wassenaar in collaboration with Kasteel De Wittenburg celebrated the traditional welcome to the newly arrived ambassadors to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. BY JULIA A. VAN OORDT/PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET/MORE PHOTOS WWW.DIPLOMATAFFAIRS.NL

The first ceremony for 2017 was on the 10th of January and the second one on the 26th June 2017. The guests were received by the Deputy Mayor of Wassenaar, Mr. Freddy Blommers at the beautiful main rooms of the Castle Kasteel De Wittenburg overlooking the

majestic gardens of the Castle. As become tradition Mrs. Shida Bliet, Founder and Director of Diplomat Club The Netherlands, warmly welcomed the new Ambassadors with an honorary ribbon and in her speech she emphasised the importance of the collaboration with

the Embassies as a means to tighten bonds with The Netherlands through Art, Music and Business. The newly arrived Ambassadors present on the 10th of January 2017, at the ceremony were the following: Greece: H.E. Mr. Dimitrios Chronopoulos



First row: Brasil; H.E. Ms. Regina Maria Cordeiro Dunlop, Palestine; H.E. Ms. Rawan Sulaiman, Vietnam; H.E. Ms. Ngo Thi Hoa, King's Commissioner; Mr. Jaap Smit, Deputy Mayor; Mr. Freddy Blommers, Cuba; H.E. Ms. Soraya Elena Álvarez Núñez, Austria; H.E. Dr. Heidemaria Güler. Second row: Mrs. Shida Bliet, Bulgaria; H.E. Mr. Rumen Alexandrov, Thailand; H.E. Ms. Pornprapai Ganjanarintr. Third row: Korea; H.E. Mr. Yun Young Lee, Mr. Ralf Meppelder, Ukraine; H.E. Mr. Vsevolod Valeriyovych Chentsov, Chief of Protocol MFA; Mr. Roelof van Ees.

Hungary: H.E. Dr. András Kocsis
Israel: H.E. Mr. Aviv Shir On
Kazakhstan: H.E. Mr. Magzhan Ilyassov
Pakistan: H.E. Mrs. Iffit Imran Gardezi
Portugal: H.E. Mrs. Rosa Batoréu
Romania: H.E. Mrs. Brîndusa-Ioana Predescu
Tunisia: H.E. Mr. Elyes Ghariani

The newly arrived Ambassadors present on the 26th of June 2017, at the ceremony were the following: Austria: H.E. Dr. Heidemaria Güler
Bulgaria: H.E. Mr. Rumen Alexandrov
Brazil: H.E. Ms. Regina Maria Cordeiro Dunlop
Cuba: H.E. Ms. Soraya Elena Álvarez Núñez
Korea: H.E. Mr. Yun Young Lee

Palestine: H.E. Ms. Rawan Sulaiman
Thailand: H.E. Ms. Pornprapai Ganjanarintr
Ukraine: H.E. Mr. Vsevolod Valeriyovych Chentsov
Vietnam: H.E. Ms. Ngo Thi Hoa
On the 26th of June, the King's Commissioner in the Province of Zuid-Holland, Mr. Jaap Smit spoke with great passion about the business development and opportunities in the province of Zuid-Holland and encouraged the newly arrived Ambassadors to visit all the cities. Specific information was to be found In the magazine 'Discover the world of Zuid-Holland'. Mr. Jaap Grijmans, member of the board of Fund For Excellence of the Royal Conservatoire The Hague explained the

importance of the collaboration with companies to support the students of 60 nationalities studying at the Royal Conservatoire. The newly appointed ambassadors and guests enjoyed a performance of the first and second movements of the Second Sonata by Ravel, and the Romanian Dances by Bartók. The performance was artfully delivered by a student ensemble of the Royal Conservatoire of the Hague: Ms. Novile Maceinaite (violin) and Ms. Gulmira Issabekova (piano). After the performance, dinner was served in the Castle garden. Our club was honoured to celebrate this evening and wishes the new appointed Ambassadors much success in their mission to the Kingdom of The Netherlands.

HIGH-LEVEL EVENT TO STRENGTHEN
PROTECTION OF EDUCATION

“Invest in Education”

On Friday 19th May, 2017, The Hague institute organized a high-level address and seminar on ‘Law, Education and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s)’.

COURTESY OF THE HAGUE INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL JUSTICE | PHOTO ANTON VAN DER RIET

As part of the Distinguished Speaker Series, the event welcomed Her Highness Sheikh Moza bint Nasser, Founder of the Education Above All Foundation and United Nations SDG advocate, to provide the keynote address on the need to strengthen the protection of education during insecurity and armed conflict. This was followed by a panel discussion with leading advocates, and an expert roundtable discussion involving key policy-makers and researchers.

The opening address was attended by Her Majesty Queen Máxima in her capacity as the UN Secretary-General’s Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development.

In her speech, Her Highness Sheikh Moza bint Nasser highlighted the normative and practical reasons for protecting education from attack, and called for greater accountability for perpetrators and preventive action by the UN Security Council. The panel of leading advocates comprised Her Excellency Fatou Bensouda, ICC Prosecutor; Her Excellency Laila Bokhari, State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway; Mrs Graça

Machel, Founder and President of the Foundation for Community Development and Founder of the Graça Machel Trust; Mr Forest Whitaker, SDG Advocate, Founder and CEO of the Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative and UNESCO Special Envoy for Peace; and Mr Kevin Watkins, CEO of Save the Children UK. The discussion was

HER HIGHNESS
SHEIKHA MOZA BINT
NASSER HIGHLIGHTED
THE NORMATIVE AND
PRACTICAL REASONS
FOR PROTECTING
EDUCATION FROM
ATTACK

facilitated by the international broadcaster, Zeinab Badawi. The panelists reflected on the importance of education during humanitarian crisis, and the need to close the gaps between humanitarian assistance and post-conflict development in order to prevent future

generations from growing up without access to education:

“We must call on those in power to live up to their values and responsibilities, and invest in education that will ensure resilient and flourishing societies.”

The event demonstrated the global leadership of Education Above All Foundation in defending and delivering quality education to the poorest and most marginalized young people around the world. It also furthered the commitment of The Hague Institute to promoting international legal accountability, and the role of education in conflict prevention through policy-relevant research and its convening power.

The event gained significant media attention, including a letter signed by the three UN SDG Advocates attending in *The Times* (London), an op-ed in *Time Magazine* and the *Gulf Times*, as well as coverage in international and Dutch media such as the tv-show *Blauw Bloed*.

The Distinguished Speaker Series at The Hague Institute showcases eminent leaders in international affairs and is the centerpiece of the Institute’s high-level convening power and policy engagement.



Her Highness Sheikh Moza bint Nasser and Her Majesty Queen Máxima.



From left, H.E. Mr. Hiroshi Inomata, Mrs. and Mr. Jacob van der Goot and Mrs. Midori Inomata.

Japan in touch with the Dutch

His Excellency Mr. Hiroshi Inomata, Ambassador of Japan to the Netherlands, highlighted two Dutch individuals for their outstanding service to the Japanese community and crucial contributions in the constant strengthening of the more than 400-years-old ties that link Japan and the Netherlands.

PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET

At his stunning Residence in the neighbourhood Zorgvliet in The Hague, His Excellency Mr. Hiroshi Inomata, with his charming spouse Mrs. Midori Inomata, both highly appreciated Honorary Members of the Diplomat Club Wassenaar, conferred the Japanese



decoration ‘The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon’ upon Mr. Jacob van der Goot during a special ceremony. On a separate occasion, they welcomed the new Honorary Consul-General of Japan in Amsterdam Mr. Jos Ter Avest.



H.E. Mr. Hiroshi Inomata and Mrs. Midori Inomata.

At the Conferment Ceremony, Mr. Jacob van der Goot, the former Honorary Consul-General of Japan in Rotterdam, received the Japanese decoration ‘The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon’. His Excellency declared: “This decoration is conferred in the name of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan for Mr. Van der Goot’s contribution to the promotion of the economic and cultural ties between Japan and the Netherlands and deepening the mutual understanding between our two countries.” The Ambassador highlighted the support and assistance Mr. Van

der Goot had given Japanese companies during his years as a bank manager in Rotterdam. From 2005 he took office as Honorary Consul-General of Japan in Rotterdam, fulfilling an important role in locally promoting the friendly relations between Japan and the Netherlands by supporting and actively involving himself in Japan-related events such as the 150th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and the Netherlands, and 400 years of trade relations. His Excellency: “His role as mediator between the authorities of Rotterdam and the Embassy of Japan was truly invaluable.”

HIS EXCELLENCY EMPHASISED HOW THE ROLE OF THE HONORARY CONSUL-GENERAL IS INCREASING IN IMPORTANCE DUE TO THE GREAT NUMBER OF JAPANESE NATIONALS THAT CHOOSE TO RESIDE IN AMSTERDAM AND THE EXPANSION OF JAPANESE COMPANIES IN THIS ECONOMIC HUB.

Furthermore, Mr. Van der Goot is very active in various Japan-related organisations, is a member of an organisation of Honorary Consul-Generals in the Netherlands and uses his network to advance Japan’s presence in the area. Since 2006, he has been co-chairman of the Rotterdam Japan Club (RJC), which promotes Dutch-Japanese economic ties and friendly relations. The RJC, which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, raised a staggering 19.000 euro support after the terrible earthquake of 2011 in Japan.

The Ambassador concluded: “Mr. Jacob van der Goot, the Government of Japan recognises and is deeply grateful for your tremendous contributions to the economic and cultural relations between Japan and the Netherlands as well as the deepening of mutual understanding between our countries.”

At another occasion, Mr. Ter Avest was distinguished. He was appointed Honorary



From left, H.E. Mr. Hiroshi Inomata and Mrs. Midori Inomata; Mr. and Mrs. Jos ter Avest.



Consul-General of Japan in Amsterdam on February 1st and has worked many years in various positions at ABN AMRO, the largest private bank of the Netherlands. His Excellency emphasised how the role of the Honorary Consul-General is increasing in importance due to the great number of Japanese nationals that choose

to reside in Amsterdam and the expansion of Japanese companies in this economic hub. The Ambassador stated: “We are delighted to welcome as Honorary Consul-General of Japan someone with such a broad network, whether in the field of sports, culture, or otherwise; with extensive personal connections in the banking community, and also in the

upper circles of Dutch society. I expect Mr. Ter Avest will be able to make excellent use of his personal connections and his career as a businessman for the benefit of Japanese companies and Japanese residents. In addition, I am confident he will actively form a bridge between Amsterdam’s municipal government and the local industry.”



Mr. Jacob van der Goot.



Mr. Jeroen Kamphuis (Board Member of RJC).



Mr. Jan Willem Sodderland (Founder of RJC).



Photo left, from left, H.E. Mr. Hiroshi Inomata; Mrs. Shida Bliek, Founder and Director of Diplomat Club Wassenaar; Mr. Peter Bliek, Chairman of TenRande Foundation.

Mr. Jacob van der Goot and Mrs. Kris Schiermeier, Director of SieboldHuis.



Left to right, Mr. Peter Goedvolk, President of CHIO Port Club Rotterdam; Mr. Jan Peter Balkenende, former Prime Minister of the Netherlands; H.E. Mr. Per Holmström, Ambassador of Sweden; H.E. Mr. Kelly Kevin, Ambassador of Ireland; Mr. Jan de Mooij, CEO CHIO Rotterdam. FOTO HENRIËTTE KÖRNER

CHIO ROTTERDAM EQUESTRIAN SPORT AND CHIO ROTTERDAM
PORT CLUB BUILDING BRIDGES

Hearts of Gold in Rotterdam

Mr. Peter Goedvolk and Mr. Jan de Mooij, promoters of the World Port Network: Brazil, the Middle East, China, India and Japan. Both involved in promoting sports, sustainable trade and investment in The Netherlands and international. BY JULIE KENNEDY

By a sweltering July afternoon, what a pleasure it was to enter the elegant, cool and welcoming offices of Count and First Dutch overlooking the river Maas; to interview two of our Diplomat Club Wassenaar members and prominent business ‘makers and shakers’ in Rotterdam.

Meet Mr Peter Goedvolk, CEO of

Count and First Dutch, Chairman of the board of Rotterdam Harbour, entrepreneur for over 30 years notably with Argos Oil, and a born Rotterdammer. And Mr Jan de Mooij, entrepreneur and CEO at the Foundation CHIO Rotterdam (Concours Hippique International Officiel), the oldest sports event in Rotterdam which will be celebrating its 70th edition in 2018 and has just won,

after a fierce bid with France, the 2019 FEI European Championship in three disciplines: show jumping, dressage, and para-equestrian dressage.

Two different men, two different industries, both involved in inspiring, value-driven projects, promoting sport, the equestrian industry, sustainable trade and investment in harbour cities. Both

sharing the joint mission of stimulating international partnership, trade and investment and making Rotterdam a hub of dynamism, innovation and success; and both members of Diplomat Club Wassenaar.

What is the link between a harbour man and an equestrian sports promoter?
The answer is: the promotion of Rotterdam, and CHIO Rotterdam.

As Peter Goedvolk explained: “The collaboration between the Port business world of Rotterdam and the Foundation Concours Hippique International Official (CHIO Rotterdam), has existed for a very long time. One of the founders of CHIO Rotterdam, Jacques Schoufour was a big harbour man and famous port entrepreneur (he passed away a few years ago). His vision was bold though the project started small after WW2, in 1948. As president of the CHIO Rotterdam Port Club, Mr. Goedvolk has been linked to CHIO Rotterdam for years. As he

said: “I saw the initiative grow and was interested as *Rotterdammer*. I didn’t know that the equestrian industry and the event were so large, and was very impressed by what was happening within CHIO Rotterdam. I felt more people should know about it. A few years ago, we discussed cooperation and the fact that many port companies are sold to foreign companies, (Singapore, USA, Denmark... etc.). This is the reality of our global world, but led us to think we should make new steps towards stronger cooperation between the port and CHIO Rotterdam. Jan (De Mooij) asked me to become involved and to join the board. I was delighted to do so.”

Mr De Mooij, for most of us internationals when we think of sports and the Netherlands: soccer, cycling and field hockey are the first to come to mind. Little do most of us know about the size and potential of the equestrian industry in the Netherlands.

“Indeed, with yearly € 2 billion turnover in NL, 10,000 horse companies, 450.000 horses and 1.2 million followers, I sincerely believe that in a few years, equestrian sport in the Netherlands will be bigger than soccer. Horses are one of the biggest exports from the Netherlands, and have long been considered of the best quality, mostly in jumping and dressage. Yearly 14.000 horses are exported to China alone, a huge Boeing leaves almost daily. We used to do business with KLM Cargo but cargo is no longer their top priority. Emirates has invested a lot in the trading and transport of horses so we are focusing on a sponsorship relation with Emirates and DP World.”

Mr De Mooij, you are CEO of CHIO Rotterdam, are you a horse man?
“Actually not, I discovered horse-riding through my middle daughter who was diagnosed aged 9 with severe limitations, meaning she could never lead a normal life. She moved from pony to horse and



MR DE MOOIJ:
“CHIO
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FOR
ROTTERDAM
AND THE
NETHERLANDS”

now at 21 has completed her Higher Professional Education and rides for talent team NL. I am tremendously proud of her. Out of gratitude and desire to give back I joined the board of CHIO Rotterdam in 2011, starting in commercial affairs, from there I was hooked.”

Now Rotterdam has been selected to host the 2019 FEI European Championship: congratulations!

“Indeed, we have worked very hard for this. CHIO Rotterdam has organised many European championships before, but this will be the first time in three disciplines. Actually, the last time show-jumping was held in Rotterdam was 30 years ago, we have been waiting a long time! It has been an exciting 2 year bidding process, involving much travelling with the team. We have a great motto and theme: *‘Hearts of Gold’* (horse and athlete’s hearts going for Gold), and an effective lobby which we put every free minute and hour into. The competition with France/Dinard, was tough... but

we made it and are VERY excited. Besides the Olympics and the FEI World Equestrian Games in 2018 in America, this is the third largest event of the International Federation (FEI).”

Well at DCW we are very much looking forward to it too, for when shall we save the date?

Mr De Mooij: “The Championships in 2019 will be held in the 3rd week of August for 7 days, (not 4 days in June as usual). We shall use CHIO Rotterdam 2018 as ‘European Championships light’, as practice!

CHIO Rotterdam is the oldest sports event in Rotterdam, passionately followed by amongst others the Royal Family. Let alone the excellent sports, it is also a fruitful networking opportunity and a lot of fun. Mr Jaap Smit, the King’s Commissioner in the Province of Zuid Holland (who we know well at Diplomat Club Wassenaar and who welcomed newly arrived ambassadors to



Left to right, Mr. Jan de Mooij, Mr. Jan Peter Balkenende, Economic Counselor Mr. Zhang, Embassy of People's Republic of China and Mayor of Rotterdam, Mr. Ahmed Aboutaleb. FOTO: MIRJAM LEMS

The Netherlands) is very impressed that all of this is taking place in his province, and attends CHIO Rotterdam every year. This year CHIO Rotterdam attracted 50,000 spectators and 30,000 VIP’s were invited to the beautiful Kralingse Bos.

Peter Goedvolk: “CHIO Rotterdam belongs to our three biggest hospitality events in the Netherlands with KLM Open Golf and ABN AMRO Tennis Tournament. CHIO Rotterdam started with Rotterdam, then became national, now international. The vision is international: ‘The way to the future is the way to the world’, that is our goal, to make it more and more international.”

CHIO Rotterdam is doing so well, where do you go from here?

Mr De Mooij: “We want to work together with local partners and organise CHIO Rotterdam in other parts of the world, a bit like the champions league in equestrian sport. For now, we have an important trade mission to China from October 16th to 22nd 2017. We already

have a very strong relationship with Shanghai but also Heilan where there is a huge equestrian club organised by a Chinese textile entrepreneur. A very impressive set-up, almost a horse city and it even boasts two big windmills up front.” The China Mission ‘Holland Horse Meets World’ is an initiative of KWP (Holland Horse Foundation), ESI – Coordinator of the Equestrian, PIB China, CHIO Rotterdam and Rotterdam Partners. Alongside the economic boom, China is showing great potential in the world of equestrian sports and as we mentioned, the Netherlands has witnessed a tremendous growth in the numbers of horses exported there over the past few years. There is an urgent need to supply the Chinese equestrian sector with adequate products, services and knowledge from the Netherlands. Continuous initiatives are required and CHIO Rotterdam is delighted to be part of this one.

What other countries are you interested in?

MR GOEDVOLK:
“CHIO
ROTTERDAM IS
ALSO
FOLLOWING
THE WORLD
PORT NETWORK:
BRAZIL, THE
MIDDLE EAST,
CHINA, INDIA
AND JAPAN:
WORLD OF
OPPORTUNITIES:
MAKE IT
HAPPEN”

Mr De Mooij: “Brazil, India, China, Japan, the Middle East to name a few, so many opportunities.”

Mr Goedvolk: “CHIO Rotterdam is also following the World Port Network: Brazil, countries in the Middle East, China, India and Japan: *World of opportunities: make it happen*. The Port of Rotterdam was for 10 years the largest in the world. This changed with the development of Asia but it is still the largest in Europe and it makes sense for it to be linked with such a large event as CHIO Rotterdam.

I would like to take the opportunity here to congratulate Jan (Mr De Mooij). CHIO Rotterdam was already a large, excellent event but since Jan started, it is taking big steps. His passion, ambition and drive are contagious and it is a real pleasure to see it is working.”

Mr De Mooij: “We have long moved beyond the image of only girls liking horses. The facts are real. We now have a horse academy (Lentiz Maasland), and I am being asked to give masterclasses to



international students: it is working! It is real! I am not doing it alone, thanks to the trust and the vision, people are following. We also have an excellent board and team including members such as Peter whose contacts and expertise are priceless.

CHIO Rotterdam is thriving. This isn’t a peak, this is just the start of a great movement, people in the Netherlands don’t realise yet how huge the equestrian market is. These are very exciting years for Rotterdam and the Netherlands.”

Diplomat Club Wassenaar would like to thank these two members for having generously shared their time and expertise. What a pleasure witnessing so much passion and drive, the interaction of Sports and Economics, the laying of connections and the building of bridges between countries and partners (very typical for Rotterdam). A perfect example of the Dutch ‘can-do’ mind-set linked with a strong vision, innovative thinking, passion, and determination.



HEARTS
OF
GOLD

FEI EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019

JUMPING, DRESSAGE AND
PARA EQUESTRIAN DRESSAGE

ROTTERDAM • THE NETHERLANDS



CELEBRATING 45 YEARS OF
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

China and The Netherlands

H.E. Wu Ken, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China and his spouse Mrs. Guo Jinqiu, welcomed their numerous guests to the Chinese Embassy on May 18th. The occasion: celebrating 45 years of China-Netherlands diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level.

PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET



H.E. Wu Ken, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China and his spouse Mrs. Guo Jinqiu.

Ambassador Wu Ken, who was welcomed to the Diplomat Club Wassenaar in June 2016, made a strong impression on all assembled by delivering his speech in Dutch. Indeed, the Ambassador is quite a linguist, fluent also in German having studied in Frankfurt and being posted there.

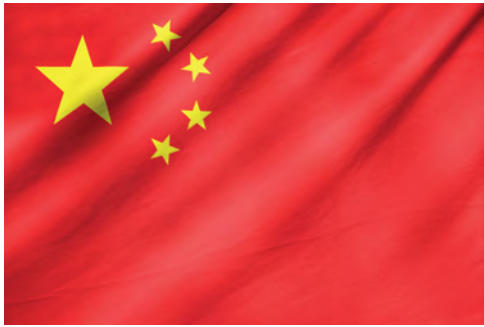
His Excellency took us back in time, highlighting the milestones which brought us to this celebration of 45 years of growing trust and partnership. Princess Beatrix was one of the first Royals from Europe to visit China in 1977 and returned as Queen.

Crown Prince Willem-Alexander attended the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics in 2008, and the Shanghai Expo of 2010. On a government level, Prime Minister Balkenende visited China four times and Minister Rutte twice.

The years 2014 and 2015 were significant with the historic exchange visits by President Xi Jinping and King Willem-Alexander to establish an 'Open and Pragmatic Partnership for Comprehensive Cooperation', laying a solid strategic

foundation for the future development of bilateral relations.

In the last 45 years, bilateral trade has grown from US\$69 million in 1972 to US\$67.2 billion in 2016, making the Netherlands the third largest investor from the EU. From the Chinese side,



close to 600 projects are being invested in in the Netherlands, over multiple industries, creating around 10 thousand jobs. The number of Confucius classrooms set up in Dutch Secondary Schools will reach 13 this year; 2 Chinese universities offer a major in Dutch, and around 9,000 Chinese students study in the Netherlands. And of course, a clear sign of the multi-dimensional level of the Chinese-Dutch relationships was the

spectacular arrival of Wu Wen and Xing Ya, the two Giant Pandas, greeted as heads of state by a large and enthusiastic crowd. As Ambassador Wu said: "It's a small step for this pair of giant pandas, but a big step for the history of China-Netherlands relations". We 'three ambassadors' will work together to continue the joint efforts with all Dutch friends to push the China-Netherlands relations a great leap forward, and bring more benefits to both countries and people."

His Excellency closed his address by expressing how full his heart was with gratitude to "Queen Juliana, Prime Minister Willem Drees and Prime Minister Barend Biesheuvel, with their far-sighted strategic friendship. Without your efforts and contribution, we would never have made such great achievements in the China-Netherlands relations."

2017 is a big year for both countries, with the new cabinet in the Netherlands and China holding the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party. He hopes to see the China-Netherlands Partnership for Comprehensive



Left, the Dutch Minister of Education Mrs. Jet Bussemaker; second from right Mrs. Ankie Broekers-Knol, Chairman of the Dutch Senate.

Cooperation flourish to a new stage.

The formal greeting was followed by the official opening of an exhibition highlighting the past 45 years of diplomatic relations by His Excellency and the Dutch Minister of Education Jet Bussemaker, who praised the Dutch-Sino relationship and mentioned how much she enjoyed travelling to China.

Guests were then treated to a wonderful spectacle of singing and music, acrobatics and more by performers from both countries, before savouring an immense mouth-watering Chinese buffet and mingling enthusiastically both inside and on the large terrace outside.



J. DE JONGE GROUP: ‘Men of Steel’ steal the show

Knowledge and tradition with cutting-edge innovativeness in Rotterdam:
J. de Jonge Group family business, still thriving after 64 years. Valuing not only
customers but also the employees and their families.

BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET/ COURTESY J. DE JONGE GROUP



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Driving to Vlaardingen from The Hague is quite an experience. Little by little one enters a totally different dimension. Quiet roads lined by towering factories, belching towers, flickering lights, mysterious activity taking place behind high fences. The occasional glimpse of workers in overalls and hard hat, the hum of human industriousness, something vital to our economy. So this too is Rotterdam (Vlaardingen lies 10 minutes from Rotterdam).

Once in Vlaardingen it was easy to locate the modern Headquarters of J. de Jonge Group, bursting with light and energy located by the water, with view on a beautiful old brick warehouse.

The rolled-up sleeve ‘can-do’ attitude, combined with genuine warmth and friendliness is palpable at all levels from the very first step of the building.

Today *Diplomat Affairs Magazine* has the chance to meet members of Diplomat Club Wassenaar in their own environment, and learn more about family business J. de Jonge Group. We are to interview Alexander de Jonge, Group Vice Director and Director Business Unit Specialties (third generation of this family business), and Jacko de Vries, CEO and Director of Business Unit International.

In this age of global conglomerates, a family business created 64 years ago, which is not only surviving but thriving, is something of a rarity. I was interested in the ingredients of their success...
“For that, we need to go back to the



“It all started in 1954...”
Mr. Jan de Jonge and Mrs. Geertje Groeneboom de Jonge.



very beginning,” said Jacko de Vries. “It all started in 1954”.
“My Grandfather, born in 1917,” explained Alexander de Jonge, “was one of the

first electrical welders in Holland, who started off working for de Bataafse Petroleum Maatschappij (now called Shell), making pipes, and travelling abroad,



Jacko de Vries, CEO and Director of Business Unit International.



namely to Indonesia. At the ripe old age of 37 he asked for his retirement money to create a piping and construction company of his own in Vlaardingen. The

port of Rotterdam was being rebuilt in those days, potential for the petrochemical industry was rife. Soon there was so much work that he needed to hire, and

“IN THOSE DAYS ONE WORKED WITHOUT CONTRACT, IT WAS A QUESTION OF ‘DOING WHAT YOU SAY’, IT TAKES A LOT OF COMMITMENT”

the company started to grow.”
Constant effort was needed to instil trust and create loyalty. Nieuwe Matex (now Vopak) and Shell were among their first



Alexander de Jonge.

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“THE ONE PLACE
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THIS IS A FAMILY
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IT HEALTHY”



Jacko de Vries.

customers, and still are, 64 years on. That is trust. As Mr de Vries pointed out: “In those days one worked without contract, it was a question of ‘doing what you say’, it takes a lot of commitment”.

“Grandfather created the core values of our company,” explains Alexander, “you cannot survive without 24/7 commitment and availability to your customers, the industry does not stop. Those values still run very much in the veins of the company today. It comes from inside. He created a culture of long-term thinking, finishing your work. Valuing not only customers but also the employees and their families”.

One example explained by Jacko de Vries is the ‘Haringhappen’ (the process of sliding a raw herring down your throat). Vlaardingen was then the city of arrival of the new herring (now Scheveningen) and since the very beginning they got together with their customers and employees, and their families, to celebrate and to taste the new arrival. These values are a strong ingredient in the continuing success of the company. The focus then was on construction and piping works. “When my Father, Jan de Jonge, took over,” continues Alexander, “he wanted to make it a one-stop-shop for the oil, gas and power industry. This

was to be his mission for the next 40 years. This diversification was an important step for the company, we could spread the risks beyond piping and construction works. One partner for our clients, which means less communication needed. The strategy worked and our success is a big result of that thought. Under my father’s guidance the company grew and grew. In the 90s, he took it abroad: Belgium, Germany, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia. He achieved and secured this status.”

We then move on to the third generation. Alexander de Jonge had not intended working for the company, nor did he study for it. An external CEO had been hired but had not worked out, his father was going to take over again, and that triggered him to join.

As he said: “You see something which was built ages ago taking a different turn, that triggered me to not want to let it go. Heritage I guess. This happened only two years after I had completed my studies. So I was given the work floor and a broom and started from the bottom to get to understand the business, walking through all the departments, getting to know the customers. In effect, a siness is customers and your people.

One morning in 2009 my father called with the news that the Manager in

Belgium was leaving. I decided to take the challenge and manage Antwerp which I then did for 5 years, growing from 15 to 70 employees, before returning to the Netherlands in 2016, when we split the company into three business units which became legal entities in 2017.

Basically, the company had grown too big to be controlled by one person. The different departments needed to grow individually with the right amount of time, energy and control to develop their full potential. The three units are: Mechanical, Specialties and International.

I see that the last part of your Master Plan is internationalisation and ‘setting your cap on international waters’, where exactly?

Jacko de Vries: “As we mentioned we have Belgium, (Antwerp) and we are active in Germany where our being a family company is seen as of great value-added. None of our competitors are family-owned and that generates a lot of trust. The Saudi market has been our target for a long time. We had been active there in the areas of Jubail and Yanbu for over 20 years but at some point, it made more sense for the equipment to be made and maintained there. We wanted to move from reactive to active. To be active you need to have a local company

and facilities which is no little affair in Saudi as you are not allowed to have a company 100% owned by shareholders outside the country. So, we started with Bahrain where it was easier to set up an entity. It took 5 years of unrelenting vision, passion, determination, lobbying high level local authorities, inviting here, visiting the Saudi authorities in Germany convincing them of what we could bring Saudi, but we made it.

I heard about a very special party in the backyard?

“Indeed”, explains Jacko de Vries, “that was to thank the staff for their incredible hard work against a very tight deadline for a huge assignment of loading arms to Jubail in Saudi in 2014. This was a prestigious project involving three years of discussions. We were very proud and thankful to our whole team. There is a nice story here. We have a lay down area in the backyard which we rent from the municipality to lay down the equipment as we make it. Overlooking the area, a Dutch playwright has her office and was so inspired by all the activity she contacted us and said: ‘We want to make a play of your equipment’. And that is what we did, to thank everyone for their hard work and commitment.”

Imagine an industrial backdrop with

metal scaffolding, it is night and the factory lights illuminate the scenery... Men of Steel. 50 or so employees in overalls and hard hats tap their metal tools to the beat on the steel structure sending vibrations down the spine of all those present. The atmosphere is electric, the pride and enjoyment of the staff giving themselves over enthusiastically to the beat is contagious, they dance and tap in synchronisation against the backdrop of the illuminated water. Then from up high on the scaffolding two opera singers burst into ‘Con Te Partirò’, sending shivers through the audience. As Jacko says with a smile: “The employees are still discussing this event. For most companies, this is far from their way of thinking. We just genuinely wanted to thank them for their honest hard work and team spirit’.

Then we have Cuba.

Jacko continues: “Six years ago we took a tour of Central and South America to look at potential markets where we could do business. Via a connection we visited some plants in Cuba. The equipment was very out-dated and poorly maintained, so much so that it came as quite a shock to us. The people however were wonderfully open and friendly and they were proud of what they were doing. The hospitality

and warmth won us over. We saw that with the knowledge and equipment we had, we could help them. We started offering solutions to upgrade their existing marine jetty equipment to make it more ergonomic and easy to maintain. The whole authorisation process was very lengthy, with continuous administrative backwards and forwards. We started in 2011 and it took us three years to get the project moving. Everything came from the Netherlands. Since then, we have an ongoing relationship and are about to start our next project. It is not about earning money. We have warm feelings for those people, a friendly relationship. We want to help them, not everything is based on profitability.”

So, I wondered: where do you go from here?

We would like to spread the risk market-wise further internationally, taking small steps,” explains Alexander. “The big steps we take in research and development, aiming to always be one step ahead of our competition. We would like to take a look at the Americas at some point, maybe Africa. Security is important to us, regulations, environmental protection et cetera, which aren’t always required in the same way in other countries. We deliver quality products whatever the local requirements, and are proud of our



integrity. We are helped by the good reputation The Netherlands has on high tech and quality products.”

What else is important to you?

“Innovation,” answers Jacko immediately. “Ours is a very innovative family business. We always aim to be one step ahead, for example in maintenance, sending our employees to our very conservative clients with a tablet etc. Innovation in our equipment to make it ready for the next generation. We invest a lot of money in it, and have, for example, a team from TU Delft working on new development targets. Every year a student project development team comes in with an assignment, some are developed far enough to enter the market. We have big growth ambitions, and technical ambitions. The one place we are conservative is from a financial point of view. We do not like banks. This is a family business and we need to keep it healthy. Another important point for us is the contact with our employees: however fast-paced our society, we invest a lot of time in our people. We have for example quarterly meetings with all our staff, a formal part with a presentation and dinner with all the employees, sometimes a game. We celebrate the year-ending summer closure with all our employees and their families, as many generations back as want to come. Our staff decide the theme and often suggest the venue. Last year’s event was held at the Excelsior stadium. This year the theme is ‘Australian beach’: there will be games for the children, massage for those who want; we take care of everyone and expect all employees to bring the whole family, including grandparents.”

How heart-warming to hear of this thriving family business, strongly endorsed by their loyal clients both local and abroad, doing so much with heart and passion for their employees, truly warm-hearted ‘Men of Steel’. And vital to the economy. As Prime Minister Rutte said: “Companies are the cork the economy drifts on”.



Jan de Jonge en Alexander de Jonge.



From left to right, Max Schoo, Peter Goedvolk, Jan de Jonge, Cees den Ouden, Alexander de Jonge, Rene van Loon.



Peace Palace in The Hague, the city of Peace and Justice.



The members of the Buddhist Maha Sangha, and representatives of the Hindu, Christian and Islamic faiths.

Dr. Arthur Eyffinger and Dr. Nilupul Gunawardena, the co-editors of the book titled 'One World, One Home, One Law for All'.



Mr. Ben Bot (r), Chairman Carnegie Foundation.



From left to right, Dr. Arthur Eyffinger, Dr. Nilupul Goonewardene, H.E. Dr. Peter Tomka, judge of the ICJ, H.E. Dr. Ronny Abraham, President of the ICJ, H.E. A.M.J. Sadiq, Ambassador of Sri Lanka, H.E. Dr. Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf, Vice President of the ICJ, H.E. Philippe Crevier, registrar at the International Court of Justice, Dr. Christopher Pinto, Guest Speaker – former Sri Lankan Ambassador.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF VESAK AT THE PEACE PALACE

Wisdom, Courage and Compassion

At the initiative of the Embassy of Sri Lanka, and for the very first time since the adoption of the UN General Assembly Resolution on the 'International recognition of the Day of Vesak', the event was celebrated in The Hague.

PHOTOS FREDERIK JACOBOWITS DE SZEGED

At the initiative of the Embassy of Sri Lanka, and for the very first time since the adoption of the UN General Assembly Resolution on the 'International recognition of the Day of Vesak', the event was celebrated in The Hague, on Thursday 11th May 2017. H.E. Mr

A.M.J. Sadiq, Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, said in his much-admired speech: "It is of immense significance that we have been able to hold this event in the hallowed precincts of the Peace Palace, the seat of the International Court of Justice."

As if to bless the occasion the sky was mysteriously imbued with a halo of limpid light seeming to issue from the Peace Palace itself, carrying a message of Peace and Hope. The Ambassador pursued: "The President of the Court, His Excellency Dr Ronny

Wisdom, Courage and Compassion

Abraham, not only gave his personal blessings by offering the Great Hall of Justice itself, but also graciously accepted our invitation to preside over the function this evening. Your Excellency, words fail me to convey my sincere gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to you for your kind patronage and support.” He also proceeded to thank the Chair of the Carnegie Foundation, Dr Bernard Bot and its Director General, Mr Eric de Baedts.

The Ambassador started by greeting the members of the Buddhist Maha Sangha, and representatives of the Hindu, Christian and Islamic faiths. He thanked them: “for your gracious presence, symbolising the common desire of people professing different faiths to unite for peace” and the large turnout of distinguished guests, ambassadors, members of the Corps Diplomatique, heads of international organisations, officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, academics, members of the Sri Lankan community, friends and well-wishers.

His Excellency also warmly thanked H.E. Dr Peter Tomka, former President and current Judge of the ICJ for readily acceding to his request that “he offer a tribute to former Vice President of the Court and distinguished son of Sri Lanka, the late Judge Dr Christopher Weeramantry. Judge Tomka concurred with my view that this would be a fitting and auspicious occasion to acknowledge the yeoman service rendered by Dr Weeramantry to humanity and for international peace.”

The inaugural guest lecture was by distinguished speaker, Dr Christopher Pinto, former Legal Adviser of the Ministry of External Affairs & Defence of Sri Lanka, former Ambassador of Sri

Lanka to Germany and a Member of the highly prestigious Institut de Droit International. The Ambassador stated: “On behalf of all of us present in this hall, I wish to express our collective thanks to you, Dr Pinto for your erudite and thought-provoking presentation. I am personally aware of the many days and hours of painstaking research and toil that has gone into your work.”

He went on to say: “The message of the Buddha is important on account of its

THIS WAS ONE OF
THOSE EVENTS
WHOSE
INSPIRATIONAL
LIGHT STAYS
BURNING
BRIGHT...

timeless relevance as well as its universal appeal to the entire humanity” and shared an excerpt of the Message to Buddhist Friends, on the occasion of Vesak-2017, issued by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue at the Holy See that the Apostolic Nuncio, His Excellency Monsignor Aldo Cavalli had sent him: “We wish to reflect this year on the urgent need to promote peace and non-violence. Religion is increasingly at the fore in our world today, though at times in opposing ways. While many religious believers are committed to promoting peace, there are those who exploit religion to justify their acts of violence and hatred. This situation requires a call to non-violence, a rejection of violence in all its forms.”

Dr. Arthur Eyffinger and Dr. Nilupul

Gunawardena, the co-editors of the book titled ‘One World, One Home, One Law for All: a tribute in honour of Judge Weeramantry’, presented this book to the members of the head table. It had been presented to Judge Weeramantry on the occasion of his 90th birthday in November last year. Sadly, Judge Weeramantry has passed away but as the Ambassador said: “his spirit lives on through his numerous scholarly works, which have made a significant contribution to the development of International Law and the promotion of world peace and justice.”

A special person he wished to express his heartfelt gratitude to was Mr Robert Barkel CEO of Janson Bridging for his generous sponsorship of the whole event and for “not merely helping rebuild the physical infrastructure of Sri Lanka, but also for building bridges of friendship and goodwill between the peoples of The Netherlands and Sri Lanka.” Having already spoken with such warmth, compassion, open-mindedness and sincerity, Ambassador A.M.J. Sadiq played with our heart strings as he thanked a very special lady...

“– My Mother. She was truly a remarkable lady; a charismatic personality; her name, Noorjehan, which means ‘The Light of the World’ in Persian, was the Light of my Universe, and was suddenly extinguished just over a month ago, leaving an unfathomable void in my life. She was the guiding light and inspiration of my life, and I owe my present station in life to her selfless sacrifice in overcoming poverty and hardship and raising my siblings and me and providing us with a sound education. Mummy, I will always remember and treasure you.”

This was one of those events whose inspirational light stays burning bright...



CELEBRATION OF THE FRENCH NATIONAL DAY

Uniting around common values

“This ceremony of the 14th of July, is a symbol of the unity between our countries, a unity respectful of the diversity of opinions and of our attachment to Dutch-French relations”.

PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET

As President Macron was celebrating with President Trump on the Champs Elysees, friends of France were treated to no less a magnificent affair at the French Residence in walking distance of the Peace Palace in The Hague.

Guests turned out by the hundreds to celebrate with France, seduced not only by the spectacular display of food and drink due to the many generous sponsors: champagne, oysters, a myriad of cheeses and breads to name but a few, and the glorious residence, but also by the charm and friendliness of Ambassador Philippe Lalliot and his spouse, Mrs. Laurence Folliot-Lalliot.

In his beautifully delivered speech, Ambassador Lalliot emphasised the big changes within France and the Netherlands following the elections. For France’s part, big alterations are ahead with the need to reform the Economy whilst taking on the challenge of competitiveness and equality. Many social and economic reforms are on the agenda, and these will require an effort from all, but he trusts that France and the French will rise to the challenge for France to have the place it deserves in the world.

His Excellency went on to comment that though there may be differences



H.E. Mr. Philippe Lalliot, Mrs. Laurence Folliot-Lalliot, H.E. Mr. Fernando Arias.

“WHEN THE STAKES
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between us all, which in times of elections can be exacerbated, values are what link us. France and the Netherlands share a deep friendship and many common projects. As he said: “This ceremony of the 14th of July, is a symbol of the unity between our countries, a unity respectful of the diversity of opinions and of our attachment to Dutch-French relations”. Key in this is the willingness to share and

Ambassador Lalliot has witnessed countless examples of this taking place at all levels. One thing is sure as he said: “We may have differences and these are perfectly normal as we all defend our interests, but when the stakes are high, we unite around the values on which our democracies are founded, the threats they receive, the large challenges of security, of climate, of growth and of Europe.”

These challenges are increasing, in frequency and in complexity, hence the need to keep these links between us tight and based on trust.

The Ambassador could not help but remember this time last year and the horrendous attack on Nice, as he paid tribute to the French Armed Forces. Mr Lalliot then switched to English to reinforce the need for a strong Europe.



“The Brexit in this respect reveals a profound existential crisis and an urgent need for concrete remedies. (...) The challenges of modernity, ecological transition, digital transition, migration, and the fight against fanaticism go beyond national borders. Europe can combine power, if it has the will, democratic values, social justice, attention to the well-being of mankind, notably climate and education for all. That is the whole point of the proposals made by France, in particular with Germany, to give a boost to the European project, in the economic and monetary field, for defence and security matters, as well as education and training. In favour of a Europe that is not naive and defends its interests, a Europe that promotes free and fair trade, a Europe that protects its citizens and companies.” On this note, all assembled raised their glasses to French-Dutch friendship and enthusiastically resumed sharing with each other, connecting and tightening those bonds.



Mr. Steven van Hoogstraten (l), Mr. Hans van Eenennaam.



H.E. Ms. Fatou Bensouda (l), H.E. Mrs. Ilze Rūse.



Mr. Hans van Eenennaam, Mrs. Shida Bliet, Mr. Tom Wetemans.



Right: H.E. Mr. Alexander Shulgin.



From left; H.E. Mr. Philippe Couvreur, Ms. Abir Ali,



H.E. Ms. Mirsada Colakovic.



Happy 50th Birthday ASEAN

On August 8th, 1967, the five founding members namely; Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand founded ASEAN, with primary aim to maintain peace and security in the region and promote socio-economic development.

BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET/MOHD YUSMIZAM YAHYA

Large photo, from left to right; H.E. Mr. I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja, Ambassador of Indonesia, H.E. Mr. Ahmad Nazri Yusof, Ambassador of Malaysia, H.E. Mr. Jamie Victor B. Ledda, Ambassador of the Philippines, Mrs. Pauline Krikke, Mayor of The Hague, H.E. Ms. Ngo Thi Hoa, Ambassador of Vietnam, H.E. Ms. Pornprachai Ganjanarint, Ambassador of Thailand, Mr. Peter Potman, Director for the Department of Asia and Oceania of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Photo top right, from left to right; H.E. Mr. I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja and Mrs. Rusdijana Puja, H.E. Mr. Ahmad Nazri Yusof and Mrs. Linda Zin, H.E. Mr. Jamie Victor B. Ledda and Mrs. Gina Ledda, H.E. Ms. Ngo Thi Hoa, H.E. Ms. Pornprachai Ganjanarint.



Celebrating its 50th birthday this year, ASEAN has now become a family of ten, when in 1999 Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam joined the grouping. To celebrate the occasion and as chair of 'ASEAN Committee The Hague' H.E. Ambassador **Mr. Ahmad Nazri Yusof** of Malaysia hosted a flag hoisting ceremony at the Embassy of Malaysia on behalf of his colleagues; H.E. Ambassador **Mr. Jamie Victor B. Ledda** of the Philippines, H.E.

Ambassador **M. I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja** of Indonesia, H.E. Ambassador **Ms Ngo Thi Hoa** of Vietnam, H.E. Ambassador **Ms Pornprachai Ganjaz** diplomatic community in The Hague. They were joined by guests of honour, Mayor of The Hague **Mrs Pauline Krikke** and **Mr Peter Potman**, Director for the Department of Asia and Oceania of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.



AMBASSADOR OF MALAYSIA:

“There is so much to learn to bridge the gap”

Diplomat Affairs Magazine was delighted and honoured that H.E. Mr. Ahmad Nazri Yusof, Ambassador of Malaysia, made extensive time to give us an exclusive interview at the Malaysian Embassy.

What are the mission and activities of the ASEAN Committee The Hague?

“In almost all countries where ASEAN members establish a diplomatic mission, the ASEAN embassies form an ASEAN Committee. For example, in Europe, we have similar committees in Brussels, Paris, Berlin and elsewhere. In the case of The Hague, it is called ASEAN Committee the Hague (ACTH) and was launched in 2015, consisting of five members which rotate the chairmanship every six months. Malaysia is the current chair, and from September 2017 Indonesia will take over. ACTH organises activities collectively with as main objective to promote ASEAN as a region in all aspects of our interest, especially in economic, trade, social, political and security. For the first time, this year, and in conjunction with the celebration of ASEAN 50th Anniversary, we grouped together in one location during the Embassy Festival event at Lange Voorhout, showcasing ASEAN’s unique and colourful food and culture. This year’s ACTH’s biggest event took place on 14 September 2017 with the organization of ASEAN Business Forum. This was a resounding success where over 120 businesses and company representatives attended the half-day session.”

H.E. Ambassador Ahmad Nazri Yusof reminded us of the many accomplishments of ASEAN over the past 50 years: Notably the 6% annual growth over the last 10 years and ASEAN projection to become the world’s fourth-largest economy by 2030. In Asia, the ASEAN economy is the third largest with a

combined GDP exceeding USD 2.5 trillion and its bilateral trade with the EU reached USD 200 billion in 2016. Bilateral trade with the Netherlands alone exceeded EUR 31 billion in 2016, an increase of 5.78% from 2015, making ASEAN the second largest trading partner for the Netherlands.

What are your birthday wishes for ASEAN?

“Prosperity, Equality, Stability is what I wish for ASEAN. ASEAN is seen as one of the biggest success stories of a regional grouping. Over time ASEAN has achieved many things that have contributed to the prosperity and stability of the region but

“WE HAVE A LONG HISTORY OF RELATIONS WITH THE NETHERLANDS”

ASEAN still has a long way to go to reach the status and achievements that the EU have. We look up to the EU as model and reference, and learn from its experience, to help ASEAN make the necessary adjustments and take the right decisions. In 2015, ASEAN created the ASEAN Economic Community (AES) with as aim to establish ASEAN as single economy, a single market with free flow of goods and resources. At the same time ASEAN aspires to be a people-oriented regional grouping. As of now, only about a third of ASEAN’s 640 million people are aware or understand what ASEAN is,

what its goals are, what it does and what benefits it brings to the region and its people. We want to change that, we want the people to be more involved in the process, to be more inclusive and supportive and see the benefits in their daily life.”

What about the relationship between Malaysia and the Netherlands?

“Countries in the South East Asia region have a long history of relations with the Netherlands, especially Indonesia and Malaysia though in the case of Malaysia it seems that part of our history has not been adequately remembered and acknowledged by either side. The Dutch were in part of Malaya (Malaysia) for more than 170 years and till today we still have Dutch historical remnants and legacies in our country. Of course, the Dutch presence in Indonesia was much longer and strongly felt. Instead, Malaysians would associate themselves more to the British owing to the two times British presence in Malaya, before and after the Second World War. The British influence is clear and is reflected in many aspects of the country’s administration systems and tradition, including legal and justice, education, parliament and government and even in our daily life and culture. Notwithstanding that, the Netherlands remains very important to Malaysia for trade and commerce. The Netherlands is our second biggest trading partner among the EU countries. In 2015, bilateral trade between the two countries accounted for 7.2 billion Euros. However in 2016, we saw a slump of about 16% partly due to



His Excellency Mr. Ahmad Nazri Yusof and Mrs. Linda Zin at Diplomat Club Wassenaar, Kasteel De Wittenburg.

the relocation of several big electronic multinational from the US and elsewhere to countries offering cheaper labour such as Thailand and Vietnam. Palm oil has always been one of our major exports to the Netherlands reflected by the presence of four big refineries in Rotterdam. Lately however, the Netherlands have found new source country for palm oil from Latin America, contributing to the slump of import from Malaysia. On a positive note, Malaysia is now working closely with a Dutch consortium PALMARES-PIB and the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs to boost the palm oil industry in Malaysia. Eight Dutch companies and research institutions are combining efforts to conduct research and development projects to convert palm oil biomass and residuals into bio energy and other valuable by-products. This business and research collaboration will benefit both sides and Malaysia is very excited about the potential of this strategic partnership.”

Recently Malaysia and the Netherlands

have been united in other ways too...

Apart from the strong trade and economic relationship, relations between Malaysia and the Netherlands are enhanced through contact and activities of peoples of both countries. Malaysia receives more than 70,000 Dutch tourists each year and remains one of the most preferred European destinations for Malaysian tourists. The tragic incident of the downing of the MH17 passenger plane on 17 July 2014 has brought both countries closer and government to government cooperation is now stronger than ever.

How far has the Malaysian Airlines tragedy affected the relations between the Netherlands and Malaysia?

“In my view it has affected in a positive way. Cooperation between the two governments especially at the political front is now stronger and closer than ever before. In relation to MH17, both countries have been working closely together beginning with the difficult process of repatriation of the remains of

the victims, followed by the criminal investigation and prosecution process. Malaysia, together with the Netherlands, Belgium, Australia, and Ukraine are part of the five country Joint Investigation Team. On 20th September 2017, together with other JIT countries, Malaysia signed an MoU for political support for MH17 prosecution, using Dutch national law and legal system, to be based in The Hague. On a personal note, this sad tragedy has had a great impact and been an emotional challenge to everyone involved, including myself. However, as public official and representative of my government, it is my duty to coordinate and facilitate all activities relating to JIT process from this end.”

What do you still hope to achieve during your mandate here in The Hague?

“I have completed slightly over two years of my tour of duty to this country and if there is no change of plan I may stay for another two years. Ever since I arrived I have been fascinated with this country, especially its many achievements in economic development, science and technology advancement, research and innovation and quality of life. As a developing nation, Malaysia has so much to learn to emulate the success of the Dutch. I have shared with many people that I have met, that I am going to give extra focus in my work and effort on only a few areas that I feel Malaysia is very much in need of. Agriculture, water related issues, high education and research and innovation would be my priority. I will continue to promote cooperation and collaboration in these fields as I strongly believe Malaysia stands to benefit from the Netherlands in this collaboration. Meanwhile, I will continue to enjoy my stay in this beautiful city of peace and justice. Moving to the city of The Hague two years ago was a big change for me and my family, culturally, as well as socially. The quietness and the serene lifestyle in The Hague suits me well and I will always cherish this adventure as part of my learning process and journey in life.”

BLUE OYSTER CULT

Two creative oyster-loving ladies from Zeeland painted the remaining shells. The Dutch East India Company ships from Zeeland, carried the blue porcelain back from China. A blue ceramics industry saw light of day in Delft. Now the ladies in Zeeland paint oyster shells blue – in yet again a different way. You can find more at: zeeuwsblauw.nl

PHOTO FIRST SPREAD FRANK VAN DRIEL



Chef Edwin Vinke from restaurant De Kromme Watergang** in Hoofdplaat (Zeeland) uses the oyster shells for his amuses.



From left; Frank Tewari, Carlos Rafael Soto Castellón, Shanti Tewari, Jorge Tomás Cardoso Segredo, H.E. Ms. Soraya Elena Álvarez Núñez, Monique de Jong, Guillermo Klijnoot, Simon de Jong.

LAUNCH OF CASARON AT HARBOUR CLUB ROTTERDAM

A Passion for Cuba

**CASARON brings the taste and story of Cuba to the world.
Launch of CasaRon at the Harbour Club Rotterdam.**

BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET

Mrs. De Jong is a lady that stands out in a crowd: beautiful, highly intelligent with an irresistible mix of ‘can-do’, knowledge, humour and heart-warming compassion. We are proud to count her as member of Diplomat Club Wassenaar. She studied International Business at Erasmus University, and managed with her mother their family business. Now

Managing Director of the Nedelko Group, she is also Marketing Director for NES Companies, the holding which operates 6 independent companies, with 24 offices around the world, of which Nedelko and CTS, with Mr Simon de Jong as CEO and owner. Quite a success story indeed. In August 2002 Simon de Jong was looking

for a change. He stopped working. He had sold his companies to the Royal Econosto Group in 1997 and moved into the stock exchange business. In April 2003 he concluded he missed the hands-on aspect of business and bought back the tank business. In 14 years since Monique and Simon de Jong joined forces, that business grew to



Guillermo Klijnoot, Monique de Jong.

six businesses, present in over 25 countries. As their brochure says: ‘6 unique companies, 6 areas of expertise, one remarkable commitment’. And you can feel it. At their impressive location in Barendrecht, a stylish modern building with a rolled-up sleeves energy, they make the complexity of their holding simple by literally walking us through a succession

of showrooms highlighting the different business units, they have special brands and their own, all pro-, they link with the outside sales department which knows what is needed.

- Prolumia LED light (own LED department)
- Smart flux (dynamic measuring system with its own research and development

department at Nedelko), they develop hardware and software for small segment controllers.

- Safety systems for the petrochemical industry: they have special brands and their own, all pro-, they link with the outside sales department which knows what is needed.

- Electrotechnical components.
- Energy solutions batteries Audio video light.

- CTS: where they build aluminium dome roofs for storage tanks and inner floater roof tops but also tank seals and more to stop vaporization and control emission, with as aim: sustainability.

As we move on to the centre of the building we reach an arresting sight: a large glass window opening directly on to their fourteen million products in stock. As she said: “We deliver, we are stockholders for our customers, this is work in action, you can see the pulsing heart at the centre.”

We are gathered today however to discuss the launch of a totally different entity, far-removed from the technical.... a brand of Cuban Rum!

Mrs de Jong explained: “Simon had been doing business with Cuba in storage tanks with domes and inner floating roofs, hoses, valves for more than 20 years, and CubaRon is a client. We travelled there frequently with our son Guillermo from the age of five and became very fond of the country and its people. Last year February 2016 we were in Havana at CubaRon, and they mentioned a very special brand of rum called La Isla del Tesoro (first reserved for Fidel Castro) which was now available for sale, and a new brand called Perla del Norte; and



H.E. Ms. Soraya Elena Álvarez Núñez and her spouse Eduardo Morales and the swinging band Amigos.

asked Simon to buy a ‘few hundred’ bottles. By then Guillermo, also studying International Business at TIO University Rotterdam needed a three-month internship, so set off to Barcelona HQ Spain, also the headquarters for South America, to conduct a market research together with the managing directors of the company there (also a father and son). Then all three of us (Simon and Guillermo) travelled to Havana for the FIHA exhibition. By then we were excited at the idea and decided to create a new company. Our mission: to bring a taste of Cuba to the world. We loved the taste and wanted to share it with others but also share the history, the people and the warmth of Cuba

We are launching Ron Santiago de Cuba, La Isla del Tesoro, 20 years of age, a true treasure for connoisseurs; Perla del Norte: Carta blanca, Carta Oro, Anejo (from 3 to 7 years old) and Ron Cubay: Carta Dorada, Anejo Suave, Anejo, Anejo Reserva Especial (from 4 to 10 years. The tastes, flavours, and ages are different.” Thankful for the light lunch I could not resist the offer to taste. What a pleasure. I went for the oldest one and in just one mouthful was transported to a more exotic place. So full, so rich, and I learnt that rum is kept in oak barrels in which

have been distilled at least two productions of whisky. For Guillermo, being Director of CasaRon is a role he takes very seriously. As he says: “The product is excellent, it is up to me to communicate that.” For the

“I WANT TO MAKE
THE BRAND GROW,
GET IT KNOWN, GET
THE STORY ABOUT
CUBA TO THE
PEOPLE”

whole family, there is a feeling that the last 20 years have taken them to this moment. Guillermo travelled there frequently from a very young age, played with the locals and got to love the country. One could say he was groomed for Cuba. He even looks quite Cuban with startling blue eyes combined with dark hair, and just as seductive is his genuine passion for Cuba and the well-being of its people. He says: “Growing up it was hard for me to communicate to my friends my feelings for Cuba and for the people there. Some only earn 15



Guillermo Klijnoot and Tessa Kok.

euros/month but seem so happy and grateful for what they have. They are like a family to me.”

He is delighted to be able to contribute to promoting it through CasaRon. He was brought up with the values of social responsibility. Simon de Jong has always done a lot of social return in all the areas where he has offices, using local managing directors, local people, empowering them, contributing to education, to health care. “We have the interests of the country at heart and want to give back to the community” said Guillermo.

Let alone the perfection of the taste, what seduced them was the purity of the product. Contrary to some other brands, there are no preservatives and no chemicals added, and it is distilled in Cuba from Cuban sugarcane. The different colours reflect the different ages, the darker, the older. They were of course well-advised by the specialists, the rum masters: the roneros. Two of them travelled to the Netherlands to give them training. There are five factories in Cuba In Havana, Santiago and Cardenas and the people there have been working from generation to generation

So, what is the plan? The Netherlands is the big launch on October 1st in Rotterdam because as Mrs de Jong says:



General Consul of Cuba in Rotterdam Mr. Rafael Lesca Torralba (fourth from left) and his spouse Ingrid Estevez (third from left).

“Rotterdam is who we are, hands on business people and from here we will distribute in the Benelux.”

I asked what it was like for mother and son to be directing CasaRon jointly: “We are very similar,” says Monique, “love and fire between us. I had not thought Guillermo would join the company. He was all set for a career in football but after his injury decided to join us. Of course, I am delighted.”

Where do you want to be in 5 years, Guillermo?

“I want to make the brand grow, get it known, get the story about Cuba to the people.”

Word is out and they are already being approached. It is hard to think how it could go wrong, the product is pure and perfect, there is a heart, a passion and a purpose behind the company. One could say they are selling from the soul. They have all the branding and marketing

knowledge in house and we hope they will take Europe by storm.

At Diplomat Affairs Magazine, we are pleased to cover the launch of CasaRon. And what a launch it was October first at the Harbour Club Rotterdam with as guest of honour H.E Mrs. Soraya Elena Álvarez Núñez, Ambassador of Cuba, welcomed to Diplomat Club Wassenaar June 26th. Her Excellency has been here eight months and has already travelled around Holland a lot, enjoying the friendliness and culture of the people but was very happy to be present in Cuban sphere at CasaRon launch. A large delegation flew over from Cuba and Barcelona for the occasion, including the Vice President of CasaRon Mr. Carlos Rafael Soto Castellon, the Director of exports, a rum maestro, assistants and more. Over 100 guests gathered in the spectacular Harbour Club Rotterdam and The Dutch and Cuban worlds collided

in an explosion of warmth and friendliness, united by the enjoyment of the Cuban spirit with music and soul-warming rum cocktails before a spectacular sit-down dinner with mouth-watering delicacies and the most divine of wines. Of course the Cuban table was the first to hit the dance floor, and for a few hours we were literally transported to the country of rum, thanks to the hospitality and generosity of Monique de Jong and Guillermo, to witness the launch of CasaRon and sample the first ‘Mojito Rotterdam’: Rum and Heineken. Surprisingly refreshing and conveying indeed as the creator intended, the best of both worlds: the flavour of Cuba: rum with all its tradition; and Heineken, the flavour of Holland, joy and culture. And it feels good to know that thanks to CasaRon, many more here in Europe will have the chance to sample the warmth of Cuba without having to leave home.

CasaRon

The real taste of Cuba

Experience the Cuban way of life...



A fine selection of Cuban rum

Ron Santiago de Cuba *Isla del Tesoro*

Established in 1862, this rum house boasts a successful and over 150 years of distillery experience. They produce first class traditional rums as well as the very exclusive La Isla del Tesoro rum, only available through CasaRon.



Ron Perla del Norte

Founded in the 1960's for the production of rum and liqueurs in the old factory of José Arechabala y Aldama and got out of business in 1990. Since 2012 this brand was revived and recovered with a totally new concept and design - now focussing only on making 3 very good rums.



Ron Cubay

This award winning rum house was founded in 1964 in Santo Domingo, primarily intended for domestic consumption. Now in 4 different flavours available worldwide.



The best partners in the economic renovation and creation of new markets

Current status and new future of bilateral economy cooperation between the Republic of Korea and the Kingdom of the Netherlands

BY H.E. MR. LEE YUN YOUNG, AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA/PHOTO COURTESY OF THE EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

The Republic of Korea (ROK) and the Netherlands are geographically far apart, located in Asia and Europe respectively. However, there has been a special bond between the two countries historically. It was the 1961 when ROK and the Netherlands established diplomatic ties, our connection already started prior to about 300 years ago, in the 1627. The Dutch man ‘Jan Jansz Weltevree’, Korean name ‘Yeon Park’ was the first westerner who visited the Korean peninsula for the first time in history and has become a historical figure who is in the mind of every Korean.

Afterwards, the two nations have forged strong ally by the Dutch troop’s participation in the Korean War, and there has been a close partnership in the fields of economic, educational and cultural affairs since establishing the diplomatic relations in 1961. Especially, ROK and the Netherlands have become to recognize each other as close friends through a Dutch football coach ‘Guus Hiddink’, who led the Korea national football team up to the glorious semifinal match of world cup 2002, and a Korean athlete ‘Park Ji-sung’ who has become a world-class soccer player from PSV Eindhoven.

Based on this special bond and the similarities between the two nations, ROK and the Netherlands have cooperated vigorously in the field of economy. In spite of small territory, large population,



NETHERLANDS AND KOREA ARE THE BIGGEST INVESTORS MUTUALLY, AND THE TWO NATIONS ARE BECOMING THE BEST PARTNERS IN MAJOR INDUSTRIES

and scarcity of natural resources, we have grown up as global trade giants with endless efforts, dedication, and a diligent national trait.

The Netherlands is the world’s fifth-

largest exporter as well as the gateway to EU markets, and ROK has become the world’s sixth-largest exporter and an economic powerhouse in Northeast Asia. We owe our success to market opening and outward-looking strategies in order to overcome our small markets.

These common features contributed to the fact that ROK and the Netherlands have become significant economic partners for each other. Among the EU countries, the Netherlands and ROK are the biggest investors mutually, and the two nations are becoming the best partners in major industries which have become complementary to each other including IT, manufacturing, finance, logistics and dairy farming.

The mutually beneficial partnership between the two countries marks a new phase in the 55th anniversary of the establishment of the bilateral ties in 2016. ROK and the Netherlands agreed to upgrade the bilateral relationship to the ‘Comprehensive future-oriented partnership’. In order to realize the goal, we have pursued to maximize the potential for cooperation in various sectors such as IT, renewable energy, and



H.E. Mr. Lee Yun Young, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea.

smart farming by taking a step forward from the existing economic cooperation sectors.

Also, we expect the new cooperation projects in the field of innovations not only applying new technologies but also creating new markets in the industries of manufacturing, transportation and logistics which have been actively collaborated by companies of the two countries. As an example, the world class airports of the two countries, ‘Schiphol Airport’ and ‘Incheon International Airport’, are planning to form a united airport alliance in 2017 and going to make joint effort to introduce new technologies for airport operating system such as robotics, IOT, and big data, as well as expansion of digital services.

The prospects for cooperation are even brighter in future sectors of the fourth industrial revolution between the two countries. There would be no doubt that

the IT powerhouse ‘ROK’ and the leader of economic innovation ‘the Netherlands’ could be the best partners in creating new opportunities and jobs. Both governments are expanding policy supports to nurture new start-up enterprises in the fields of 4th industrial revolution including big data, drones,

BASED ON THE SIMILARITIES BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES, OUR PARTNERSHIP WILL BE FURTHER DEVELOPED HAND IN HAND IN THE GLOBAL MARKET

Artificial Intelligence (AI), and electric vehicles. The cooperation between the two nations, I am sure, which have world-class technologies and strengths in the world, will be a great opportunity to lead the world’s fourth industrial revolution.

In the field of renewable energy, the Netherlands and ROK are expected to further widen mutual cooperation as a leading country in the wind power generation, and as the second mover committed to enlarge the importance of new renewable energy, respectively. In particular, it is expected that companies of the two nations will enter into each other’s market and promote exchange of advanced technologies by the MOU, signed between the wind energy industry associations of ROK and the Netherlands in May this year.

The scope of cooperation is predicted to broaden to create new markets in the global agricultural sector with the Netherlands, the second exporter of agricultural and food products in the world. ‘Food Polis Cluster’ is currently being created in ROK which benchmarks agri-food cluster ‘Food Valley’ of the Netherlands. We expect technological innovation and joint initiatives for global markets.

‘Small but strong country’, it is the words that can describe the Netherlands and ROK together in the global market. The persistence of the Korean and Dutch people who have continued to strive to cope with the difficult situations, without adapting to hardship, would be the driving force behind this success. Based on the similarities and complementarity between our two countries, our valuable partnership will be further developed hand in hand in the global market.

Royal Conservatoire School for Young Talent

The Royal Conservatoire of The Hague, on March 24th, 2017, welcomed H.M. Princess Beatrix of The Netherlands, Ambassadors, distinguished guests and members of the public to join in a celebratory event: a delightful concert by the students of The School of Young Talent.

COURTESY ROYAL CONSERVATOIRE THE HAGUE | PHOTOS ALEX SCHRÖDER



H.M. Princess Beatrix and the students of The School of Young Talent.

The evening highlighted an array of incredibly talented young individuals from many European countries. The eclectic sounds of choice for the performances were derived from composers of The Netherlands, Great Britain, Germany, Finland and Portugal. As young as 12 to 19 years of age, these skilful musicians delivered with confidence and beauty, on violins, cellos, oboes, flutes more, filling the auditorium with harmonious acoustics, as well as demonstrating to a wide audience that such talent is achieved not merely through experience, but also hard work. The event was organised to pay recognition to the promise made sixty years ago by the Royal conservatoire, to develop

their pupil’s passion in dance, music and fine arts. Having launched their first course in 1956-1957 for dancers and then expanding to include musicians, the combination added to the primary and secondary school curriculum gave rise to a new form of education in The Netherlands. By amalgamating their general school studies with their desire to pursue an art, the Conservatoire could issue secondary school diplomas to their students. Focusing on the needs of their students, while enhancing their talents, led them to receive the ‘Excellent School’ title from the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. Expanding their excellence in the field of

music, the Royal Conservatoire has, over the last ten years, begun collaborating with schools across Europe that are ambitious to train young talent, developing friendships within Norway, Finland, Great Britain, Portugal and Germany. These new relationships gave birth to a European network known as the Young Music Talents in Europe (YMTE), an organisation curated to share expertise, exchange students and teachers as well as collaborate on group projects. Bringing this joyous evening together to celebrate such a historic milestone for The Royal Conservatoire, we were able to witness the magnificence of the youthful talent of the future.



- 1 Board member of Fund for Excellence of RC The Hague Mrs. Hilgen Smit Boersma, Mr. Jaap Smit, Mrs. Brigitte Brengelmann, H.E. Mr. Dirk Brengelmann (Germany).
- 2 H.M. Princess Beatrix, Iris Kengen.
- 3 H.E. Mr. Urs Breiter (Switzerland), Mrs. Nino Rusadze, H.E. Mr. Konstantine Surguladze (Georgia), Mr. Peter Blik.
- 4 H.E. Mr. Elyes Gharani (Tunisia), H.E. Dr. Heidemaria Gürrer (Austria).
- 5 Former Ambassador of Mexico H.E. Mr. Eduardo Ibarrola and Ms. Fabiola Soto.
- 6 H.E. Mr. Dirk Brengelmann (Germany), Mayor of The Hague Mrs. Pauline Krikke.



“THROUGH PASSION, CHALLENGE AND SELF-CONFIDENCE TO EXCELLENCE. THIS IS AND WILL REMAIN OUR MISSION. BY FOLLOWING THIS PATH MANY OF OUR PUPILS HAVE FOUND THEIR PLACE IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DANCE COMPANIES AND ORCHESTRAS. OR HAVE PURSUED OTHER CAREERS IN THE WORLD OF THE ARTS”

Jan van Bilsen, Director Interfaculty of School for Young Talent





Mr. Rajiv Mehra, Mr. Ram Lakhina, Ambassador H.E. Mr. Venu Rajamony, Mr. Wahid Saleh and Mr. Eric Niehe.



Ms. Priyanka Chaudary, spouse of Mr. Suresh Raina (cricket player of Indian National Team), Ambassador H.E. Mr. Venu Rajamony and his spouse, Dr. Saroj Thapa.

It's time for India!

India, the world's largest democracy and fastest-growing large economy, celebrated 70 years of independence on August 15th this year.

BY H.E. VENU RAJAMONY, INDIA'S AMBASSADOR TO THE NETHERLANDS & DR. VIKAS CHATURVEDI, CHAIRMAN ASSOCHAM EUROPE/PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET

Interestingly, this year also marks 70 years of India-Netherlands diplomatic relations. The Ambassador of the Netherlands was present in India when the flag of freedom was hoisted by its leaders in 1947.

In the last couple of years, the political and business engagement between India and the Netherlands has risen to new heights for several reasons.

The rapid economic growth achieved by India in recent years is drawing the attention of countries and companies from far and wide. According to the IMF, India's growth is expected to be 7.2% in the 2017-18 fiscal year, and 7.7% in 2018-19.

In 2016-17, the inflow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to India was a record US \$60.1 billion. India has become the fastest-growing investment region for foreign investors. According to the World Bank, private investments in India are expected to grow by 8.8% in 2018-19.

In the last two years, around US \$6 billion worth of investments have gone into India from the Netherlands. At the same



time, India also makes significant investments in the Netherlands, with 180 companies based here and US \$ 3.3 billion worth of total investments.

In 2015, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte visited India, taking along 80 Dutch companies. The visit enabled him to establish a personal relation with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, under whose leadership the Indian government has been working hard to achieve the goal of 'Minimum Government and Maximum Governance'. Moreover, Indian Prime Minister Modi paid an eight-hour, intense and highly productive visit to the Netherlands on June 27, 2017. During this visit, he called upon The King and Queen of the Netherlands, and held bilateral discussions with Prime Minister Mark Rutte who was accompanied by four other Ministers.

The primary focus of PM Modi's visit was expanding economic and business ties. He participated in a round-table moderated by the Chairman of VNO NCW, with the CEOs of 16 key Dutch companies, i.e., Aegon, APG, Arcadis, Boskalis, Enraf Nonius, PGGM, Philips, Port of Rotterdam, Rabobank, Rijk Zwaan, Tata Steel, Unilever, Van Oord, Vopak, and Zeelandia. In the last three years, the Indian government implemented a number of programmes aimed at making India an attractive destination for companies to invest in. It has also been working tirelessly to eliminate black money, corruption, red tape, and outdated laws which have existed for decades. Some of the important schemes launched by the Indian Government, and decisions that contribute to improving ease of doing business are as follows.

1. IMPLEMENTATION OF A GOODS AND SERVICES TAX (GST).

As of 1st July 2017, GST has been introduced with the intention of creating a



Ambassador H.E. Mr. Venu Rajamony and his spouse, Dr. Saroj Thapa, getting into the carriage which will transport them to Noordeinde Palace for the presentation of Ambassador's credentials to the King.

single India, single tax and single market. This law is believed to be a game-changer for the Indian economy. It will simplify the tax structure and compliance. With the introduction of GST (one tax), around 15 indirect taxes have been repealed.

2. SIMPLIFICATION OF THE INVESTMENT PROCESS IN INDIA.

Today companies can invest in India, in virtually all sectors without a formal approval process. This eliminates the red tape that existed in India.

3. CREATION OF A SINGLE WINDOW FACILITATION PLATFORM CALLED 'INVEST INDIA'.

'Invest India' is the official Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency of the Government of India, mandated to facilitate investments in India. It is to be the first point of reference for potential investors. A team of domain and functional experts provide sector-and state-specific inputs, and hand-holding support to investors through the entire investment cycle, from pre-investment decision-making to after-care. They assist with location identification, expediting regulatory approvals, facilitating meetings with relevant government and corporate officials, and provide aftercare services

that include initiating remedial action on problems faced by investors.

4. DIGITAL INDIA.

A flagship programme launched on 2nd July 2015, it seeks to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. This includes transforming the entire ecosystem of public services using information technology. The government has allocated US \$ 100 million for this programme in the Union budget 2017-18.

"BY COMBINING THEIR STRENGTHS, INDIA AND THE NETHERLANDS CAN TOGETHER BECOME THE BEST IN THE WORLD"

5. CLEAN INDIA.

The Clean India Mission is the most significant cleanliness campaign by the Government of India. Launched throughout the country on 2nd October 2014 as a national movement, it aims to achieve the vision of a 'Clean India' by 2019. The government has allocated around US \$



Mr. Theo Henrar, Ambassador H.E. Mr. Venu Rajamony and Mr. Roelof van Ees.

2.5 billion for the Clean India Mission in 2017-18.

6. MAKE IN INDIA.

Launched on 25th September 2014, this major national programme is designed to facilitate investment, foster innovation, enhance skill development, protect intellectual property and build best-in-class manufacturing infrastructure in the country. It aims to attract investments from across the globe and strengthen India's manufacturing sector, along with a focus on live projects like industrial corridors. In the Union budget 2017-18, "Make in India" was given a further boost with the allocation of US \$ 62 billion for infrastructure, with US \$ 7 million for electronics manufacturing, as well as a possible further liberalization of the FDI policy.

7. START-UP INDIA

This flagship initiative was launched on 16th January 2016 to build start-ups and nurture innovation. Through this initiative, the Government plans to empower start-up ventures to boost entrepreneurship, economic growth and employment across India. The promotion of digital and cashless transactions will encourage the digitization drive, and provide a



Ambassador H.E. Mr. Venu Rajamony and his spouse, Dr. Saroj Thapa, and the staff of the Embassy of India.

boost for the start-up ecosystem. The Union budget 2017-18 provides tax breaks and income tax benefits for Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

8. 100 SMART CITIES BY 2022.

Launched on 25th June 2015, this mission is aimed at developing the entire urban eco-system, which is represented by the four pillars of comprehensive development- institutional, physical, social and economic infrastructure. The strategic components of area-based development in the Smart Cities Mission are city improvement (retrofitting), city renewal (redevelopment) and city extension (green-field development) plus a Pan-city initiative in which Smart Solutions are applied covering larger parts of the city. The Union government has decided to allocate around US \$ 75 million over five years at an average of around US \$ 15 million per city per year. In the first phase of implementation, 20 cities have

been shortlisted for the initiative's implementation. With regard to project management, consultants from the Netherlands, Royal Haskoning DHV and STUP Joint Venture have been selected for developing solutions to upgrade the infrastructure of the city of Kota, Gujarat.

9. DOUBLING FARMERS' INCOME BY 2022.

India is the third-largest in global agricultural output, and has the sixth-largest food and grocery market in the world. At the same time however, huge amounts of food products go to waste. Attaining the above goal would require a huge increase in agricultural products. India is the largest global producer of spices, pulses, milk, tea and cashews; the second-largest producer of wheat, rice, fruits and vegetables, sugarcane and oil-seeds, along with being second globally in inland fish production.

A 'World Food India' event is being held in New Delhi in November 2017. It is the first international investment and sourcing event in the food sector in India, and will showcase a vast landscape of opportunities in the food processing industry. There are around 200 Dutch companies doing business with India. However, this number does not depict the true potential that exists for Dutch investments into India. India has huge needs with regard to infrastructure development i.e. Water Management, Waste to Energy, Port development, road development, inland water bodies' development and Agro and food processing amongst other sectors. Dutch companies have a wealth of experience and technical know-how. This is the opportune time for Dutch companies to engage with India for mutual benefit.

By combining their strengths, India and the Netherlands can together become the best in the world.



From right: Mr. Mourad Amokrane, CA of Algeria; Ms. Rose Sumbeiyuo, CA of Kenya; Ms. Lourdes de Castro, CA Angola; Ms. Grace Chia Sani, CA Nigeria; H.E. Mr. Elyes Ghariani, Ambassador of Tunisia; H.E. Ms. Vestine Nahimana, Ambassador of Burundi; H.E. Mr. Pierre Karabaranga, Ambassador of Rwanda; H.E. Mr. Abdelouahab Bellouki, Ambassador of Morocco; H.E. Ms. Odette Melono, Ambassador of Cameroon;

H.E. Mr. Sallah Hamza, Ambassador of Cote d'Ivoire; H.E. Mr. Breik Swessi, Ambassador of Libya; H.E. Mr. Bruce Koloane, Ambassador of South Africa; H.E. Ms. Irene Florence Mkwawa Kasyanju, Ambassador of Tanzania; H.E. Mr. Momar Diop, Ambassador of Senegal; Mr. Tekeste Zemuy, CA Eritrea; Ms. Doris Brese, CA Ghana; Mr. Mohamed Elsharif, CA Egypt.

'HARNESSING THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND THROUGH INVESTMENTS IN YOUTH'

Africa day 2017

As elsewhere in the world, the representatives of African countries gathered in The Hague to celebrate Africa's identity and unity on the 26th of May at the Mariott Hotel. PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET

On May 25th, 1963 Africa made history with the foundation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) which brought the Continent together. Since then, the 25 May has been celebrated widely across the world, first as 'African Freedom Day' with focus on the liberation movement, and in 2002 the OAU was replaced by the African Union and the celebration renamed Africa day.

Themes are set each year, 2017 under the flagship of 'Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through investments in Youth'.



Seventeen African countries attended, represented by their Ambassadors working closely together. The event was characterised by their vibrancy: both in the stunning attire of all present resplendent



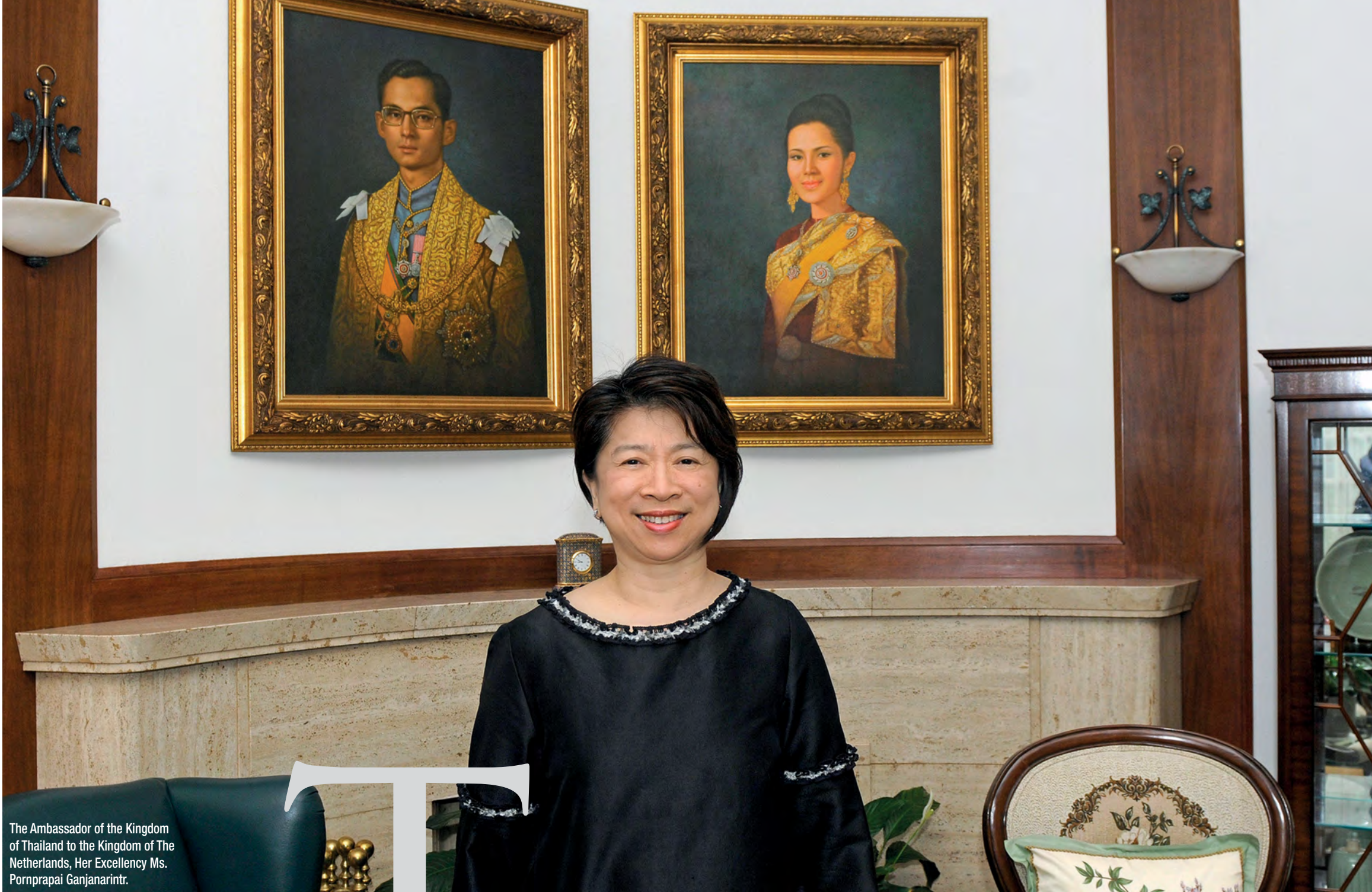
in magnificent colours and fabrics, beads and embroidery: a true feast for the eye; but also in the spirit of pride and energy, laughter and dance that was contagious to all present.

The sumptuous buffet was also a treat for the senses: an explosion of colour, and variety of national dishes all beautifully presented, not to mention the enticing smells and delightful taste. So many nationalities represented through their dishes, their dress, their presence, yet united as continent for the good of all.





The Moradokmai Theatre Community of Thailand. Right: Mr. Janaprakal Chandruang.



The Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand to the Kingdom of The Netherlands, Her Excellency Ms. Pornprapai Ganjanarintr.

Ramakien at Thai Residence

The Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand to the Kingdom of The Netherlands, Her Excellency Ms. Pornprapai Ganjanarintr hosts National Thai epic Ramakien at her Residence.

BY JULIA A. VAN OORDT/PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET | MORE PHOTOS: WWW.DIPLOMATAFFAIRS.NL

The Ambassador of Thailand, Ms. Pornprapai Ganjanarintr, invited a group of distinguished guests to enjoy a performance of Ramakien on Tuesday 16th of May 2017 by the Moradokmai Theatre Community of Thailand. The play took place at the luscious garden of the beautiful Thai residence in Wassenaar, in a warm and welcoming spring atmosphere. Thailand’s national epic Ramakien was charmingly performed by the Moradokmai theatre troupe, an alternative, tuition-

free residential school in rural Thailand, where youth study traditional dance, music, and theatre with volunteer teachers. The play was directed by ‘Kruchang’ Janaprakal Chandruang, the well-known Thai dramatist and actor who founded the Moradokmai Theatre Community and Homeschool. Ramakien is a metaphor of good and evil. The hero king and representative of virtue Rama, plays opposite the villain or demon king Tosakan. Rama spends 14

years in exile after being banished by his stepmother. There he lives with his consort Sita and his brother Lakshman. When Sita is abducted by the Demon King Ravana (Tosakanth) and taken to Lanka, Rama and his brother rescue her with the help of monkey warriors. After the performance an array of exquisitely prepared Thai cuisine dishes were served, which the ambadress herself had selected especially for the occasion.

ERASMUS MC THORAX FOUNDATION AT CITY HALL IN ROTTERDAM

Thorax dinner raised a record

The 6th edition of the Thorax dinner to the benefit of research in heart and vascular disorders, raised a record 240.000 euro in Rotterdam on April 3rd 2017.

BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET



Mayor of Rotterdam, Mr. Ahmed Aboutaleb.



Mr. Peter Bliek, Mrs. Lisette Goedvolk, Mrs. Shida Bliek.



Mr. Roland Pechtold, Mrs. Elisabeth Pechtold-van Opstall, Ms. Caroline Lavooij, Mr. Frans Lavooij.



Mr. Bastiaan van der Knaap (r).

The Mayor, Mr Ahmed Aboutaleb, as ambassador for the Erasmus MC Thorax Foundation had generously offered the beautiful banquet room of ‘his’ Townhall on the Coolingsingel as location for the event. Alexander Pechtold (D66) temporarily took leave from the government-forming negotiations to overview an auction of various items amongst the 160 guests present. The dinner was sponsored by First Dutch, ING and NIBC and all proceedings went this time to the project: ‘Pain in my chest, is it my heart?’ of cardiologist Dr Eric Dubois. This research is aimed at a rapid detection of acute heart attacks. In the Netherlands, 30,000 people are victim of heart attacks every year, a third of them are women, two thirds men. The best treatment is



Mr. Alexander Pechtold, Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb, Prof. Jolien Roos-Hesselink, Mr. Frans Lavooij.



Mr. Peter Goedvolk, Mr. Peter van der Ende.



Mrs. Pili de Jonge, Mrs. Jolande de Haan, Mrs. Lisette Goedvolk.

generally to dotter the heart as soon as possible. Dr Dubois’ research focusses on patients where it is not, at first view, clear if it is indeed a heart attack. These patients often remain up to five hours at the Emergency room, waiting for blood measurements to be repeated to diagnose

‘PAIN IN MY CHEST,
IS IT MY HEART?’

whether indeed their pains are coming from the heart. Dr Dubois stated: “With this research, we aim to achieve a more rapid diagnosis, which can lead to a possible treatment being started a lot earlier. The statement ‘Time is Muscle’ is certainly applicable here!

Tunisia Cooking and Cocktail Show

ORGANIZED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE TUNISIAN NATIONAL TOURISM OFFICE AT KASTEEL DE WITTENBURG



PHOTOS ANTON VAN DER RIET



From left: Ms. Abir Ali, H.E. Ms. Rawan Sulaiman (Palestine), H.E. Mr. Elyes Ghariani, H.E. Mr. Breik Swessi (Libya), H.E. Mr. Ahmad Al-Mufleh (Jordan).

Held in July, we did have a rather cool and wet evening, prompting H.E. Ambassador Mr. Elyes Ghariani, (which we were delighted to welcome to the Diplomat Club Wassenaar at our January Welcoming



Mr. Ronald van Bruchem, Mrs. Janet de Frel (Thomas Cook Ned. BV).



Mr. Rob Oostendorp, Ms. Joke Heijdra (TUI).

Ceremony) to entice us to his country by informing us that it is currently 20 degrees warmer in Tunis, before adding with more seriousness how much he rejoices at the normalization of the

security situation in his country enabling tourists to visit and savour the joys of Tunisia. As his Excellency said in his welcoming address: “Our target remains regaining the normal figures of 7 million tourists visiting yearly Tunisia, as before the 2011 Revolution.” He went on to remind us that of course, beyond the weather and stunning beaches, it is also a land with a three-thousand-year civilization. He added: “From the coast to the desert through the deep valleys, it offers an incredible geographic, cultural, natural, patrimonial, historical and human richness, with amongst others a surprising number of archaeological sites inherited from multiple civilizations, some listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites:



Renowned Chefs Wafik and Haykal who travelled specially from Tunisia to treat us.



H.E. Mr. Elyes Ghariani, Ambassador of Tunisia.



The pot was spectacularly decapitated.



The display of hors d'oeuvres was a definite work of art.

Carthage, the Punic City of Kerkouane and its necropolis, the amphitheater of El Jem, the medina of Sousse, Kairouan and Tunis, Dougga and the Ichkeul National Park”. Not to mention the thermal baths, temples, amphitheatres, but also mosques, harbours, museums, churches, synagogues, mausoleums and medinas, not to mention the famous mosaics, and... a heart-warming hospitality. Whilst we dream of visiting, how wonderful for us that Tunisia was brought closer with our chance to taste the exotic culinary gourmets made by renowned Chefs Wafik and Haykal who travelled specially from Tunisia to treat us. The Ambassador informed us:” Tunisian-



Right: H.E. Mr. Nourredine Ayadi (Algeria).

style food is quite distinctive. The cuisine reflects the country’s rich and varied history, blending Berber, Roman, Arabic, Phoenician, Turkish and French influences. Overall, it could be labelled as a mix of Mediterranean dishes and distinctive

Berber traditions with bold and earthy spices.” We learnt for example that cous-cous in Tunisia has a distinct nature as the grain is highly seasoned rather than steamed plain, and often enhanced with spicy Harissa which is frequently toned down with olive oil. And that Tunisia has the biggest olive tree field in the World. And what a delight it was. The display of hors d’oeuvres was a definite work of art, and were as delicious as they were beautiful. The amazing salads competed with each other in terms of divine blends of texture and spices, the fragrant stews (whereby the pot was spectacularly decapitated!) and so much more, accompanied, amongst others, by the renowned red wine ‘Magon’.

FIRST TRANSVIA DIRECT FLIGHT AMSTERDAM-TIRANA

Dr Gerrit Valk, Honorary Consul of Albania from April 2017 and Her Excellency Ms. Adia Sakiqi, the Ambassador of Albania to the Kingdom of The Netherlands.



‘A window to tourism in Albania’

On May 10th, 2017; the first ever Transavia direct flight from Amsterdam to Tirana landed at Tirana International Airport – Rinas (TIA).

The Embassy of Albania in The Netherlands and the Dutch Embassy in Tirana joined forces to arrange a special working visit programme for a delegation of high representatives from Transavia, Dutch tour operators, a Dutch urban developer working in Albania, as well as Dutch journalists. CEO of Transavia, Mr. Mathijs ten Brink, and other high representatives of Transavia were accompanied by the Ambassador of Albania to the Kingdom of The Netherlands, Her Excellency Ms.



WITH ITS OFFER OF THREE FLIGHTS PER WEEK, NOT ONLY TOURISM, BUT ALSO BUSINESS RELATIONS WILL BE ABLE TO THRIVE

Adia Sakiqi, the former (acting) Honorary Counsel of Albania Mr. Kees Blekxtoon, as well as by representatives of RVO in The Hague (the Netherlands Enterprise Agency). A delightful inaugural ceremony was organised by TIA upon arrival, followed thereafter by a slow-food dinner at a traditional restaurant with organic Albanian cuisine, hosted by Dutch Ambassador to Albania, Ms. Dewi van de Weerd. Hosts of honour were the

Albanian Minister of Economy and Tourism, Ms. Milva Ekonomi, and the energetic Mayor of Tirana. Many Albanian tour operators and Dutch businesses active in Tirana participated in the networking dinner held at Restaurant ‘Mullixhiu’ in Tirana. The visit of this exceptional delegation attracted the attention of the Albanian Media. Top-Channel news interviewed Mr. Mathijs ten Brink and welcomed Transavia flights Amsterdam-Tirana.

The second day of the visit kicked off with a workshop organised by RVO and the Dutch Embassy to Albania entitled: ‘A window to tourism in Albania’. After an intense and productive exchange of tourism opportunities and offers, the delegation from the Netherlands proceeded to the cities of Berat and Durrës. In Berat the delegation visited the cultural and historical sights protected by UNESCO, and enjoyed traditional Albanian dishes from the region. The trip to Berat included

visits to the Berat Castle, dating from the XIII Century and its Byzantine churches, the Onufri Museum of Iconography, the Valley of Osumi River, the Red Mosque, the University of Berat, and the old city centre. In Durrës, the visitors enjoyed the Sphinx Statue at Durrës beach, and the Durrës Archaeological Museum. With its offer of three flights per week, not only tourism, but also business relations will be able to thrive.



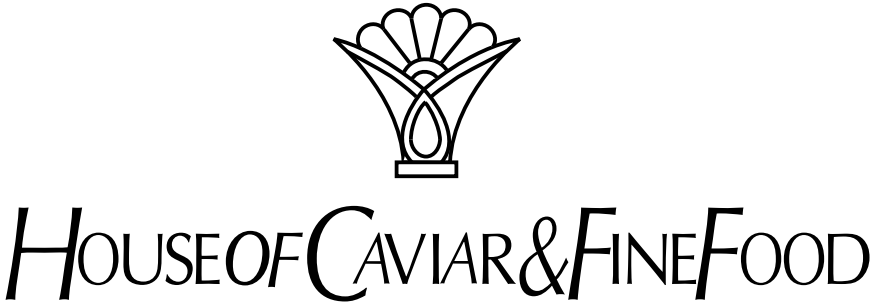
First row: H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Belal, H.E. Ms. Iffat Imran Gardezi, H.E. Ms. Ankie Broekers-Knol, H.E. Ms. Ngo Thi Hoa, H.E. Ms. Lyndal Walker.
 Second row: H.E. Mr. Ken Wu, H.E. Mr. Hiroshi Inomata, H.E. Mr. Venu Rajamony, H.E. Mr. I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja, H.E. Mr. Ahmad Nazri Bin Yusof, H.E. Mr. Jaime Victor Badillo Ledda, H.E. Dr. Alireza Jahangiri, H.E. Dr. M. Homayoon Azizi, H.E. Mr. A. M. J. Sadiq.

Asian Ambassador’s Luncheon

Her Excellency, the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan H.E. Ms. Iffat Imran Gardezi hosted an Asian Ambassador’s Luncheon, with as chief guest the President of the Dutch Senate, H.E. Ms. Ankie Broekers-Knol on October 26th 2017, to facilitate questions on the functioning of the Senate and Dutch organs of state and of course on the new cabinet which was received by the King that very morning. H.E. Dr. M. Homayoon Azizi, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Belal, Ambassador of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, H.E. Mr. Ken Wu, Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China, H.E. Mr. Venu Rajamony, Ambassador of the Republic of India, H.E. Mr. I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja, Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia, H.E. Dr. Alireza Jahangiri,

Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Mr. Hiroshi Inomata, Ambassador of Japan, H.E. Mr. Ahmad Nazri Bin Yusof, Ambassador of Malaysia, H.E. Ms. Lyndal Walker, Ambassador of New Zealand, H.E. Mr. Jaime Victor Badillo Ledda, Ambassador of Philippines, H.E. Mr. A. M. J. Sadiq, Ambassador of Sri Lanka, and H.E. Ms. Ngo Thi Hoa, Ambassador of Vietnam, were warmly greeted by their charming hostess H.E. Ms. Iffat Imran Gardezi in the opulent surroundings of Pakistan house. Right from the start, amidst a back-ground of lush carpets and majestic chandeliers, the questions abounded in an open and candid atmosphere of curiosity and interest, with H.E. Ms. Ankie Broekers-Knol answering tirelessly with great knowledge and straightforwardness and a warm dash of good humour. By the end of the informal drinks the

tone was set, and once seated in the jewel of a dining room with its intricate wood panelling giving out onto the beautiful gardens, the conversation did not lull for a minute with the professional staff of the residence discreetly serving a delightful meal consisting of a wide variety of delicious, fragrant Pakistani dishes. Questions covered a large array of topics to do with the new cabinet, the formation process, the functions and workings of the various organs of state, the priorities ahead and the challenges. A lot of ground was covered. The Ambassadors thanked H.E. Ms. Ankie Broekers-Knol for the overview and “having had the chance to ask everything they wanted to ask” and of course Ambassador H.E. Ms. Iffat Imran Gardezi for having organised a relaxed and interactive session with such delicious food. BY JULIE KENNEDY/PHOTO ANTON VAN DER RIET



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Masked Warrior: Battle Stage of the Samurai

8 December 2017-27 May 2018

Japan Museum SieboldHuis

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