



The Swiss Gazette

Embassy of Switzerland in Nigeria

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Editorial

Dear readers,

Many new faces arrived at the Swiss Embassy, but The Swiss Gazette will continue in its usual form to inform you about what is going on between Nigeria and Switzerland.

I would like to start on a more personal note. As my predecessor, Ambassador Andreas Baum, who began his new assignment in Israel a few months ago, announced in the last edition, I have taken over as Ambassador of Switzerland to Nigeria early September, following the interim of my very experienced deputy, Tamara Mona, who was described by Ambassador Baum as the "kind hearted but energetic iron lady" of the team. I came back to Africa from Central America, where I was the Swiss Ambassador to Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama, with residence in San José. Before, my first assignment as Ambassador was in Kinshasa with responsibility over the Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa), the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville), Gabon, the Central African Republic and São Tomé and Príncipe.

Even with my African experience, I have been impressed by the friendliness, the creativity and the warmth of the Nigerian people and the diversity of this nation. Abuja is a great place to live. My Residence has a fantastic view of Nigeria's capital.

For the first time since the Swiss Embassy moved to Abuja, the Residence is also occupied by a lady as I am accompanied by my wife Verena. She is also enjoying herself very much and has already made an impressive number of friends. Our four children live in different parts of Europe and are very keen to visit us in the near future.

On the 8th of November I had the privilege to present my letters of credence to the Nigerian President

Goodluck Jonathan. We are both happy with the very good and ever improving bilateral relations between our two countries. In addition to the ongoing institutionalized dialogues in different sectors, the focus will be on the economic field. During my first visit to Lagos in October, I already met several key players of the Swiss economic presence in Nigeria.

Ambassador Andreas Baum did a great job in Nigeria. He briefed me perfectly well and my team welcomed us in the best possible way. I thank them all for this.

Hans-Rudolf Hodel
Ambassador of Switzerland



Portrait

Swiss Surgical Team

Peter Nussbaumer is the acting president of the Swiss Surgical Team (SST). The SST has been mainly active in Mongolia but in the last two years expanded its activities to Nigeria. Mr. Nussbaumer shares his Nigerian experiences with us:

My name is Peter Nussbaumer; I am a Swiss board certified general and vascular surgeon and work in a governmental hospital in Switzerland. For the last 20 years I have taken part in several humanitarian missions besides my normal employment. In 2006, I began to work on a regular basis with the Swiss Surgical Team in Mongolia and assumed the leadership of this non-governmental organisation this year. Members of the SST are experienced Swiss surgeons, anaesthetists and other specialists working in leading positions in various Swiss hospitals. We have been working in Mongolia for 14 years, with volunteer teams in various hospitals throughout the country. Our work consists in building capacity mainly through bedside teaching, teaching operations and



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lectures, hands-on courses, and congresses.

Two years ago we started a similar project - though smaller - in a rural hospital in Okpoga, through an English NGO contact in Benue State. St. Mary's Hospital belongs to the Catholic Diocese of Otuipo and is managed by the sisters of Nativity. The hospital was built some 35 years ago and has around 140 beds. It consists of wards for surgery, internal medicine, mother and child, Tuberculosis, as well as an outpatient department.

As is the case in many rural hospitals in sub-Saharan Africa, St. Mary's Hospital has a limited availability of surgeons, with basic procedures having to be performed by general practitioners. The two procedures performed most commonly are caesarean sections and repair of inguinal hernias.

When the Swiss Surgical Team started its project back in 2011, we focused on hernia surgery, a common and often neglected pathology in African countries. The respective teams usually include four surgeons, one anaesthetist and a scrub nurse.

Following a tiresome journey, we are always warmly welcomed by the staff of St. Mary's Hospital, with singing and dancing. Our numerous boxes are then sorted and the equipment unpacked. The operating theatre is set up the same evening to be ready for the rush of patients the next day.

The next morning we start our work. As early as six o'clock the first patients arrive and start to line up. Most of them were put on the list by the preceding team some months back. Following confirmation of the diagnosis, patients go and pay the fee for the operation. They are charged 3000 Naira for a unilateral and 6000 Naira for a bilateral intervention. They then line up in front of the theatre and patiently await their turn.



Peter Nussbaumer and his surgical team perform 15 to 20 operations per day

Inside the theatre, one hernia after the other is treated

by mesh repair with mosquito-net. The two teams work tirelessly, the operating table being vacant just long enough to be cleaned before the next operation. Children under the age of two are operated first thing in the morning, and our experienced anaesthetist earns a mark of respect for managing these delicate cases extraordinarily well without proper equipment. Only after finishing the paediatric cases is the air conditioning put on again, what a relief!

Our scrub nurse is like a diligent bee. Not even the smallest detail escapes her watchful eye and she is first in and last out every day.

Work usually finishes between 7 and 8 p.m., but somewhat later in cases of emergency such as C/S, ruptured uterus or strangulated paediatric hernias. Generally, the team performs anything from 15 to 20 interventions per day.

The majority of the procedures were teaching operations, and towards the end of a mission some are done by the local staff under supervision. In 2013, four surgical teams are expected to spend two weeks each treating patients and continuing the teaching of local staff. There are also plans to extend the project and include additional interventions besides hernia surgery.

Politics

Ambassador's First Visit to Lagos

The hosting of a Business meets Politics (BmP) Forum in Lagos provided Ambassador Hodel with the opportunity to make his first working visit there, from October 15–16.



The Ambassador and his Deputy, Mrs. Tamara Mona in discussion with Mr. Tayo Rabiu, the MD, and other executives of Cotecna.

He paid interesting visits to the offices of some Swiss-affiliated companies including Nestlé Nigeria, Cotecna Destination Inspection Ltd., Du Pont Nigeria, and Swipha Nigeria. In addition, he met with the Executive of the Nigerian-Swiss Chamber of Commerce, and exchanged ideas for increased collaboration with the



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Embassy. The interaction with these business people was an appreciated introduction to the peculiarities of Nigeria's economy for Ambassador Hodel.



Swipha's Chairman /CEO, Mr. Colin Cummings, briefed Ambassador Hodel about the company's activities in Nigeria

The trip was also the occasion for a first meeting with some of the Swiss living in Nigeria, the majority of whom are based in Lagos. Our Honorary Consul, Chief Mrs. Marlies Allan, graciously hosted members of the Swiss colony and other guests for a reception in honor of the Ambassador and Mrs. Hodel.

Ambassador's First Visit to Chad

At the end of September, Ambassador Hans-Rudolf Hodel visited N'Djamena, the capital of Chad. The main purpose of the visit was the presentation of the copies of his letters of credence to the acting Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Ambassador met formally or informally with most of his resident colleagues. He also met the Swiss Development and Cooperation (SDC) delegation, headed by Willi Graf, and the Human Security Division of the Swiss MFA, headed by Vincent Conus. Both were in N'Djamena during the same week, Mr. Graf for the formulation of a new development cooperation project in the agricultural sector, and Mr. Conus for the introduction of the new resident Human Security Adviser in the Cooperation Bureau, Cédrine Beney. To complete his needs assessment, the Ambassador also met with the UN Resident Representative and the Delegation Chief of the ICRC. The economic and social situation was another focus of his discussions, as well as the security situation in the region with control over Northern Mali having been taken over by rebel forces, and as ECOWAS, the AU and the UN Security Council are working on an appropriate response. Switzerland's 48-year long engagement in Chad is one of the longest in its history of development cooperation. Chad is a priority country for the Swiss public development cooperation. Our new programs in the field of rural development, basic medical services, and elementary schools are the best proof of our intention to continue with our engagement.

Kick off of the 2nd Phase of the project on Human Rights and Policing

After the formal presentation of the reviewed and Human Rights-enhanced Nigeria Police Force (NPF) Training Syllabus by former Ambassador Baum to the Inspector General of Police on 30 July (see Swiss Gazette no. 18), the focus has now shifted to translating the new syllabus components into a user-friendly **"Human Rights and Policing" teaching manual**, for effective use by Police instructors in training institutions across the country.

On 6 September, the Embassy organized a stakeholder meeting to launch this second phase, federating available expertise for the development of the manual, whilst working closely under the leadership of the NPF to align with its existing approach and facilitate its integration into the regular training curriculum of police recruits and officers.



Dr. Uju Agomoh, Executive Director of PRAWA, facilitates a meeting at the Swiss Embassy with leading civil society organizations on police reform

A good dozen academic, civil society and international organizations are providing substantive inputs or analytical review services to the manual development process, which is coordinated by long time project partner PRAWA (Prisoners Rehabilitation and Welfare Action).

On 24 September, a bilateral workshop with senior officers of the Police Headquarters, as well as the Jos Staff Training College and the Kano Police Academy, enabled an in-depth definition of the envisaged scope and format of the manual, the use and sustainability of which will depend on how well it is integrated in and enhances existing Police training practice. A comprehensive draft will be produced by early 2013, when it will be reviewed, tested, and piloted. Once completed, phase three (mid-2013) will subsequently focus on the actual roll out of the project in NPF Training Institutions and Police Stations - including the



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development of a core group of trainers amongst the NPF staff at Headquarters, in training institutions, and in Police stations.



Commissioner of Police for Training, Aderemi Opadokun, leads a delegation from the Nigeria Police Force to a workshop on the manual development at the Swiss Embassy

Economy

BmP Forum on Custom Regulations

In collaboration with Cotecna Destination Inspection Ltd, the latest Business meets Politics (BmP) Forum was organized in Lagos on October 16th. This event, the first to be hosted since Ambassador Hodel's arrival, was themed the "Nigerian Customs Service reforms and the implications on external trade". It attracted around 100 attendees including members of the Swiss colony, the diplomatic corps, and businessmen.

Over the past few years, in response to a substantial increase in the volume of its trade, Nigeria has embarked on ambitious reforms of its customs operations. This BmP Forum provided an opportunity for those present to hear more about those reforms, directly from the Customs high command, represented by Ms. Banke Adeyemo, the Assistant Comptroller-General in charge of the Strategic Research & Policy Department. Also speaking was Dr. Ken Ife, a consultant for the ECOWAS Commission, who also served on the Inter-Ministerial Task Force on Trade Facilitation that drafted a new trade policy for the country.

In his welcome address at the BmP Forum, Ambassador Hodel spoke of his pleasure to visit Lagos and saluted the contributions the Swiss community makes to the Nigerian economy.

Development and Cooperation

End of Cycle of This Year's Small Scale Projects

In 2012, the Swiss Embassy supported six small scale projects to build capacity in various fields such as human rights, after-prison care, domestic violence, agriculture, and renewable energy:

Children of Tomorrow:

This organization runs an orphanage in Enugu. With the support of the Embassy, the orphanage built a poultry farm and a fishpond, which are generating income to cover some of the running costs of the orphanage. The project was successfully implemented and well received by the beneficiaries (see Swiss Gazette Nr. 18)

Mbara Onzima Foundation (MOF):

With the support of the Swiss Embassy, MOF constructed a yam and cassava mill in Umunumo, Imo State. The Women's Community St. Nicolas is in charge of the administration of the mill. The project, successfully implemented by MOF, enhances the agricultural sector in the region whilst empowering the women of the community.

Avocats sans Frontières:

With the support of the Swiss Embassy, Avocats sans Frontières conducted trainings for 40 persons from different branches of the judicial sector, with the aim to increase knowledge of the UN Convention against Torture among those key stakeholders. Two roundtables enabled dialogue on torture and ill-treatment, and fostered improved collaboration between the different judicial bodies. Additional workshops for community leaders and representatives of civil society sensitized the respective stakeholders on issues related to torture. The Swiss-funded activities were part of a bigger project, which comprised additional activities such as an information campaign, further training sessions, awareness-raising conferences and press conferences.

Legal Defense & Assistance Project:

This project, called "Improving handling of domestic violence in 6 police stations in Lagos", was successfully realized by our implementing partner LEDAP (Legal Defense & Assistance Project). Some 300 police officers in 6 Lagos police stations were trained on the correct handling of cases of domestic violence. Experts on domestic violence, police training



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and human rights norms - especially the rights of women - gave the trainings. Over 10'000 memory cards with guidelines on how to report, record, file, and handle cases of domestic violence were printed and distributed to police officers. Moreover, 3000 "Domestic Violence tool kits/manuals" were designed and printed. They provide practical step-by-step guidelines on how police staff receiving complaints of family related violence should respond to the needs of the victims, especially when they are women or children, as well as how to handle the perpetrator through counseling and advisory services. The aim of the project was mainly to increase awareness on domestic violence and gender rights issues among police officers in the six police stations in Lagos State, to increase cases of domestic violence being recorded and filed, and to provide redress to the victims.

Community Research and Development Centre:

On 20 November, a representative of the Swiss Embassy, Andreas Broger took part in the Appraisal Workshop of the project "Promoting Environmental Sustainability through the use of Central Solar Charging Stations as Clean Energy Source for Lighting in Uniarho Community" in Benin City. The Swiss government grant enabled our implementing partner, the "Community Research and Development Centre" to construct a solar power (solar panels) based charging station and to provide 40 households with "Solar Home Lighting Kits".



The Embassy's migration officer, Mr. Andreas Broger with the initiators of the Community Research and Development Centre

The aim of the project is to supply households which do not have access to the national power grid with clean and cheap energy, and therefore to improve the household income and the quality of life of the beneficiaries. Thus far, the inhabitants of the Uniarho Community had to buy the more expensive kerosene for cooking and lighting, which also had harmful effects for health. Furthermore, the running of the Solar Charging Station (collection of money for the recharging of the batteries, book keeping) provides a

small income for three persons and ensures the sustainability of the project.

Integrated Prisoners Care Initiative (INTERPRICIN)

On 30 November, 2012, Ambassador Hodel and Pascal Holliger, Human Security Adviser, represented the Swiss Embassy at the graduation ceremony of 24 ex-offenders who followed an intense 2-week **character reformation and vocational skills (entrepreneurship, ICT, GSM repairs) training program**. More than 180 inmates were trained in seven prisons in and around Abuja, whilst 24 volunteered to attend an additional "on-campus style" course in Abuja immediately upon their release. The project was managed by the Integrated Prisoners' Care Initiative Nigeria (INTERPRICIN), and financially supported by the Swiss Embassy.



The participants of the training program in the presence of the ambassador, the INTERPRICIN director, Reverend Ozioma and the Deputy Controller General of Prisons in charge of Welfare, Dr. Labo

Courses were mainly facilitated by experts of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) whilst the initiative as a whole was conducted in close partnership with the Nigeria Prisons Service. At the ceremony, attended among others by INTERPRICIN Director, Reverend Ozioma, and by the Deputy Controller General of Prisons in charge of Welfare, Dr. Labo, Ambassador Hodel commended the graduates for their resilience and strength of character. Emerging from a difficult past, their initiative to participate in this course and their willingness to carve a new life for themselves as free citizens of Nigeria was inspiring. Ambassador Hodel wished them well as they prepared to return to their families and communities and hoped to get some positive news from them in future.



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Joint Technical Committee and Project Highlights (CBAEN, NDLEA, etc.)

On 6 November 2012, Ambassador Martin Uhomoibhi, Permanent Secretary of the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, received in Abuja a Swiss delegation headed by Mr. Mario Gattiker, Director of the Federal Office for Migration, and Ambassador Claude Wild, Head of the Human Security Division, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, for talks on migration. This was the third meeting within the scope of the migration partnership between Switzerland and Nigeria since its establishment in February 2011. The discussions highlighted the development of the partnership and the progress of various projects.

Since the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in February 2011, Switzerland and Nigeria have intensified their cooperation on migration issues, within the framework of a balanced partnership. In the process, the interests of both parties and the migrants themselves, as well as the opportunities and challenges of migration between our two countries are taken into account. The third meeting of the Technical Committee allowed an open and frank exchange of views on existing and upcoming issues, as well as on current projects and their development. The migration partnership promotes the development of innovative projects. Thus, Switzerland is currently setting up a project enabling Nigerian expatriates in Switzerland to teach young people in Nigeria, for example in the field of automotive engineering. Additional activities such as capacity building for the Nigerian immigration authorities, support for the implementation of a Nigerian protection policy for internally displaced persons, cooperation in the multilateral dialogue on migration and development, the development of a partnership between Switzerland and Nigeria in the field of agricultural education, and extension of a pilot project in police cooperation are also taking place.

Both delegations underlined the excellent bilateral relations and expressed their satisfaction with the ongoing projects and the cooperation in the field of migration. Both parties were pleased to note that 90% percent of Nigerian citizens who had to return to their home country in 2012 did so out of their own initiative. The majority of these individuals took advantage of the return assistance offered by the Swiss authorities. Both parties clearly make voluntary returns a high priority.

ECOWAS: Validation of the Concept of the Civilian Component of the ESF

Since 2010, Switzerland has been supporting ECOWAS' efforts to **develop the Civilian Component of its Standby Force (ESF)**. Funding was provided for consultant Oury Traore, whose mandate was to develop a detailed technical concept for the establishment of the Civilian Component. This concept was presented by Mrs. Traore on 2 November, 2012, on the occasion of a roundtable organized by ECOWAS' Political Affairs, Peace and Security Commission (PAPS). The roundtable brought together relevant stakeholders within ECOWAS, representatives of the African Union (notably Mr. Sivuyile Bam, Head of the Peace Support Operations Division), as well as involved development partners (GIZ, EU, and Switzerland). The political leadership shown by PAPS Commissioner Salamatu Suleiman on this matter was key to ensuring the success of the gathering, and a plan of action aimed at rapid implementation of the Civilian Component was drafted and accepted. International partners present (including Switzerland) reiterated their commitment to support these developments by funding key positions of the Planning Element of the Civilian Component as of 2013. These new staff members will be responsible for the operationalization of the concept and to ensure that the **Civilian Component optimally complements the already existing military and police dimensions of the ESF**. The ongoing crisis in Mali once again demonstrates the importance of ECOWAS's role in seeking peace in the sub-region, as well as the necessity of integrated military, police, and civilian dimensions to interventions aimed at achieving sustainable peace, security, and development.

Human Rights Day marked in Style

The Swiss Embassy played a leading role in coordinating activities of the diplomatic community to mark International Human Rights Day on 10 December. A partnership with leading Nigerian radio stations Wazobia FM, Cool FM, and Nigeria Info FM enabled five Ambassadors (Canada, European Union, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland) to record "Human Rights jingles" which were aired in the days leading up to 10 December.

Other events, organized by the National Human Rights Commission, included a "Walk for Human Rights" between Eagle's Square and the International Conference Centre (ICC) in Abuja, a press conference at the ICC, and a national dialogue on torture and extrajudicial killings in Nigeria, the keynote speaker of which was the Minister of Justice and Attorney



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General of the Federation, Barrister Mohammed Bello Adoke. No less than twelve “like-minded” Embassies took part in the various activities and seven Ambassadors and High Commissioners attended the press conference.



Ambassador Hodel at the NHRC press conference, seen here with the Ambassadors of Norway, the European Union Delegation, Sweden, and Germany, as well as NHRC Executive Secretary, Prof. Bem Angwe

In his statement, Swiss Ambassador Dr. Hans-Rudolf Hodel highlighted **Human Rights as a fundamental pillar of Switzerland’s domestic and foreign policies** and mentioned some of the key thematic areas such as combating torture, abolishing the death penalty, the fight against all forms of discrimination, and the protection of vulnerable and minority groups.



Ambassador Hodel and his German and Swedish counterparts celebrating Human Rights Day with NHRC Executive Secretary Prof. Bem Angwe and Senator Umaru Dahiru, Chairman Senate Committee on Human Rights

Ambassador Hodel praised the annual rounds of bilateral Human Rights Consultations between Nigeria and Switzerland – the next round of which will be held in February 2013 in Abuja – and mentioned some of

the **projects which Switzerland is currently supporting, especially in the field of Human Rights and policing**. He concluded by quoting former South African president Nelson Mandela that “No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion”, and by reaffirming that Human Rights for all are not a privilege, but a legal and indeed a moral obligation.

Seminar on Counter Financing of Terrorism

From December 11-13, 2012 a training workshop on Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) took place in Abuja. This was organised by Switzerland, in collaboration with the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA) and the Federal Republic of Nigeria, with the assistance of the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF) and financially supported by the City of Geneva.



The participants of the seminar at the opening ceremony

The objectives of the workshop were to raise the awareness of officials from the 15 ECOWAS member states and some of the neighbouring Maghreb countries on AML/CFT regimes, particularly the fight against money laundering and the financing of terrorism in a manner that conforms to international law. Around 70 experts attended the workshop, which focused on increasing cooperation among border control agencies and other authorities involved in countering the financing of terrorism. Also highlighted were the responsibilities of non-bank financial institutions, reinforcing measures against money laundering and the financing of terrorism in cash-based economies with informal routes for money transfer. In the final stage of the seminar 27 recommendations, based on the matters discussed in the workshops, were approved.



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Participants during the workshop concerning the lack of cooperation among customs/border authorities and other CFT relevant authorities

The training workshop was delivered by technical experts with extensive working experience in the private sector and governmental institutions. Nigeria's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Olugbenga Ashiru, represented by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Martin Uhomobhi, was present at the opening session, along with the Director General of GIABA, Abdullahi Shehu and the Ambassador of Switzerland to Nigeria, Hans-Rudolf Hodel.

The film "Marcello, Marcello", produced by the Italo-Swiss director Denis Rabaglia was shown on a big screen on the Residence's terrace, and culinary specialties from the Tessin and from Italy were served.

In addition, the three winners of a writing contest amongst students of the Italian language from the University of Abuja presented their short essays, and were rewarded for their efforts.



One of the winners of the writing contest presents her essay, in the presence of the hosts

The event was attended by 150 guests (diplomats, representatives of the Swiss and Italian communities of Abuja, staff of Nigerian agencies and NGOs).

Culture

Settimana della lingua italiana

On 14 November 2012, in the framework of the "settimana della lingua italiana" the Swiss and Italian Embassies jointly organized a "serata della lingua italiana" at the Swiss Residence.



Ambassador Hodel with the Italian Ambassador, H.E. Dr. Roberto Colaminè, welcoming guests to the Serata della lingua italiana

ASOHOM Charity Bazaar

On 13 October, the Association of spouses of Heads of Mission (ASOHOM) organized their traditional Charity Bazaar at the Sheraton Hotel in Abuja.



A team from the Embassy at the Charity Bazaar



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About 30 diplomatic missions participated in the event, including the Swiss Embassy and spouses. A variety of handiworks, art objects, and gastronomic delights from all over the world were on offer. The Bazaar enjoys a great popularity and attracted a big crowd of local and international visitors.

The Swiss Embassy ran a stall, decorated with posters and Swiss flags. It sold raclette (melted cheese) and potatoes, as well as Swiss cakes as desserts. Thanks to the popularity of the Swiss specialities with the visitors, a substantial amount was raised and profits will enable ASOHOM to realize various charity projects.

News from the Embassy

Personnel Changes at the Embassy

Our intern, Ms. Sarah Himmelberger, left the Embassy after 4 months of intense work. She was replaced by Ms. Anna Maria Capaul, who will also be staying for a period of 4 months. We wish Anna Maria all the best during her stay in Abuja.

A new local employee, Ms. Modupe Oluyemisi Ogunbanwo, came to reinforce our Visa section at the end of October. Yemisi is receiving training and the necessary support from our staff to facilitate her introduction in this complex and intense work field.

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