Outlook

URGENT: Letter of Invitation / the Somali Ambassador to Kenya will help

From Nicholas Gessler, Ph.D. <nick.gessler@duke.edu>
Date Tue 7/14/2026 3:21 PM
To Jutta Zipfel <jutta.zipfel@senckenberg.de>
Cc MetSoc President <metsocpres@meteoritical.org>
Bcc Coalition of Somali HRDs CSHRDS <somaliacshrds3@gmail.com>

Dear Jutta,

Yes, another "urgent' request...

Thank you. Your letter has attracted additional attention and support from the Somali Ambassador to Kenya. He has offered to communicate his own endorsement to the German Ambassador to Kenya, Nairobi. The Somali Ambassador advises that a new, simpler and more direct letter be drafted, and now for only three invitees. Consequently, as per his advice, we respectfully request a new modified invitation letter as follows:

Page 1: Delete the "To:" address and replace it with:
To:
The Visa Section
Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany
Nairobi, Republic of Kenya

Page 2: After the sentence beginning with "The purpose of..." Insert the following:
The participation of the El Ali indigenous community is important in fostering dialogue between the international scientific community and the indigenous custodians of this globally significant meteorite and its impact site. They will contribute by sharing its cultural, historical, and archaeological significance, sharing traditional iron-working practices, and networking with scientists, museums, and other institutions, on the protection of Indigenous cultural heritage,

Page 2: Paragraph beginning "The purpose of..."
To be a bit less negative, please replace the sentence beginning with, "Beyond," with **"Beyond this objective, the organizers emphasize that, due to the late request, they are unable to provide any further activities, a dedicated space or other resources."**

Page 2: **Please delete the sentence; "The professions of the El Ali delegation demonstrate that most are not trained scientists in the field of meteoritics and will, thus, not contribute to the scientific topics nor will they add scientific benefit to the meeting." It makes me feel that even I am not welcome.**
The social sciences have always been a benefit, beginning with Ursula Marvin. At the MetSoc 86th Conference in Los Angeles in 2023, an entire session was devoted to "Meteorite Falls and Societal Significance." Two papers on the social science of Shiid Birood have been already been published in MAPS, and a grant was received to translate Somali Media news videos on the social scientific background of the meteorite into English. MetSoc's "Community Grants" have focused on meteorites as human cultural heritage. I note that, "Membership in the Society is open to any person interested in

meteoritics and related sciences..." and that the Meteoritical Society's "Code of Ethics," states that it, "welcomes as members all who are interested in the study of extraterrestrial materials, no matter what their background."

Page 2: After the sentence beginning with "Below," add only three names:

PERSONAL

INFORMATION

DELETED

Page 3: Delete any remaining names.

Page 4: Delete remaining name at top.

Page 4: Delete the sentence "The organizers..." and add:
In a separate letter, The Coalition of Somali Human Rights Defenders (CSHRD), have agreed to fully pay for travel, accommodation, local transportation, subsistence, conference-related expenses, and all other financial costs associated with the participation of the El Ali Indigenous Community delegation.

Page 4: Conclusion: Delete "We would like..." and replace it with:
We respectfully request the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Nairobi to kindly facilitate the issuance of Schengen visas for the above-mentioned delegates to enable their participation in the 88th Annual Meeting of The Meteoritical Society. Their attendance will contribute to meaningful dialogue between the international scientific community and the Indigenous custodians of the El Ali Meteorite, whose cultural heritage is directly connected to this internationally significant discovery.

With best regards,

Nick

Nicholas Gessler, Ph.D.
nick.gessler@duke.edu
https://people.duke.edu/gessler

Research Associate, RETIRED
INFORMATION SCIENCE & INFORMATION STUDIES

Duke University, Durham, North Carolina

EL ALI Research Archive (8th largest meteorite in the world)
"Probably no other meteorite has een so intimately connected with the life and fate of so many people..."
https://people.duke.edu/~ng46/El-Ali/

* COMPLEX SYSTEMS: ARTIFICIAL LIFE, CULTURE & EVOLUTIONARY COMPUTATION, Multiagent Modeling & Simulation: ISIS-170, CompSci-107, VisualMediaStudies-172
* ESPIONAGE, CRYPTOLOGY & PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS, Networks of Trust, Secrecy & Deception: ISIS-235, CulturalAnthropology-226, VisualMediaStudies-245.
* METEORITICS: METEORITES & SOLAR SYSTEM HISTORY, Science, culture and history of Meteorites: ISIS-230, EarthOceanSciences-230