

## Sweden to open embassy in cyberspace

A few days after the announcement that Sweden would shut down two embassies in Africa partly due to financial constraints, the country is slated to open a new embassy in cyberspace, reports said Tuesday.

The foreign ministry and the Swedish Institute that promoted Sweden in cyberspace, backed the initiative to open an embassy next month in Second Life, a 3-D virtual world.

Second Life, which opened in 2003, has some three million inhabitants.

'This is a good way of reaching youth,' Swedish Institute Director General Olle Wastberg was quoted as telling the Aftonbladet newspaper.

The Swedish embassy would look like the current Swedish embassy in Washington, known as House of Sweden.

The cyberspace-based embassy would however not issue passports or visas but rather link visitors to real embassies and agencies.

Wastberg said the aim was to inform other members of Second Life about Sweden - just as the Swedish Institute currently does.

Visitors or inhabitants in Second Life might also meet Wastberg in person since he has created a so-called avatar that roams the virtual world.

More details on Second Life available on <http://secondlife.com>.

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