

MEDIA RELEASE



SWISSCHAM HELPS UNICEF TO FIGHT, PREVENT & EDUCATE AGAINST SARS

BEIJING/ CHINA, 11, July 2003 – In May 2003 the Swiss Chinese Chamber of Commerce (SwissCham) launched a **long term** SARS fundraising initiative to support UNICEF's 1 Million Soap Campaign – an environmental, health and hygiene campaign conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Health's National Patriotic Health Campaign Committee (NPHCCO) through the coordination of the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM). Money raised so far has been handed over to UNICEF in Beijing today at a ceremony attended by the Swiss Ambassador to China, Mr. D. Dreyer and SwissCham Beijing's President, Mr. Cyrill Eltschinger.

Acting as a focal point for all-incoming funds from companies, private and individuals, the Swiss Chinese Chamber of Commerce is confident in maintaining the fundraising campaign to support the fight against SARS here in China.

For Alex Sudan - Treasurer and Director of the Swiss Chinese Chamber of Commerce, it was evident to align with UNICEF: "For us it was important to engage in a long-term programme. We liked the fact that the campaign is focussing on **prevention** of SARS and includes an **educational aspect** as well: a programme for children and families from rural poor areas in China stressing the need for hygiene. At the same time it was important for us to ensure that the money we raise will be utilised in China."

The donations are part of the free distribution of 2 Mio. soap bars through 12 provinces. A specially printed soap wrapper carries messages promoting hygiene, hand washing, encourages none smoking and none spitting. Note that in addition to this donation, other Swiss-invested companies established in China have contributed to the fight against SARS for an amount in excess of RMB 17 millions, donated to Government bodies, already.

About SwissCham -The Swiss Chinese Chamber of Commerce (SwissCham) is a network of private associations registered in Switzerland and China, among them the leading Swiss companies in trade, industry and financial services have joined the Chamber, making it one of the largest and most active in Switzerland. SwissCham was established in Beijing In 1995 and is currently registered under PRC law. SwissCham thus operates with two national organisations and five regional chapters in Beijing, Shanghai, Zurich, Geneva and Lugano. Since its inception, SwissCham has contributed to the development of the Swiss-Sino economic relations and assisted the many Swiss-invested companies doing business with China, while it is assisting in turn a growing number of China-based enterprises in their dealings with Switzerland-based partner. SwissCham has a distinctively an international character and welcomes people of any nationality. Furthermore, SwissCham clearly pursues the building of Sino-Swiss co-operation, undertaking great efforts to increase its increasing number of Chinese members.

For further information on the Chamber action and activities, you may visit <http://www.bei.swisscham.org/>, or send an email to: <mailto:info@bei.swisscham.org>, or simply call: +86-10-6432-2020.

ABOUT UNICEF – Established in 1946 UNICEF was first known as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. Since 1953 UNICEF is permanent part of the United Nations and being known as United Nations Children Fund striving to build a world in which all children live in dignity and security.

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UNICEF's 7 Regional and 126 Country Offices do cover more than 160 countries to help children living in poverty. Goal is to ensure that Children do get the care and stimulation they need in the early years of life, and encourages families to educate girls and boys. Equally important is to reduce childhood death and illness and to protect children in conflict situation and natural disaster.

UNICEF China was established in 1979 and works in close co-operation with the People's Republic of China. Girls Education, Immunisation Plus, Combating HIV Aids and Integrated Early Childhood and Development (IECD) and Child Protection are our main focus.

For further information on our activities in China please contact: Charles M. Rycroft, Communication Officer, (86-10) 55323131 ext.: 1301, mailto:crycroft@unicef.org