

Newsletter

of the Embassy of Switzerland in the People's Republic of China

November 2012

A Word from the Ambassador

It is a great honor for me to have been appointed Ambassador of Switzerland to the People's Republic of China, to Mongolia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. My wife and I arrived last September in Beijing and we are already deeply immersed into the very interesting and colorful life of China.

Upon my arrival, I found a very dynamic Embassy. Numerous projects are being undertaken to further strengthen the increasingly deep ties between China and Switzerland. Substantial bilateral talks on political, economic, scientific and development issues in particular are being held, and I am confident that they will open up new opportunities for cooperation in many fields. A Free Trade Agreement is under negotiation, which, if we succeed soon, will be the first agreement of this type between China and a European country.

I came to China after concluding my five years' posting as the Head of Mission of Switzerland to the European Union in Brussels. Different continents bring different challenges: my mission in China bears little resemblance with what I was doing in Brussels! Most notably, my remit as Head of Mission to the EU did not include responsibility for consular affairs nor an active exchange with the Swiss community, whereas here in China, the links between the Embassy and Swiss citizens, and the support and services for Swiss compatriots, are amongst the priorities of our work. Overall, 4827 fellow citizens are registered at the Swiss representations. 664 of you are currently living in Beijing out of the 882 who are living in the Embassy's circumscription.

This connection between you and the Embassy is very important to me. It is one of the major tasks of the Embassy to defend the interests of Switzerland and promote the culture and values of our country. Swiss citizens in the world also represent our country and contribute to the image of Switzerland. It is therefore my sincere hope to contribute exchanges that will spawn new ideas and to forge reciprocal collaboration between you and the different sections of the Embassy.

I am looking forward to our future cooperation!

With my best regards,

Jacques de Watteville
Ambassador



Ambassador Jacques De Watteville



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Upcoming events

Irene Kung – Dreams of China

05.12.2012 to 08.02.2012

China through the eyes of a Swiss artist, the widely familiar images in a new, either dark or golden glow and the result of a woman's month long journey through the middle kingdom - that is what awaits the visitor at Irene Kung's stunning photo exhibition. The Swiss painter, who expanded her repertoire to photography in recent years, has already achieved international recognition in her relatively new field of expertise.

www.irenekung.com

SIGMASIX Project by Florian Pittet and Eric Merzier

01.11.2012 to 30.11.2012

Florian Pittet and Eric Merzier are presenting SIGMASIX at the 3rd Art & Science International Exhibition and Symposium organized by Tsinghua University. Their project, an experiment in the fields of visual creation, won the 3rd price in this exhibition.

www.sigmasix.ch www.tasie.org.cn

Contemporary Dance with Compagnie 7273

20. & 21.11.2012: Nil (Nile), Shanghai

25.11.2012: Romance-s, Guangzhou

Compagnie 7273 like impossible challenges, tickling the audience and looking for the meaning of the dance. Their first performance in Shanghai, Nil (Nile), is a ballet for six dancers with a new composition by Sir Richard Bishop. Their show Romance-s is a love story that recalls different chapters of the history of dance and it is performed in total silence. Nicolas Cantillon and Laurence Yadi, who make up Compagnie 7273, received the Swiss Dance and Choreography award in 2011.

www.cie7273.com

Swiss Students Welcome Reception in Residence

23.11.2012

The annual Swiss students welcome reception will be held on November 23rd at the Residence. Swiss students who are currently studying in Chinese universities are invited to the Residence for a dinner reception, where they will be received by the Ambassador of Switzerland in China. The annual gathering of Swiss students is a tradition of the Embassy to greet newly arrived Swiss students and to introduce them to the Swiss student's community.



Work of Irene Kung



Florian Pittet and Eric Merzier



Contemporary Dance with Compagnie 7273



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Swiss University Alumni Event

15.12.2012

The annual Swiss university alumni event of the Embassy is expected to be held on December 15th in Beijing. The event is a platform for Swiss university graduates in China to network and renew their link to Switzerland. In cooperation with the Western Returned Scholars Association and the China Scholarship Council, every year, the Embassy section has the pleasure to welcome new returnees from Switzerland. They invite them to join the alumni community and endeavors to maintain, enlarge and mobilize the Swiss university alumni community.

Political News

Credential Ceremonies of Ambassador de Watteville in China, Mongolia and DPRK

Soon after his arrival in Beijing Ambassador de Watteville had the opportunity to present his credentials to all the governments he is accredited to, namely in Mongolia, China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea DPRK.

Credential Ceremonies in China

The accreditation ceremony in China took place on September 12th. In a short meeting with the Chinese President Hu Jintao, Ambassador de Watteville emphasized the great importance Switzerland attaches to the ongoing negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement with China. Furthermore they touched on several topics of bilateral interest, in particular on further cooperation in financing, in water resource management as well as in tourism.

Credential Ceremonies in Mongolia

On September 18th he handed over his letters of credentials to the President of Mongolia, Mr. Elbegdorj Tsakhiagiin in Ulan Bator. Mr. Elbegdorj expressed its gratitude for the existent cooperation programs of Switzerland, implemented by a Cooperation Office of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC in Ulan Bator. He praised Switzerland as a country with best practices in implementing direct democracy and specifically welcomed Swiss projects supporting decentralization efforts in Mongolia. Ambassador de Watteville expressed the wish of Switzerland for closer collaboration with Mongolia in international organizations.



Ambassador shakes hands with Mr. Hu Jintao, President of People's republic of China



Ambassador shakes hands with Mr. Elbegdorj Tsakhiagiin, President of Mongolia



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Credential Ceremonies in DPRK

Last but not least, on October 18th, Ambassador de Watteville handed over his letters of credentials to Mr. Kim Yong Nam, president of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly of the DPRK. During the meeting in Pyongyang they exchanged views about the current situation of the DPRK from internal and external policy points of view. The president Kim Yong Nam informed Ambassador de Watteville about the recent reforms undertaken by his government under the new leadership of Kim Jong Un. He expressed his gratitude for the humanitarian assistance provided by Switzerland in the aftermath of the floods end of July, August and in September 2012.

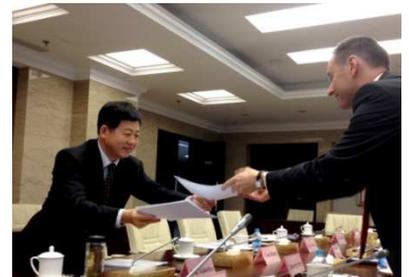
International Conference on Mining Development and Human Rights in Ulaanbaatar

The Embassy of Switzerland participated to the first international conference on mining development and human rights in Ulaanbaatar hold on October 10th and 11th organized by the National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia. The conference was attended by government officials, members of the Parliament, UNDP, representatives of mining companies, national human rights institutions of the region, local NGOs and herders from all around the country. The UN Working Group on Business & Human Rights of the Human Rights Council also participated in that conference as part of its first official mission to Mongolia. Switzerland presented the global initiative of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights <http://www.voluntaryprinciples.org>.

Economic News

Agreement on the avoidance of double enrollment on social security issue

On August 21st -22nd, 2012, a delegation of the Swiss Federal Office for Social Insurances, led by Mr. Stephan Cueni, Head of International Affairs, met with the representatives of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (MoHRSS) to discuss about the launch of negotiations on an agreement on the avoidance of double enrollment on social security issues between both countries. This demarche follows the introduction last year in China of a new law on social security and the mandatory participation of foreigners in the social security contribution scheme. Since this announcement, more than 12 countries have declared their intention to enter into negotiations with China on that topic.



Mr. Stephan Cueni, meets with the representatives of the MoHRSS



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Switzerland is among the first ones to have concretely entered into discussions with MoHRSS in this regard. The discussions went very well and a first round of formal negotiations should take place around December/ January. Switzerland is looking for a quick, pragmatic and uncomplicated solution.

6th round of negotiation on a Free Trade Agreement

The sixth round of negotiations on the Switzerland-China Free Trade Agreement took place from September 4th to 7th 2012 in Davos, Switzerland, headed by Ambassador Christian ETTER, Delegate of the Swiss Government for Trade Agreements, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, Federal Department of Economic Affairs, and Mr. YAO Wenliang, Commercial Counselor of the Department of International Trade and Economic Affairs, Ministry of Commerce. During this round, in-depth discussions were held in the following areas: trade in goods, trade in services, rules of origin, customs procedures and trade facilitation, technical barriers to trade (TBT) and sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS), trade remedies, intellectual property rights, competition, investment promotion, government procurement, trade and sustainable development, legal and institutional matters, dispute settlement, economic and technical cooperation. Follow-up work was agreed in all areas of negotiations and both sides agreed to hold, where relevant, intersessional expert meetings before the next round of negotiations which is foreseen to take place before the end of the year.



6th round of negotiation on a Free Trade Agreement

Swiss Business Hub China

Opening of the new Business Hub in Hong Kong

The Swiss business network OSEC has established its 19th Business Hub in Hong Kong on October 15th, 2012; a mere two weeks after the free trade agreement between Switzerland and Hong Kong came into effect. The grand opening was held at the Ritz-Carlton hotel in the presence of 300 invitees including State Secretary Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch, Consul General Rita Hämmerli, Mr. Daniel Küng, CEO OSEC, Mr. Wolfgang Schanzenbach, Director APAC OSEC, Mr. Alain Graf, Head of Swiss Business Hub China, Mr. Frank Eggmann, Director of this new Swiss Business Hub in Hong Kong as well as media, officials and entrepreneurs from Hong Kong. Besides offering consulting services for the over 190 Swiss companies currently based in Hong Kong, this new hub will serve as a first contact point for Swiss companies prospecting to do business in Hong Kong and actively promote Switzerland as an investment location for Hong Kong companies. Therefore, the opening of



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this Swiss Business Hub shows the importance of Hong Kong for the Swiss Economy: Switzerland's exports to Hong Kong climbed by 19 percent and topped CHF 6.3 billion last year which makes Hong Kong Switzerland's third-largest Asian trading partner, after China and Japan.

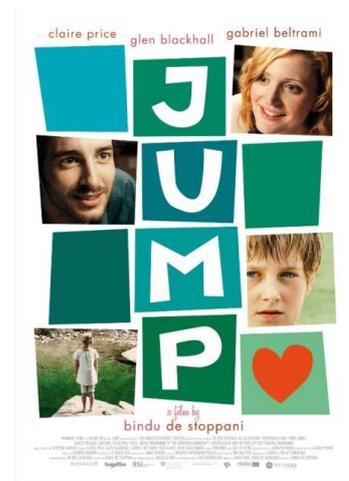
Cultural News

Settimana della lingua Italiana

With one of the national languages being in the spotlight of the Settimana Italiana the Swiss Embassy organized several events between October 15th to 22nd for the occasion. The start was made with the heart-warming Swiss-Italian movie "Jump" which was shown at the Italian Culture Center. Later in the week the students of the Beijing Foreign Studies University and the University of International Business and Economics had the opportunity to enjoy the lectures of two Swiss-Italian and Ticino-born writers. Mr. Andrea Fazioli presented first his work famous for his suspense stories which take place in Ticino. He was then followed by Mr. Fabiano Alborghetti who talked about his poetry, defined as investigation poetry.

Swiss Jazz in Beijing

This year's October can truly be called the "Jazz-month". Several great Swiss Jazz musicians stopped in Beijing to give concerts. The show was kicked off by Eliane Amherd who charmed everyone at the Embassy residence as she gave an exclusive concert for the arrival of the new Swiss ambassador in Beijing. The next highlight was made by Sonic Calligraphy who enriched the Beijing Hutong area with a cross-cultural music encounter featuring Chinese gu qin virtuoso Wu Na for their concert. The Tobias Preisig Quartet introduced Beijing to a new style of acoustic expression in Jazz. The audience was taken on a musical journey by his violin. Another young rising star of the Swiss Jazz scene is Samuel Blaser who hit the stage of CD Blues Café on October 20th. Together with New York-based saxophonist Michael Blake and his two colleagues on the drums and bass they captured the audience with an infusing positive and accessible sound. The next highlight of this month's performances was the Swiss sextet "Hildegard lernt fliegen" who are far from being unknown in their home country and now delighted the Jazz fans in both Beijing and Shanghai.



Eliane Amherd, Photo by Beat habermacher



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The Alps: Chinese Ink Painting

The exhibition "Alps - Chinese Ink Painting" presented the work of twelve masters of the traditional Chinese ink painting who travelled to Switzerland to paint the landscape in different alpine regions. The result let the visitor see the Alps from a new perspective, inviting him on a cultural journey and allowing new point of views on something which is thought to be familiar. The opening ceremony was held on October 21st at Rongbaozhai Gallery including guests like Ambassador Jacques de Watteville and former Swiss Federal Councilors Pascal Couchepin.

Institute of incoherent cinematography (IOIC) – a variety of contrasts

It's the variety of contrasts the IOIC offered during its China tour in September which made this event such a unique experience for visitors. Modern music by Swiss and Chinese musicians combined with silent film classics such as Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, a cozy and traditional but yet very cool location for the screenings in the Beijing Hutongs area are only two to be named. The IOIC toured with ten Swiss and five Chinese musicians and sound artists to Beijing and Shanghai.



Work from "Alps - Chinese Ink Painting" exhibition

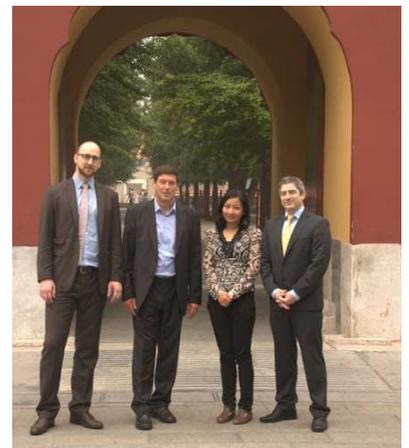
Science, Education and Health News

State Secretary Mauro Dell'Ambrogio in China

Swiss State Secretary for Education and Research Mr. Mauro Dell'Ambrogio visited China to attend the Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2012 (also known as Summer Davos) in Tianjin during September 11th and 13th. Mr. Dell'Ambrogio also took the opportunity to meet with the new Science, Technology and Education Head of the Embassy of Switzerland in Beijing, Mr. Nektarios Palaskas as well as with the new Head of the Swissnex in Shanghai, Mr. Pascal Marmier.

New MoU on Education Cooperation between Switzerland and China

The head of the Federal Department of Home Affairs Federal Councillor Alain Berset, and Vice Minister Du Zhanyuan of China's Ministry of Education have signed a Memorandum on Higher Education Cooperation during a working visit in Bern at the end of September. The declaration of intent aims to consolidate and intensify cooperation between the two countries in the fields of science and research. The memorandum concentrates on the promotion of academic exchange programs for young researchers through government scholarships, cooperation between



State Secretary Mauro Dell'Ambrogio with the team of the Science, Technology and Education section of the Embassy



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higher education institutions and the involvement of China's Ministry of Education in the Sino-Swiss Science and Technology Cooperation, a highly successful bilateral research program. The new memorandum raises the number of scholarships offered by both countries from 20 to 25 per year. Up to 30 tuition waivers will also be available. Young academics from both countries can apply via the existing channels: the Federal Commission for Scholarships for Foreign Students (FCS), which awards several types of post graduate scholarship to foreign academics and artists, and the China Scholarship Council (CSC).

SER-MOST Joint Working Group Meeting on SSSTC Held in Zurich

On September 27th 2012, the mixed working group of the Sino Swiss Science and Technology Cooperation (SSSTC) program met for the sixth time. This year's meeting took place on the campus of the Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETHZ). The joint working group discussed the strategies for the next phase of SSSTC and decided to sponsor 20 joint research projects over the next four years. In parallel to the meeting of the mixed working group, the SSSTC directors held a Sino-Swiss symposium on the subject of medical technology. Next joint working group meeting will be held in 2013 in Beijing.

University of Zurich – Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Workshops in Beijing

Through the Sino Swiss Science and Technology Cooperation an Institutional Partnership was realized between the University of Zurich and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. In this framework two workshops were organized in Beijing during the month of October. One focusing on "Governance Issues in Megacities: Chinese and International Perspectives" and a second one concentrating on "Behavioral finance and Quantitative risk management: from perspective of policy response in China and Europe". Both workshops laid a solid foundation for future Sino-Swiss cooperation in humanities and social sciences.

Swiss University Booth in China International Education Fair

Swiss universities were represented by the Swiss University Booth at the China International Education Fair that is touring throughout China. The Science, Technology and Education Section participated at the exhibitions in Beijing (October 20th to 21st), Xi'an (October 23rd) and Chengdu (October 25th) together with representatives from Swiss universities. Education fair is one of the most important activities to promote awareness on the excellent education provided by Swiss universities among Chinese parents and students.



Signing of New MoU on Education Cooperation between Switzerland and China



Mr. Conradin Pfaff, head of Education from the Embassy poses for a Sohu.com Interview during the education fair



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University of Fribourg – Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Colloquium in Honor of 100 Year Anniversary of Swiss Obligation Code

In honor of the 100th anniversary of the Swiss Code of Obligations, The University of Fribourg in Switzerland and the Institute of Law (CASS) in Beijing co-organized a colloquium for professionals from politics and legal practice (judges, lawyers and magistrates) and students from both law jurisdictions. During the 2 day conference on October 27th and 28th, speakers from China and Switzerland held presentations and subsequent discussions focusing on the code of obligations. The colloquium intends to bring forward the dialogue and mutual understanding for common ground. The University of Fribourg delegation also visited key law institutes in Beijing such as the China University of Political Sciences and Law and the Beijing Foreign Studies Universities to exchange with law students.



Swiss Code of Obligations

Cooperation News

High-level intensive talks on environment between China and Swiss government

The high-level talks on environment issues between China and Switzerland are held on a regular basis, exemplifying the deepening of Sino-Swiss collaboration in this domain. During the 2012 World Resource Forum in Beijing State Secretary, Mr. Bruno Oberle met with Mr. LI Ganjie, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China. They reviewed the collaboration between the two countries in the field of clean air legislation and further discussed the actions and measures to be taken for air pollution reduction. Under the context of continued rapid economic growth, Chinese government is facing severe challenges in environmental protection. Therefore, the valuable experiences and expertise from countries like Switzerland is much needed. This provides good perspectives for collaboration.



State Secretary, Mr. Bruno Oberle meets with Mr. LI Ganjie, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Environmental Protection, PRC

CTCSPMO partnership – Internal joint evaluation mission in Inner Mongolia

The Sino-Swiss Management Training Programme (SSMTP) is a partnership programme between Switzerland (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC) and China (China Training Centre for Senior Personnel Management Officials CTCSPMO) initiated in 1994. The core competence of this programme is the special provincial projects aiming at supporting the sustainable development in economically and



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socially backward regions in Western China. From September 24th to 26th, representatives from the Swiss Embassy in Beijing, St. Gallen University and China Training Centre for Senior Personnel Management Officials (CTSCPMO) did a field visit to Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region to carry out a medium term internal impact evaluation on the three-year programme held in the region from 2006 to 2008. The delegation did an assessment, together with the local authority, on the following topics: a) ecological tourism and sustainable development in Arshaan region, b) medium and small enterprise development in Wuhai region, and c) social security system and pension insurance study in Hohhot City. The evaluation confirmed some positive results in the living conditions of the target population (included the Mongolian minority), particularly in income generation and distribution.

Celebration 30 years Partnership Zürich-Kunming

Last September Zurich and Kunming celebrate the 30th anniversary of their sister-city partnership. This three decades friendship enjoys a remarkable reputation on both sides. At the beginning of the partnership, the main themes covered were related to water supply and municipal drainage. Other topics addressed through the collaboration are financial aspects, renewable energies and energy efficiency and cultural heritage protection. Special emphasis is put on urban development planning and development of urban transport systems. During the process, several ambitious objectives have been achieved, and since 1999 Kunming is the first city in the People's Republic of China to have a bus line with all the attributes associated to modern bus lanes. The next step to be taken by the administration includes the developing of the metro network within the 2010 frame for building and urban planning. Overall the partnership is a strongly positive experience, had achieved to establish a friendly relationship and collaboration between teams and the intensive personal interactions between both cities and has permitted them to reach demanding results.

Sino-Swiss Cooperation on Forestry

Based on previous high-level dialogues, a Letter of Understanding has been signed in Beijing on the October 31st 2012 by Mr. Andreas Götz, Deputy Director of the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) and Ms. Yin Hong, Vice Administrator of the Chinese State Forest Administration (SFA). Acknowledging the significance of forests and forestry in social and economic development as well as in environmental protection in both countries, the two sides have agreed to make great efforts to develop Sino-Swiss cooperation in fields such as forest policies and legislation, wood processing, protection and pests control, and sustainable management, among others.



Sino-Swiss Management Training Programme



Zurich and Kunming celebrate the 30th anniversary of their sister-city partnership



Mr. Andreas Götz, Deputy Director of the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) shakes hands with Ms. Yin Hong, Vice Administrator of the Chinese State Forest Administration (SFA)



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Swiss-Chinese Friendship Days in Xiamen and Nanning

The Consulate General of Switzerland in Guangzhou pays a great attention to be active in all of the six provinces within its consular area. This presence is meant to offer the Chinese visitors various activities related to Switzerland as well as to strengthen the ties between Swiss and Chinese authorities. For the year 2012, the Consulate had chosen Fujian Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region to host two Swiss-Chinese Friendship Days.

The Consulate General of Switzerland in Guangzhou, with the support of Swissnex China and the Swiss Business Hub China (SBH), organized two Swiss-Chinese Friendship Days in Xiamen on October 25th and 26th as well as in Nanning on November 1st and 2nd 2012.



Above: Gala dinner in Xiamen. Below: opening of the exhibition Swiss Design in Hollywood in Nanning.

These two events also gave the newly appointed Ambassador of Switzerland to the P.R.C. Mr. Jacques de Watteville the opportunity to pay his first official visits to both provinces. The Ambassador also opened the seminar on “Vocational Training and Apprenticeship in Switzerland”, held by Swissnex China and Les Roches Gruyère University of Applied Science, as well as the seminar “Switzerland – Enable your business in Europe”, held by the SBH. This seminar offered Chinese entrepreneurs and companies the opportunity to learn more about the advantages of setting up an EU headquarter in Switzerland. In the evening, a Gala buffet-dinner with around 200 guests in each city offered an excellent opportunity to network and meet Chinese officials from Fujian and Guangxi but also leaders from Swiss and Chinese companies. The Swiss folklore band “Kapelle Jungfrau” contributed a great deal to a relaxed and friendly atmosphere during the two Gala dinners.



On October 27th, Mrs. Li Yiping, Swiss Mezzo-Soprano of Chinese origin sang together with the Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of well known conductor Mrs. Zheng Xiaoying in the Xiamen International Convention Center Concert Hall which attracted over 800 music lovers. In Nanning, the Ambassador de Watteville lead the ribbon cutting for the opening of the exhibition Swiss Design in Hollywood that will be will be shown until December 16th 2012 in the Guangxi Museum of Nationalities. Seminars organized by SBH and Swissnex also took place on the occasion of these Swiss Days in Nanning.



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