

Newsletter

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

March 2013

A Word from the Ambassador

The year of the snake is beginning under favorable auspices for the Swiss protagonists in China. I am glad to observe a real motivation to foster collaboration among the various representatives of the Swiss government in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Hong Kong. You might say this should be obvious! I fully agree and I commit myself in this sense to fully valorize existing synergies and to create new ones.

As you may have already heard, there have been several changes among Swiss representatives during 2012 and 2013. Mr. Pascal Marmier took over Swissnex in Shanghai, Mr. Alain Graf is the new head of the Swiss Business Hub and there is also a new management team of the Swisscham in Beijing, to name just a few. All of them have expressed their strong commitment to work together to the benefit of Switzerland and its citizens.

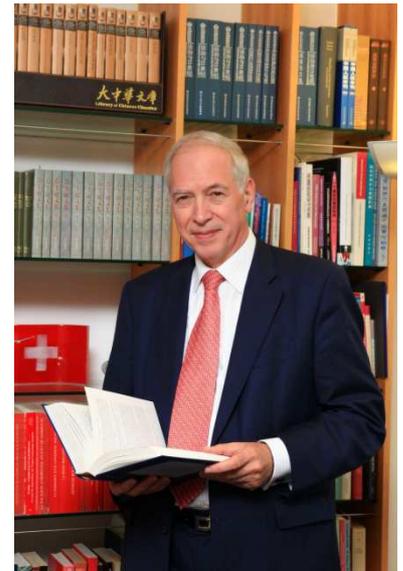
Many projects are going to take place in 2013; the most imminent ones are listed in this newsletter. Of course the Embassy will continue to closely follow the developments in China but also in Mongolia und North Korea, the two side-accreditations of the Embassy. We also remain closely involved in the ongoing negotiations for a bilateral Free Trade Agreement, and continue to cultivate contacts between Swiss and Chinese authorities, which will certainly be reinforced this year with several high-level visits.

Above and beyond these more conventional tasks, all the Swiss actors work hard to promote the image of Switzerland. Our country already benefits from a very positive image here in China, but it remains very traditional and linked to mountains, chocolate and Swiss army knives. Today, we would like to enhance some more contemporary sides of our country, which make its success: the excellence of its education system and research institutions, its competitive environment, the outstanding quality of life and its great creativity.

We all look forward to working together to achieve these common objectives!

Jacques de Watteville

Ambassador



Ambassador Jacques de Watteville



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Upcoming Events

Fête de la Francophonie:

La Fête de la Francophonie takes place during the whole month of March. This 18th edition in China gives you the opportunity to attend many cultural activities linked to the French speaking culture all over China in French, but also in Chinese and other languages. The Swiss Embassy and Consulates general in China are contributing to several activities:

Mars en Folie

Great success for the 6th edition of « Mars en Folie » in Beijing: The venue was full for the concert of the Swiss reggae musician **Junior Tshaka**, who played on Saturday 9th at Yugong Yishan after the Canadian Klô Pelgag, the French Les Mauvaises Langues and the Belgians Benjamin Schoos & Sophie Galet.

From March 6th to 23rd, these four groups are touring in 13 Chinese cities. Pop, rock and reggae, they will perform in universities and concert halls in Beijing and Macau, as well as Tianjin, Jinan, Qingdao, Wuhan, Xian, Guiyang, Chengdu, Chongqing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Hong Kong. The concerts are free and open to all! A unique opportunity to listen to brilliant young artists from the francophone music scene, presented for the first time in China.

The music festival Mars en Folie is organized by the network of Alliances françaises, the Embassies of Canada, Switzerland and Belgium / Wallonia-Brussels Delegation, as well as the Québec offices in China. (<http://www.marsenfolie.afchine.org>).

Festival du Film Francophone

The Francophone Film Festival is annually held in March. This year, 25 member countries of the Francophonie present films, documentaries and short films to the Chinese public in 13 different cities. (www.faguowenhua.com/francophonie).

For this 2013 edition, the Embassy of Switzerland has selected the film "Mon frère se marie" from the film-maker Jean-Stéphane Bron. This moving tragicomedy portrays the difficult relationship among the members of a Swiss middle-class family, which struggles to present a fake, but nice picture of themselves on the occasion of the wedding of their Vietnamese adoptive son Vingh. French, with Chinese and English subtitles. (<http://www.faguowenhua.com/francophonie>)



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Projet mode!

A young Swiss designer, Mrs Jenifer Burdet, will take part in this first edition of the Fashion project organized in the frame of the Fête de la Francophonie 2013. 14 young designers from Switzerland, Belgium, France, Canada and China will work together during two weeks at the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technologies (BIFT). This gives them a great opportunity to meet and exchanges ideas, techniques and artistic concepts. They will reveal their creativity and present their common work to the public on March 29th. Upon invitation only. For further information please contact the Embassy.



Fashion project

Groombridge

March 26th, BUAA University, Beijing

Don't miss the concert of the Swiss rock band Groombridge at the BUAA University in Beijing. You won't find the spirit of Burgdorf, their place of origin, but a more "British style" in their slightly psychedelic rock! They will perform in 9 cities in their second China Tour.

(<http://groombridge.ch/tours/chinatour-13/>)



Bubble Beatz performance

Bubble Beatz

April 29th to May 1st, Midi Music Festival, Beijing

Whether on the open air stage, in a club drenched in sweat, or in front of a huge TV audience: If they can hammer away at their impressive "Trashmachine", Bubble Beatz feel right at home, sweeping people along with hypnotic rhythms, powerful beats and a stunning visual spectacle. Since 1999, the two drummers Kay Rauber and Christian Gschwend have been giving everything in their intensely physical and visceral shows. They will be in China soon, electrifying new audiences with energy, rhythm and exhilaration... (<http://bubblebeatz.jimdo.com/>)



Sybreed

Sybreed

May 1st, Midi Music Festival, Beijing

If you like aggressive metal don't miss Sybreed on May 1st in Beijing! Formed in 2003, this industrial groove metal band from Switzerland is going to take you for a ride to explore the darker side of their musical experience with their chilling voices and groovy guitars. If you don't make it in Beijing, they will also perform in Shanghai, Shenzhen and Hong Kong. Supported by Pro Helvetia. (www.sybreed.com)



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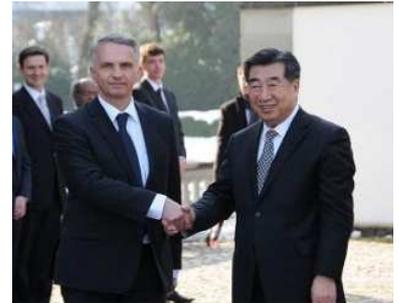
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Political News

Visit to Switzerland of Chinese Vice Premier HUI Liangyu

The Vice Premier of the People's Republic of China, Hui Liangyu paid an official working visit to Switzerland on 18 February 2013 at the invitation of Federal Councillor Didier Burkhalter, who as well as being Vice President of the Federal Council heads the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). During the visit he paid a courtesy call on the Swiss President Ueli Maurer and also had a meeting with Federal Councillor Johann N. Schneider-Ammann.

The two parties acknowledged the growing importance of exchanges between China and Switzerland in areas including the movement of persons, goods and services, culture, knowledge and ideas. It was also agreed that in addition to bilateral agreements and official visits, the imminent opening of a direct air link between Beijing and Geneva is both a good indicator and a new instrument for ever more dynamic relations between the two countries.

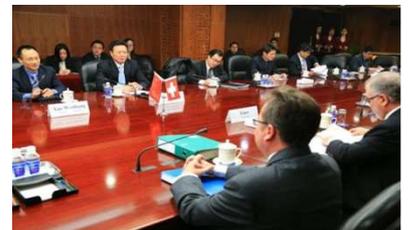


Mr. Burkhalter shakes hands with Mr. Hui Liangyu (picture from Xinhua Agency)

Economic News

Eighth Round of FTA Negotiations

The eighth round of negotiations on the Switzerland-China Free Trade Agreement took place in the week of 25 February 2013 in Beijing, China. The Chinese delegation was led by Mr. YAO Wenliang, Commercial Counselor, Department of International Trade and Economic Affairs, Ministry of Commerce. Head of the Swiss delegation was Ambassador Christian ETTER, Delegate of the Swiss Government for Trade Agreements, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research.



Assistant Minister of Commerce Mr. YU Jianhua, Chinese Head of FTA Delegation Mr. YAO Wenliang and Swiss Head of Delegation Mr. Christian Etter during the Opening Plenary of the 8th Round of FTA Negotiations

1st Round of Social Security Agreement (SSA) Negotiations

The Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security of China (MoHRSS) and the Federal Social Insurance Office (FSIO) held a first round of negotiations on a Social Security Agreement between the 4th and 6th of March in Beijing. The negotiations were efficient and took place in a friendly atmosphere. The objective is to conclude an agreement regulating primarily the posting of workers with the objective to mutually exempt them from the burden of double charging. Numerous points were agreed upon and a second round of negotiations will most likely be held this year.



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IPR-Dialogue

A delegation from the Swiss Intellectual Property Institute, led by its Deputy Director Mr. Felix Addor, visited Beijing from March 4th to 8th for the 6th round of the bilateral dialogue on IPR. On the Chinese side the dialogue is coordinated by the Department of Treaty and Law of MofCOM and involves several Chinese authorities responsible for IPR matters such as the State Intellectual Property Office, the State Administration of Industry and Commerce as well as a number of other relevant institutions.

The yearly meetings of the bilateral working group, which alternately take place in Switzerland and China serve the purpose of discussing and explaining questions related to the respective IP-regulations as well as specific industry problems. The dialogue also offers an opportunity to industry representatives to raise specific concerns in the framework of an industry roundtable.



1st Round of Social Security Agreement (SSA) Negotiations

Exploratory Talks on Bilateral Cooperation in Health Protection

Following the meeting of H.E. Ambassador de Watteville with Mr. YIN Li, Commissioner of the State Food and Drug Administration (SFDA) on February 4th, 2013, exploratory talks and exchange of information took place on March 4th and 5th, 2013 between SFDA and various Swiss competent authorities, such as experts from the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH), Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), Swissmedic (Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products) and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). The discussions were fruitful and the objectives for the mutual understanding of the regulatory policies in both countries in the fields of cosmetics, chemicals, medicines and medical devices have been successfully reached.



Chinese and Swiss delegation representatives with SFDA Deputy Commissioner Mr. BIAN Zhenjia (centre)

Groundbreaking Ceremony of Sino-Swiss Zhenjiang Ecological Industrial Park (SSZEIP)

On January 22th, 2013 the Groundbreaking Ceremony of the Sino-Swiss Zhenjiang Ecological Industry Park (SSZEIP) has been celebrated in Zhenjiang/Jiangsu. This bilateral initiative shall foster economic ties between Switzerland and China based on a more sustainable and environmental friendly development approach. The ceremony with speeches by the Swiss Ambassador, representatives of MofCOM, Zhenjiang and Cleantech Switzerland has been followed by more than 300 invited guests, amongst them 15 interested Swiss company representatives.



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Swiss Business Hub China

Golden Club - VIP Reception

Organized by the Swiss Business Hub, the Gala Dinner hosted by Ambassador Jacques de Watteville on November 30th, 2012 gathered 35 CEOs of important Chinese companies as well as Mr. Roland Decorvet, Chairman & CEO of Nestlé (China) Ltd. and Mr. Julien Bonnard, Manager of Baur of Lac Vins Asia. In addition to strengthen the business ties our two countries have developed since the launch of Deng Xiaoping's reform policy in 1978 this event offered an ideal platform to promote Switzerland as a business place. Following Mr. Ambassador's welcome note, Alain Graf, Counselor and Head of the Swiss Business Hub China, detailed the numerous advantages Switzerland can offer as a European hub to Chinese companies willing to develop their activities in Europe. Furthermore, Mr. Liu Erqi, CEO of China Volant Industry Co. Ltd., shared his positive experience as a participant in last year's CEO trip to Switzerland and how much he was impressed by the attractiveness of Switzerland as a business location. The CEO trip is a yearly "fact finding mission to Switzerland", usually held in July and organized by the SBH for 10 Chinese CEOs invited by the Ambassador.



Food Fact Finding Mission – November 10th to 20th, 2012

Organized by OSEC in cooperation with Swiss Business Hub China and Peach International, the Food Fact Finding Mission (FFFM) aimed to give Swiss entrepreneurs, who have the intention to enter the Chinese Market, a comprehensive and insightful view of the Chinese food market.

The 10 days FFFM took place in 5 different locations, starting in Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Nanjing and then ending in Beijing with the following program elements:

- Visit of successful Swiss companies and personal meetings with their high level managers;
- Market Check (from high-end stores to local supermarkets);
- Meeting with government officials and Investment Promotion Commission;
- Introduction to Top Chinese F&B experts and distributors, as well as logistic experts
- Meeting with the official Swiss representations in all locations.
- Visit of the FHC food fair in Shanghai
- Participation in networking events

Totally 9 Swiss companies and entrepreneurs from the Food & Beverage segment joined the FFFM. During the 10 days program, they had the opportunity to learn from both sides: experience from the Swiss business



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side in practice as well as the view of the Chinese distributors, consumers and government officials.

The FFFM also showed the participants very well the opportunities of the Chinese market for Swiss food suppliers on the one hand and also the big challenges on the other hand. It is obvious that a rising number of Chinese people can afford more expensive imported products. Such products are considered a symbol of wealth and display an international mindset. Additionally with several food scandals shocking the nation, the trust in domestic products has also been higher in the past. However at the same time, it is a huge and expensive challenge for a Swiss SME to start business in China. Culture differences, language (low penetration of English), general business methods, logistics, quality control and an unstable and little transparent legal framework are only some of the most important burdens for foreign market entrants to conquer.

Cultural News

Swiss Game Design

Pro Helvetia presented the exhibition Swiss Game Design from January 19th to February 3rd at CMoDA (Museum of Digital Arts) in Beijing. In a very interactive way, the exhibition displayed the edgy and contemporary visual culture offered by gaming, gathering 20 different games all realized by Swiss designers. Game designer Florian Faller arrived in Beijing with his award-winning Feist and gave the Beijing audiences a fruitful lecture. This exhibition allowed the Chinese public to get a deep insight of the Swiss creativity in the field of game design, which is often too little known. The 5,500 visitors could discover the wide variety of games and the state-of-the-art technologies developed in Switzerland.



Swiss Game Design Exhibition

Verbier Festival Chamber Orchestra

Led by the virtuoso Russian violinist Kirill Troussov, the Verbier Festival Chamber Orchestra played a brilliant concert at NCPA in Beijing as well as in Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen. For this first tour in China, it presented a very special repertoire, which alternates the pieces of Vivaldi's Violin Concerto "The Four Seasons" and Astor Piazzola's "Four Seasons of Buenos Aires". Thanks to the sponsoring of Julius Bär, the Chinese public had the chance to discover this outstanding ensemble, which gave us a taste of the spirit and atmosphere of the Verbier Festival !



Kirill Troussov and the Verbier Festival Chamber Orchestra



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Science, Education and Health News

All Swiss University Alumni Event

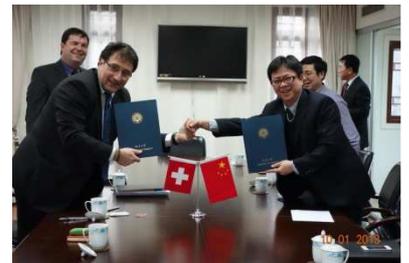
The annual Swiss university alumni gathering took place at Gehua Design Center on December 15th, 2012. More than 70 graduates from Swiss public universities and research institutes, including several freshly returned EPFL students, attended the networking event. The alumni were greeted by Ambassador de Watteville and Mrs. HONG Huang, director of Gehua Design Center library and were introduced to the new Science and Education team of the Embassy. Ambassador de Watteville also took the opportunity to donate a collection of books on Swiss art and design to the library.



All Swiss University Alumni Event

EPFL Vice President Visit to China

Philippe Gillet, Vice President of Academics of EPFL led a delegation to China in January. During his stay in Beijing, Professor Gillet visited EPFL's partner universities in Beijing, including Tsinghua University, Peking University, Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics and Chinese Academy of Sciences and renewed exchange agreements with the partners. Professor Gillet also hosted an EPFL alumni night at Swissotel together with over 20 EPFL graduates in China. The EPFL delegation was in town for a conference jointly organized by Tsinghua University and the EPFL-based International Risk Governance Committee.



EPFL Vice President Visit to China

Swiss Booth at Education Fairs in Shenyang and Ulaanbaatar

The Embassy of Switzerland took part in the China International Education Exhibit in Shenyang on March 12th. It will also be present on March 23rd and 24th at the International Education Exhibition in Mongolia. Comprehensive information about study opportunities in Switzerland will be provided at the "www.swissuniversity.ch" booth. Each year education fairs attract many students and parents interested in Switzerland's excellent education possibilities.



Swiss Booth at Education Fairs in Shenyang and Ulaanbaatar

8th APAIE Conference & Exhibition

From March 11th -14th 2013 the 8th Annual APAIE Conference & Exhibition took place at the AsiaWorld-Expo in Hong Kong, hosted by The Chinese University of Hong Kong. The aim was to grant the international educators community, over 1000 delegates from around the world, extensive opportunities to exchange ideas and learn about new initiatives and trends in the Higher Education field. Under the conference's theme "An Ascendant Asia-Pacific: International Higher Education in the 21st Century", the participants had access to over 50 seminars and lectures in order to learn more about best practices and future challenges. At the Exhibition with over



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100 booths, Swiss universities such as the University of Zurich, Bern, Lausanne and Geneva were given the opportunity to present their institutions and programs at the Swiss booth which was organized by Swissnex China - the Swiss Government's Higher Education outpost.

4th Reception of the St.Gallen Symposium in Beijing

The 4th Reception of the St. Gallen Symposium in Beijing is to be held on March 27th at the Swiss Residence in China. The reception is a prelude to the 43rd St. Gallen Symposium which will take place in the city of St. Gallen in May. Business leaders from MNCs, young entrepreneurs from high-tech startups and promising master and doctoral candidates at the most prestigious universities in China are invited to join a panel discussion led by high-profile guests on the topic "Rewarding Courage—the future of Chinese innovation".

Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships for Foreign Scholars and Artists Application is in Process

The application for Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships for Foreign Scholars and Artists for the academic year 2014-2015 is in process. The Swiss Government awards various postgraduate scholarships to Chinese scholars, researchers and artists. These scholarships provide graduates from all fields with the opportunity to pursue doctoral or postdoctoral research at a public higher education institution in Switzerland. Students and researchers from China Mainland interested in a Swiss Government Excellence Scholarship 2014/2015 have to submit their applications between March 1st and March 20th to the Chinese Scholarship Council.

Cooperation News

Collaboration in Water Domain Stepping Forward

In 2009, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the China Ministry of Water Resources and the Federal Office for Environment. Under this framework, the experts from the two countries are collaborating in three on-going projects, the early warning system for glacier lake outburst flooding in the Yarkant river, the integrated flooding risk management in the Yangtze river (Wuhan) and the dam safety enhancement management in the Sichuan province.

To establish long-term cooperation, a more programmatic approach is proposed by the Swiss team to transfer the Swiss concept in integrated water management and risk management in relation to water resources, especially under the perspective of a changing climate. On February 19th



Swiss booth at the AsiaWorld-Expo in Hong Kong



Ambassador de Watteville meeting Minister Chen Lei.



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2013, Ambassador Jacques de Watteville paid a courtesy call on Minister CHEN Lei, Ministry of Water Resources of China. Ambassador de Watteville handed over to the Minister a Concept Note in that perspective, and had a friendly exchange. Minister CHEN briefed the Swiss delegation about the challenges for China in water resources management, and invited the Ambassador to pay a visit, at his convenience this year, to the famous three-gorge project as well as to the project provinces.

High Level Dialogue in Climate Change

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has been collaborating with China in the field climate change adaption since mid 2009. The four-year trilateral on-going program of UK, Switzerland and China, called Adaptation to Climate Change in China (ACCC) has produced sound evidence in climate change and its impacts on agriculture, water resources, grassland, health and extreme events. All these contribute fundamentally to the National Adaptation Strategy, which is expected to be ratified after the two National Congress sessions.

To continue the bilateral cooperation with China, in particular to share China experiences and knowledge with other developing countries in adapting to climate change, the Embassy had a productive meeting with the Director General SU Wei of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the leading ministry in charge of climate change issues in China. NDRC is the highest policy maker in national economic development. China central government attaches equal priority to the climate adaptation and mitigation. Both sides express interest in deepening the mutual cooperation, helping local provinces in shaping their climate change adaption plan, and giving attention to the south-south collaboration in the future.



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