

A word from Ambassador Jean-Jacques de Dardel

Dear Friends of Switzerland,

2014 and the entry into force of the Free Trade Agreement will go down as a further milestone in the history of bilateral relations between China and Switzerland. At first glance, this 1000-page document, with annexes, might appear as a collection of abstruse regulations for back office businessmen and investors. As an example, here is art 2.3.1 (a): "*Customs duty on imports means any duty or charge of any kind imposed in connection with the importation of a product, but does not include any: (a) charge equivalent to an internal tax imposed consistently with paragraph 2 of Article III of the GATT 1994*". A technical jargon indeed!

But let's go beyond the technicity of each single article. This agreement is way more than a trade instrument. First, the whole drafting process has given priceless opportunities to develop trustful networking between the Swiss and Chinese administrations. It took only two years and half between the launch of the negotiation till the signature. But between January 2011 and July 2014, experts and diplomats from each country met more than 40 times and remained permanently connected, nurturing personal contacts and developing mutual knowledge and understanding in many fields such as intellectual property rights, technical barriers to trade and environmental and labour issues, to name some of them.



The agreement will not only boost trade and investment between our two countries, it will actually create a whole new framework for bilateral cooperation in many fields. It is in our mutual interest to keep an open and ongoing dialogue on various topics such as sustainable development or in the area of services for example. In this agreement; both countries have expressed their willingness to do so. For a very open country like Switzerland, it is always important to develop trade exchanges, all the more so with one of the most thriving nations in the world, it also necessary to nurture close contacts and enhance mutual understanding. In collaboration with the private sector, it is therefore now our task to identify needs and opportunities in order to maintain an active, effective and useful dialogue, building on the strong foundations which have now been laid.

However important this henceforth operational Free Trade Agreement may be, it should not distract from the multifaceted Sino-Swiss relations and their liveliness in other fields. It is the purpose of this revamped newsletter to give you a glimpse of the variety of the Swiss presence in China. Don't hesitate to give us your feedback and express your interests, as we will be looking into ways to further improve our outreach and information endeavors.



Jean-Jacques de Dardel
Ambassador of Switzerland to the People's Republic of China



Bilateral relations

Extensive Sino-Swiss relations throughout this year 2014 of entry into force of the Free Trade Agreement

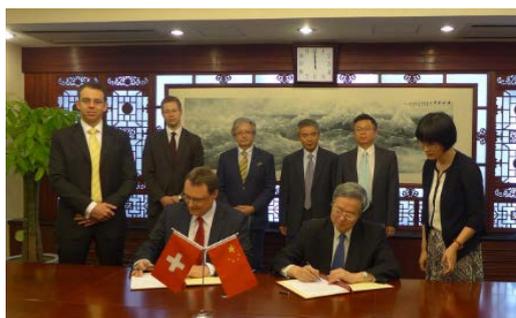
Diplomatic activities between the Swiss Confederation and the People's Republic of China (PRC) are still flourishing this year, thanks to the entry into force of the Free Trade Agreement but not only! High level visitors from both countries met several times and exchanged views on a comprehensive numbers of domains.

The highlight this year was certainly the visit from July 3rd to 12th of the President of the Council of States, Mr. Hannes Germann. Mr. Germann met **Mr. Zhang Dejiang, Chairman of the National People's Congress** of the PRC as well as **Vice-President, Mr. Li Yuanchao**. The discussion with Mr Li took place in the framework of the Sino-Swiss dialogue on environment in Guiyang where the delegation of Mr. Germann attended the Eco-Forum Global (EFG). This annual Chinese event brings together high-ranking politicians and renowned experts from around the world for exchanges of views on sustainable development. For the second consecutive year, Switzerland was one of the main guest countries to this important Chinese event in the field of environment.



Meeting of Mr. Hannes Germann with Mr. Zhang Dejiang, Chairman of the National People's Congress

Switzerland and China agreed to closer financial sector cooperation. The finance dialogue between the two countries also took a big step forward. This second edition of the dialogue which was held in Bern on June 27th, was launched in Zürich by a bilateral talk between **Finance Minister Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf** and China's Central Bank **Governor Zhou Xiaochuan**. The dialogue focused on the contribution and enhanced role of the Swiss financial sector in the process of internationalization of the Chinese currency, the renminbi. The two sides agreed to continue to cooperate closely in developing a renminbi centre in Switzerland.



The Governor of the People's Bank of China, Mr. Zhou Xiaochuan, and the Chairman of the SNB Governing Board, Mr. Thomas Jordan, signed the bilateral SWAP agreement

Less than one month later, the talks were concretized by the signature of a SWAP agreement between the Swiss National Bank (SNB) and the People's Bank of China. The agreement was signed in Beijing by Mr Zhou Xiaochuan, and the **Chairman of the SNB Governing Board, Thomas Jordan**. The swap agreement enables renminbi and Swiss francs to be purchased between the two central banks up to a limit of 150 billion renminbi, or CHF 21 billion. This will allow liquidity in renminbi and Swiss francs to be made available to the relevant markets as required. The swap agreement is a key prerequisite for the development of a renminbi market in Switzerland.

Last but not least, State Secretary for Economic Affairs Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch paid a visit to China and met with her counterpart, **Vice-Minister of Commerce Zhong Shan** to celebrate the entry into force of the FTA and discuss the further promotion of the economic relationship between the two countries.

In yet another domain, the 6th Sino-Swiss High-Level Dialogue on Water Management was held in Crans-Montana in the presence of **Swiss Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard** and **Chinese Vice Minister of Water Resources Hu Siyi**. Both parties signed a cooperation agreement with focus on the Yangtze River (Jinsha River Basin) and the optimum management of the associated water resources, in particular in the context of floods and periods of drought.

Trade and investment

One year after its signature, the Free Trade Agreement enters into force

On July 1st 2014, the bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the Swiss Confederation and the People's Republic of China has entered into force.

This milestone in Sino-Swiss relations was celebrated on July 1st both in Basel, where Federal Councillor Johann Schneider-Ammann was hosting festivities, and in Beijing, where State Secretary for Economic Affairs Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch inaugurated the third Sino-Swiss Economic Forum at the Grand Hyatt Hotel Beijing. The forum was dedicated to the FTA and co-organized by Swisscham and the Embassy of Switzerland.

For the vast majority of bilateral trade, the FTA dismantles tariffs fully or partially, sometimes subject to transition periods. The FTA improves mutual market access for goods and services, enhances legal security for the protection of intellectual property and for bilateral economic relations in general. Together with related agreements, such as the agreement on labour and various sector-specific agreements, the FTA contributes to the reduction of non-tariff barriers to trade as well as sustainable development and the promotion of a deepened cooperation between Switzerland and China.



Opening Speech of State Secretary Mrs. Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch at the Sino-Swiss Economic Forum

Opening of the Sino-Swiss Zhenjiang Ecological Industrial Park

China and Switzerland cooperated to establish an ecological industrial Park which is built with Swiss Cleantech Know-how and will host industrial companies from all over the world in addition to Swiss and Chinese companies.



Digital model of Sino-Swiss Zhenjiang Ecological Industrial Park

Only two years after the cooperation work started, a first compound was inaugurated on July 2nd 2013 in the presence of State Secretary for Economic Affairs, Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch and Mr. Fu Ziying, Vice-Governor of Jiangsu Province.

Switzerland stands out due to its important number of innovative companies. At the same time, the need for sustainable technology is increasing among emerging markets such as China. Thus this specific expertise features big potential for further bilateral developments. In this context, the Swiss Federal Counsellor Johann Schneider-Ammann and the Chinese Minister of the Economy Chen Deming signed on the July 9th, 2012 a Memorandum of Understanding in order to jointly support the creation of a Sino-Swiss Ecological Industrial Park. The Sino-Swiss Zhenjiang Ecological Industrial Park (SSZEIP) is built according to ecological standards and will host companies from all around the world. The park, which stretches out on a total of 20 km², covers four different thematic fields: Innovation and Research & Development; Cleantech; energy efficient construction, leisure and tourism.

Additional information concerning the Sino-Swiss Zhenjiang Ecological Industrial Park can be found under the following link: www.sszeip.com.

Culture and Science

New promotion program for Swiss higher education and research in China

Swissnex, the institution for the promotion of Switzerland in the areas of science, innovation and education, has launched the Swiss Days, a new communication program for Swiss higher education and research in Chinese major universities.

Switzerland is known in China for its outstanding landscapes, its traditions and watches, but few people are aware of the high standard of the Swiss education system. Even though many students know that Swiss universities rank among the best in world, Switzerland does not rank highest among students as an education destination. With the Swiss Days, Swissnex wants to promote the excellence of Swiss education and research on Chinese campuses and create a networking platform between Swiss universities and Chinese young generation.

Beihang University Swiss Day took place on June 12th. Throughout the day, the event banners were floating all around the university as a reminder of the many organized activities. The highlight of the day was the two lectures given by key note speakers Professor Thierry Courvoisier, President of the Swiss Academies of Science and Professor Volker Gass, Director of Swiss Space Center at EPFL. These two famous experts in the domain of astrophysics and space science attracted many students and researchers with a full audience of 200 people. Temporary exhibitions on Swiss success stories in space, on the CERN physics laboratory in Geneva, as well as a photography exhibition of Fabian Oefner and a photo booth from Switzerland Tourism gave the opportunity to students to ask questions and interact with Swiss institutions, also in a playful way. During the whole day, information materials, quiz games and goodies informed and entertained the passerby.

The excellent collaboration between Swissnex and Beihang university was a complete success, emphasized by the signature of a cooperation agreement between Beihang and EPFL (Lausanne) at the issue of the opening speech by the Swiss Embassy's Chargé d'affaires Mrs Salome Meyer. Other Swiss Day events took place in Shanghai at Tongji University on May 23rd and at Fudan University on June 16th. New series of Swiss Days will be organized in October 2014 and March 2015.



Swiss Day banners at Beihang University, June 12th 2014



"liquid jewels" series by Fabian Oefner

Swiss science photographer Fabian Oefner, born in 1984, is a curious investigator and artist, whose work moves between the fields of art and science. His images capture in unique and imaginative ways natural phenomena that appear in our daily lives, such as sound waves, centripetal forces, iridescence, or the unique properties of magnetic ferroliquids. His exploration of the unseen and poetic facets of the natural world is an invitation, as he says, "to stop for a moment and appreciate the magic that constantly surrounds us." (text from www.fabianoefner.com)

Events

“Switzerland in Motion”: The Swiss National Day, 40 years of the Embassy compound in Sanlitun and 64 years of diplomatic ties with the People’s Republic of China - all celebrated in one amazing night !



On August 1st, Swiss Ambassador Jean-Jacques de Dardel and Mr. Wang Chao, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, together with more than 1500 guests enjoyed highlights of Swiss cultural diversity, scientific achievements and culinary arts and saw “Switzerland in Motion” in the biggest event ever in the history of the compound of the Swiss Embassy in Beijing.

Decorated with the special event logo featuring Swiss scenery, innovations and architectures in a both Swiss and Chinese paper-cut style, the whole Embassy compound was infused with the warmth of the long friendship between Switzerland and China, as well as the infinite vitality of modern Switzerland full of energy and creativity.

Among the various activities, the guests were lead in a journey through time through a retrospective exhibition of old photos of the former Swiss Embassy in Beijing, as well as the construction of the present compound. They could also discover an interactive space exhibition featuring the debris-cleaning project CleanSpace One and the orbiting Swiss satellite SwissCube.

While discovering the final laureates of the Photo Competition “Switzerland in your Eyes” organized on this occasion and enjoying the charming atmosphere of the Embassy garden, the guests were invited to experience Swiss gastronomy and drinks. Not less than 1600 bottles of Rivella were distributed, with more than 2000 Teuscher chocolate truffles and 40 kilograms of Raclette, along with a wide variety of Swiss typical dishes and wines.

During the event Ambassador de Dardel stressed: “the good relations between nations are not only a question of diplomatic ties. This is very much linked with the dynamism of private exchanges in trade, culture and science to name some of them.” Standing at the conjunction of past and future on this very special day, with the strength of history and the courage of exploring new horizons, we hope the night was not only a great memory for all but also made its own contribution to the friendship between Chinese and Swiss people.





Diplomatic life



Ambassador de Dardel visits Tadra Orphanage in Qinghai

Ambassador Jean-Jacques de Dardel paid a visit to Qinghai province in Western China.

During a short stay in the capital Xining, he held a dinner with the local Swiss community and toured the renowned Qinghai Red-Cross Hospital, where a couple of Swiss doctors are committing their expertise to advancing care. Ambassador de Dardel then made his way up to the Tibetan plateau to visit the TADRA Project in the Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and take part in the moving but joyous occasion of the annual Children's Festival. TADRA (www.tadra.ch) provides around 500 orphans and abandoned children with an education and a home in two villages in the Tibetan areas of Qinghai and Sichuan. As private initiative and registered charity it is supported by many Swiss citizens.



Briefing for the business community

After taking office as Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, to Mongolia and to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ambassador de Dardel held his first biannual briefing for the business community on May 15th.

He focused on his first impressions and priorities for the three countries covering topics ranging from economic relations and the Free Trade Agreement, to urbanization, food safety and intellectual property. The briefing was organized by the Swiss Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Beijing (SwissCham)

50th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Switzerland and Mongolia

Ambassador Martin Dahinden, Director-General of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), was in Ulaanbaatar for the celebration the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Switzerland and Mongolia as well as the 10th anniversary of the SDC's development cooperation activities in the country.



The official reception for the celebration of this double jubilee took place on May 21st in Ulaanbaatar. In the presence of the Mongolian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Luvsanvandan Bold, Mongolian government representatives, members of the international diplomatic corps, heads of international organizations and members of the Swiss community in Mongolia all enjoyed the pleasant atmosphere, the music and dance performances as well as the excellent dishes cooked by Kempinski with Swiss Wine.

On the occasion of this anniversary, a photo exhibition showing Switzerland and Mongolia pictures was exhibited at the main square in Ulaanbaatar. Passers-by were invited to participate in a small quiz "Who knows Switzerland best?"



Did you know?



The Chinese version of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum website is online! Taking up the user-friendly design of the English website, the Chinese version contains all the information needed to prepare a visit and gives prominence to the new permanent exhibition, The Humanitarian Adventure.

Publication of the Chinese version of the book “SWISS MADE, The untold story behind Switzerland’s success” by R. James Breiding. Don’t miss this comprehensive presentation of Switzerland’s economic achievement. Swiss Made outlines how numerous global giants were created within our small landlocked country. Yes, Switzerland produces plenty of milk chocolate but also dominates a wide range of industries from pharmaceuticals and electrical engineering.



How is this possible? Can the Swiss continue to perform in a hyper-competitive global economy? The author R. James Breiding offers answers to these and many other questions about the Swiss economy while describing origins, structures, and characteristics of the most important Swiss companies. The book can be ordered at the Swiss Center SH: www.swisscenters.org

No more visa for Swiss citizens travelling to Mongolia. The Government of Mongolia decided to allow citizens of 42 countries to enter Mongolia without having a visa in order to boost the country’s economy. The new regulation applies from June 2014 until December 2015. Swiss citizens can travel to Mongolia visa-free up to 30 days for tourist and business purposes.



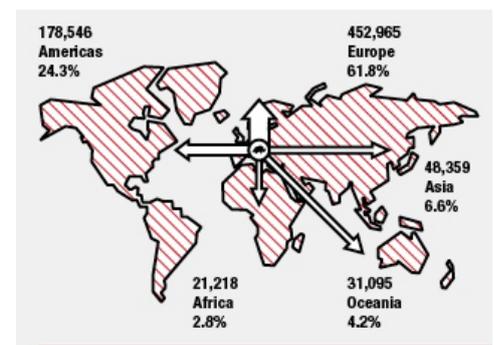
Facts & Figures

8'136'700 Swiss population

73.75% of the people live in urban areas

23.3% are foreign residents (1.87 million persons)

10% of Swiss citizens live abroad (732'183 persons)



Upcoming events



OHNE ROLF China tour

Beijing Fringe festival, Sep 12-14th
Hangzhou Kebian theatre, Sep. 17-18th
Shanghai Power Station of Art, Sep. 19th

Two men and thousands of posters! A silent conversation starts. Soon they flick through the pages for their life... OHNE ROLF is virtuosos of printed improvisation. With their absurd and ingenious play on words they move somewhere between theatre, comedy and animated comic strip. OHNE ROLF has been performing their shows more than 2000 times in German, French and English. And now the first time in Chinese!

LIFT going to China!

Shanghai, Power Station of Art, Shanghai, Sept. 10th

Lift is organizing the first Lift Event China in Shanghai in partnership with **Swissnex China**. Lift China will be the place for makers, artists, startups and pioneers alike to meet and make fruitful connections. By gathering observers, explorers and builders from around the world, Lift is a key partner for organizations and individuals wishing to identify the current challenges and creative solutions presented by emerging technologies. <http://liftconference.com/lift-china-14>



Ugo Rondinone - *Breathe Walk Die*

Rockbund Art Museum, Sept. 13th 2014 to Jan. 4th 2015

Rockbund Art Museum (RAM) presents the very first exhibition of the internationally acclaimed Swiss artist Ugo Rondinone in China. Rondinone will tailor for RAM a stunning visual ensemble of works in which the whole architecture of the museum and the visitors will be involved in a full spectrum of colors and advances extremely diverse techniques: neon signs, gradient horizon wall paintings, windows filters and performing clowns.

Roman Signer

Videos and Films 1975-1989 and NOW

Hangzhou, China Academy of Art, Sept. 1st to 30th

Beijing, CAFA Museum. Oct 24th to Nov 25th

The time period 1975 to 1989 witnessed the birth and death of a sort of 'media age'. Unlike a lot of artists who rely too heavily on media techniques, Signer attempts to find himself a free balance between media intervention and naturally occurring events, and to present mundane daily life through extremely simplistic methods. Roman Signer first came to China for <Action and Video> project in 2011. 3 years later, curator Li Zhenhua initiated Roman Signer's first touring exhibition in China.



Béatrice Berrut

Beijing, Tsinghua University, Sept 5th at 19.00

http://www.hall.tsinghua.edu.cn/info/pwzx_hdap/1596#

Described as a wonderfully talented and musical pianist with impressive seriousness, commitment and sensitivity, the young Swiss pianist Beatrice Berrut is going to tour China from September 5th to 14th with a repertoire of Bach, Brahms, Liszt and the Swiss composer Heinz Holliger.

Newsletter

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

August 2014

List of Swiss institutions in China

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