



## Media release

Beijing 21 April 2015

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# Swiss airplane Solar Impulse lands in Nanjing to meet Chinese youth on innovation and clean energy

**Solar Impulse 2, the zero-fuel aircraft conceived in Switzerland, completed its sixth leg of the round-the-world flight, and landed at the Nanjing Lukou International Airport on Tuesday night, April 21 at 11:28pm, 17 hours 22 minutes after it took off from Chongqing.**

The single-seater airplane, with energy generated by the 17,000 solar cells built in its wings, left the Chongqing Jiabei International Airport at 6:06 am, Tuesday. Navigated by co-founder and pilot Bertrand Piccard, it flew a total distance of 1,241 kilometers.

“I’m here to extend my warmest congratulations to my countryman Bertrand Piccard who has successfully made another important step in this unprecedented adventure. As the Swiss Ambassador to China, it is my honor to witness the plane’s two landings in China and to share the pilots’ dream, passion and utmost endeavor to campaign for a clean future with renewable resources,” said Mr. Jean-Jacques de Dardel, Ambassador of Switzerland to the People’s Republic of China, who welcomed the plane at the airport.

“The Swiss Confederation supports the project as it is also an embodiment of Switzerland’s commitment to clean energy and environment protection. The technological expertise, including that in ultra-light composite materials, energy chain and solar cells developed by the leading Swiss research institute Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) also showcases the strengths Switzerland has developed when it comes to innovation and technology,” he added.

The ambassador also thanked the Nanjing authorities and airport staff for their support to Solar Impulse’s stay in the city.

Solar Impulse 2 arrived in Chongqing on March 31 following its 20-hour flight from Mandalay, Myanmar. The plane was scheduled to leave for Nanjing the next day. However, due to unfavorable weather conditions, it had to stay in Chongqing for 20 days. As scheduled, the plane will be stationed in Nanjing for about three weeks, and get ready for the next leg to fly over the Pacific.

During this period, the Embassy of Switzerland in China, one of the project's partners, will host several activities with the Solar Impulse in Nanjing. On April 30<sup>th</sup>, about 600 Chinese university students and young people will be invited to the airport where the plane is parked, and exchange ideas with the pilots on Swiss innovation, technology, renewable resources and environment protection.

With its wings at 72 meters, larger than that of a Boeing 747 and its weight about the same as a family car at 2,300 kilograms, Solar Impulse is the world's only manned solar airplane able to fly day and night without fuel.

The plane, created by Swiss explorers Bertrand Piccard and André Borschberg, is a collaborative project of over 100 Swiss government institutes, research centers and private companies. It is currently on a five-month epic journey to circle the globe solely with solar energy after it became airborne in Abu Dhabi, UAE on March 9.

While the aircraft embraces an international vision and approach, it benefits from the joint efforts of high-standard research institutes in Switzerland and the country's leading position in innovation and technology. For instance, 20 laboratories from EPFL were involved in researching on subjects related to the solar plane, such as solar energy, computers, modelization and new materials. The Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Science and Technology (EMPA) tailor-made a thermo-regulating clothing system for the pilots and a specialized insulating seat and seat cushion combination which can adapt to the extreme temperatures in the cockpit.

Placing priority on research, education and technology, Switzerland has been dominating in most innovation indicators worldwide. It ranks No. 1 in the Global competitiveness Index 2014-2015 for six consecutive editions since 2009, No. 1 in the Innovation Union Scoreboard 2014 and No. 1 in the Global Innovation Index 2014

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**Solar Impulse official website:** [www.solarimpulse.com](http://www.solarimpulse.com)

**Official Chinese website:** <http://solarimpulse.sina.com.cn/>

**Swiss Confederation Weibo:**

- Embassy of Switzerland in Beijing: @瑞士驻华大使馆
- Consulate of Switzerland in Shanghai: @瑞士驻上海总领事馆
- Swissnex: @瑞士科技文化中心

**Solar Impulse Weibo (Chinese Version Twitter):**

- Solar Impulse official account: @阳光动力官博
- Bertrand Piccard: @贝特朗-皮卡尔
- André Borschberg: @安德烈-波许博格

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**Youku (video sharing):**

<http://i.youku.com/u/UMTg0NzQyMjk1Mg>

**Press corner of Solar Impulse website to download latest pictures and video:**

<http://press.solarimpulse.com>

Username: solar-impulse

Password: zerofuelairplane-2012

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