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EMBASSY OF SWITZERLAND IN CHINA



Media release

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Photos of the Shaping Visions event to be released at 9pm, Sept. 14

Shaping Visions: splendid fashion, design night highlights 65 years of dynamic Sino-Swiss diplomatic relations

On September 14, the Swiss Embassy turns into a multi-faceted platform and delights its guests with a glamorous show and meaningful dialogue of Swiss and Chinese fashion, design and culture as it celebrates the 65th anniversary of bilateral relations between Switzerland and the People's Republic of China. As one of the first Western countries to recognize the New China in January 1950, the two countries have together crafted numerous achievements in the past 65 years, and have been enjoying stable, ever-growing and prosperous bilateral relations.

The official celebration, titled *Shaping Visions*, is characterized by an unprecedented fashion show brought by talented and young Swiss and Chinese fashion designers and labels including Julian Zigerli, enSoie, Yingz. C and CH'IN. Design pieces from students from Geneva University of Art and Design, China Central Academy of Fine Arts and a jewellery exhibition add charisma to the evening. The creative display of innovative Swiss technical textiles on the Embassy's compound offers an insightful look into Switzerland's long history, rich heritage and the latest innovative developments in the textile industry.

Captivating runway show

The fashion show is produced by Mode Suisse, Switzerland's leading platform for emerging fashion designers, in cooperation with Brand New China, a visionary concept store created by Hung Huang, one of China's most influential fashion figures, in support of promising Chinese designers. During the 30-minute catwalk, Swiss and Chinese designers showcase their freshness and boldness and interpret their understanding of modernity and innovation with their latest collections.

“People might not necessarily associate a fashion and design happening with a diplomatic occasion, especially such an important one like the 65th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Switzerland and China. Yet, the dynamism, modernity, innovation and the intimate collaboration among all partners involved at our event are the best demonstration of the substantial Sino-Swiss relationship. We’d like to use this occasion to bring to everyone’s attention a domain where both countries might not be internationally well known but have lots to say,” said Swiss Ambassador to China Jean-Jacques de Dardel at a press conference for the official celebration on Monday morning.

The creativity and capacity of Swiss design is also manifested in the luxury watch tailor-made by the well-known Swiss watchmaker Hublot. As the official watch partner for the jubilee year, Hublot revealed its Classic Fusion Chrono Aero "65th Anniversary Swiss-China" Limited Watch on Monday, paying tribute to the historic moment in the robust bilateral relations between the two countries.

“As one of the world’s most innovative nations, Switzerland has been enjoying an exclusive reputation in the fashion and design field thanks to its unique and high quality Swiss textiles as well as a number of emerging designers. Meanwhile in China, a group of talented Chinese fashion designers also consistently refresh the international stage with creative ideas,” Ambassador de Dardel noted. “In this sense, we intend to create new perspectives, offer new insights into and shape traditional visions for the fashion and design industries in our two countries,” he added.

Breathing textiles into life

Besides the runway show, an exhibition presenting Switzerland’s know-how in technical textiles demonstrates the country’s revolutionary involvement in the textile industry. Eastern Switzerland has long been known for its tradition and expertise in the textile industry and a large number of Swiss companies have been in the business for well over a century. As Asia has become the engine for producing classic fabrics, Swiss textile companies started to specialize in developing high-tech and smart textiles and repeat their success to new developments and markets.

With innovation as the key word, the exhibition, produced in collaboration with the Swiss Textiles association, showcases how Swiss companies continue to lead a pioneering role by applying state-of-the-art technologies for new applications and solutions in the various fields such as healthcare, mobility and sustainability.

“Switzerland is a country which embraces innovation with great gusto and the evolving textile industry is an excellent example to illustrate this,” noted Swiss Ambassador de Dardel. “Meanwhile, China is also a world powerhouse of textile production and it has been tackling global challenges by developing high-quality, sustainable technologies and added-value products. The making of fabrics and the interweaving of threads somehow signify the network our two nations are making.”

Intensified Sino-Swiss relations

On January 17, 1950, Switzerland recognized the newly founded People’s Republic of China. The first Swiss representation in Beijing opened on September 14 the same year, marking the final step in establishing official diplomatic relations.

Since those early beginnings, the relationship between the two countries has strengthened and expanded steadily. The dynamism of the intensified bilateral relationship is underlined with numerous great achievements in the wide range of fields such as politics, economy, culture, education, science and technology, and more recently, the environmental field.

The latest intensive economic co-operation between Switzerland and China is marked by the successful implementation of the free trade agreement since July 2014, Switzerland becoming a renminbi hub and its active engagement in the China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. The bilateral trade between the two countries (including Hong Kong) came to 45 billion US dollars in 2014 and Switzerland has become China's eighth most important source of imports earlier this year. The overnight stays of Chinese visitors in Switzerland set a remarkable new record of close to 1.2 million and that figure is up by 33% in the first half of this year.

Support from Swiss enterprises

Switzerland is home to a number of powerful global enterprises in the areas such as banking, pharmaceuticals, machinery, watchmaking and construction. Some of them have witnessed the development of Sino-Swiss relations and supporting the activities organized by the Swiss representations throughout the year.

Schindler, the world's leading elevator manufacturer, is the first foreign company that China built a joint venture with back in 1980. Nestlé, the world's largest food company headquartered in Vevey, Switzerland, opened its first sales office in Shanghai in 1908 and now employs over 50,000 people in the Greater China region. Bühler, with expertise in producing plant and equipment and related services for processing foods, has been re-shaping and supporting the Chinese food industry in its transition to world class food safety standards in the past 30 years.

The dynamic company Mercuria, established in Geneva in 2004, has now become one of the largest integrated energy and commodity trading companies in the world. Last but not least, the newly created group LafargeHolcim, registered in Switzerland, leads the building materials industry. Operating in 90 countries including China, it has been committed to driving sustainable solutions for better building and infrastructure.

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Embassy of Switzerland in China official website: www.eda.admin.ch/beijing

Embassy of Switzerland in China Weibo: [@瑞士驻华大使馆](https://weibo.com/瑞士驻华大使馆)

65th Anniversary of Sino-Swiss relations: www.Switzerland65China.com

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