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Swissnews



Message from Ambassador Jean-Jacques de Dardel



Ambassador de Dardel and his wife wish all readers a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. ©Swiss Embassy

Dear Swiss citizens and friends of Switzerland,

'Tis the season for festive cheer!
Allow me to start the final issue of Swissnews for 2016 by wishing you and your families a safe, peaceful and joyful Christmas and New Year.

As we near the end of the year, it is worth taking time to reflect on the past and look ahead to the future. I am very glad to say that the past year has been extremely fulfilling for Sino-Swiss relations, which have continued building momentum through further high-level exchanges between Beijing and Bern. Following Swiss President

Johann Schneider-Ammann's visit to China in April 2016, Sino-Swiss relations have surged to new heights vivified by both countries' Innovative Strategic

Partnership.

The partnership will usher in new collaboration opportunities through the application of “practical innovation” unique to Switzerland. As creative partners, both countries will explore innovative ways to further ties to mutually beneficial ends.

On the economic front, the fourth round of the financial dialogue between our two countries was successfully held in Geneva. Both sides pledged to further expand cooperation in financial matters and mutual market access, while also pushing ahead with the internationalization of the renminbi. As bilateral trade continues growing, the newly-opened Swiss Consulate General in Chengdu is expected to further drive economic exchanges while also boosting trade, innovation and tourism.

In people-to-people exchanges, Switzerland is bringing itself closer to Chinese visitors not only by organizing and supporting cultural, educational and innovation programs, but also through the establishment of new Visa Acceptance Centers (VAC). Twelve VACs opened nationwide in 2016, speeding up and simplifying visa application procedures.

With 2017 just around the corner, I am optimistic about bringing more substance to our new partnership. I very much look forward to the state visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Switzerland at the beginning of next year. His visit will without doubt substantially increase bilateral interactions, further develop our shared visions and bring our shared goals closer to fruition. I encourage you to follow future Sino-Swiss developments and get involved with the many exciting events planned by our Embassy and consulates general.

Jean-Jacques de Dardel

Ambassador of Switzerland to the People's Republic of China

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Bilateral Relations

Sino-Swiss political dialogue held; preparations for President Xi's state visit underway



Chinese and Swiss foreign ministers met in Neuchâtel on Dec.12. © keystone

Swiss and Chinese foreign ministers expressed pleasure at the steady progress in bilateral relations made on migration and in the political, economic and financial domains during their talks. Preparations for President Xi's state visit to Switzerland in early 2017 are under way. [Read more>>>](#)

New consulate general in Chengdu to boost ties



The opening ceremony of CG Chengdu on Nov. 30. © Swiss Embassy

Switzerland opened a consulate general (CG) in November 2016 in Chengdu. As the fifth Swiss representative office in China, the Chengdu CG will service the Southwest China region with its main focus to promote trade, innovation and tourism between the two countries. [Read more>>>](#)

Related: [Low Carbon Cities Project](#) | [Visa Acceptance Center](#)

Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights

Switzerland co-organized and co-chaired the 16th Informal Asia-Europe Meeting Seminar on Human Rights in Beijing in November. The initiative promotes mutual understanding and cooperation between Asia and Europe in political dialogue, particularly on human rights. [Read more>>>](#)

Inauguration of occupational health and safety MoU

A visiting State Secretariat for Economic Affairs delegation recently inaugurated the new Memorandum of Understanding on occupational health and safety. The agreement was signed during Swiss President Johann Schneider-Ammann's visit to China in April 2016. It covers labor and employment issues under both countries' Free Trade Agreement. [Read more>>>](#)

Economic News

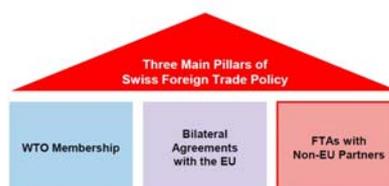
4th round of Sino-Swiss financial talks

Swiss and Chinese representatives of financial markets and central banks explored further areas for cooperation in their fourth round of talks. Both sides agreed to continue working together in their respective areas, push ahead with the internationalization of the renminbi via Switzerland and continuously improve relevant framework conditions. [Read more>>>](#)

Ambassador's Briefing

2016 has been another year of fruitful interactions between Switzerland and China as the two countries elevated their relations to a Strategic Innovative Partnership. Highlighting current trends, Swiss Ambassador de Dardel provided a comprehensive overview of the state of Sino-Swiss affairs from domestic, bilateral and regional perspectives. [In slides: Ambassador's Briefing.](#)

Swiss Foreign Trade Policy



Source: State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (State Confederation)



Swiss foreign trade policy. © Swiss Embassy

AIIB recruitment drive

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is recruiting employees across a variety of areas. Applicants with relevant technical competence,

international financial experience and suitable educational backgrounds are encouraged to apply. For more information, please visit the AIIB's website: www.aiib.org.

Science and Education

Venture Leaders bring high-tech startups to China



This year's Venture Leaders China program involved entrepreneurs from 10 startups who embarked on a 10-day fact-finding mission in China. The founders met with investors, business executives, fellow entrepreneurs and potential collaborators. [Read more>>>](#)

Venture Leaders of 2016 were received by Ambassador de Dardel in Beijing. © Swiss Embassy

Related: [swissnex China](#) | [venturelab](#)

Swiss Day 2016: focus on innovation

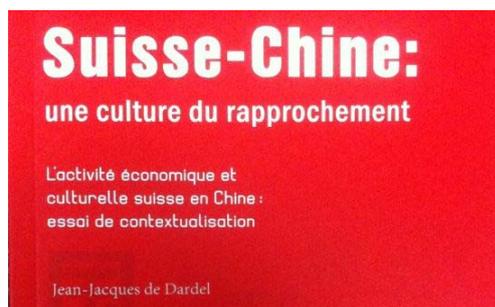


The Swiss booth presented explanatory panels highlighting the country's innovative strength and competitiveness, in addition to examples of projects and research breakthroughs. [Read more>>>](#)

Cultural News

Suisse-Chine: Une culture du rapprochement

Swiss Ambassador to China, Jean-Jacques de Dardel, offers a comprehensive and concise review of the evolution of Sino-Swiss bilateral relations in his new book *Suisse-Chine: une culture du*



rapprochement. Published in French and Chinese, the book also explores the development of Switzerland's foreign policy and external cultural policy. [Read more>>>](#)

Jean-Jacques de Dardel

The book is an invaluable asset and source for experts, scholars, journalists and researchers. © Swiss Embassy

Celebrating Italian language and culture

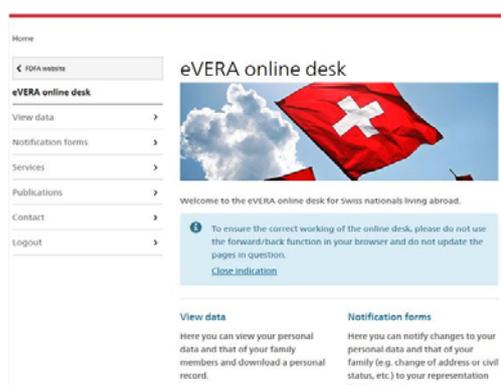
The Swiss Embassy in Beijing and its consulates general presented a rich program of book talks, film screenings and lectures to Chinese audiences during Italian Language Week in October 2016. Highlights included Ticino Night, an evening dedicated to the only canton in Switzerland where Italian is the sole official language. [Read more>>>](#)

Consular News

Express and urgent China Visas for Swiss Citizens

China re-introduced an express service for visa procedures for Swiss citizens on October 19, 2016. Urgent service (24h pick-up) and express service (two- or three-day pick-up) are available for additional fees. Swiss citizens can enquire about special conditions with their local Chinese Embassy.

Online desk for Swiss expats



The online desk provide Swiss nationals abroad the possibility to access consular services. © FDFA

The Online Desk for Swiss citizens living abroad was launched on October 5, 2016. Swiss citizens can request consular services and manage their data in the Swiss-abroad-register anytime by using the Online Desk, which is accessible on computers and mobile devices.

To access the services, please log on to the website of [the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs](#) and click on 'Login Online Desk'.

Services will be continuously expanded. We trust that communication with the Swiss representation in your host country will become more convenient. Please direct any questions to your local Swiss representation.

Consulate General in Guangzhou to be relocated

The Consulate General of Switzerland in Guangzhou is scheduled to be relocated to a new office in the city's Zhujiang New Town neighborhood during the third week of 2017. For details and further announcement, please follow the Consulate General's [homepage](#) or its official WeChat account SwissConsulate_GZ.

New address: 27F, Kingold Century, Jinsui Road, Tianhe District, Guangzhou
Tel: +86 20 3833 0450

China Encounters

Documenting Life in the Alps



Jon, 3, enjoys very much his summer in the Alps. © Susanna Fanzun

Trough her camera, Swiss filmmaker Susanna Fanzun recorded the daily life of three kids in the Safiental Valley in Canton Graubünden over two summers. In the absence of digital devices, the children's daily lives center around cows, cheese and playful learning through helping with daily chores.

[Read more>>>](#)

Upcoming Events

Below are some of the highlights of the cultural events from the Swiss Embassy and its Consulates General. For more events and detailed information, please visit the [Agenda page of the Embassy's website](#) or follow its WeChat: [SwissChat](#).

15/01 - Power Station of Art, Shanghai

The Theory Opera: 达-da Manifesto



2016 marks the centenary of Dada, an avant-garde art movement



that originated in Zürich. In celebration of the spatial and temporal evolution of Dada, Open Matter Institute presents the 达-da Manifesto revealing the latent, unspoken sound of “da.” Event supported by Pro Helvetia Shanghai, Swiss Arts Council.

Until 02/03 - OCT-LOFT, Shenzhen

Shenzhen Independent Animation Biennale



Swiss artists Yves Netzhammer and Bernd Schurer present Cemetery of Clouds, a multichannel installation with mirrors, projections and soundscapes. The best films from Fantoche, a Swiss Animation Film Festival, will also be screened.

02 - Xiamen

China between Yesterday and Tomorrow



The photos by Swiss photojournalist Fernand Gigon showcase the hardships and beauty of everyday life of ordinary Chinese in the 1950s. Traveling extensively across the country, Gigon was particularly impressed by the masses uniting to develop the social economy and find their own path to the modern world.

05/03 - Power Station of Art, Shanghai

‘The Acrobat Returns’ by Ding Yulei at Shanghai Biennale



Swiss art director Ueli Hirzel will come to China to work with former acrobat Ding Yulei in a performance at the Shanghai Biennale. Born in 1980s, Ding has won international awards for his performances that showcase his expressive body power. Event supported by Pro Helvetia Shanghai, Swiss Arts Council.

17/03 -Beijing

Swiss Traditional Dinner



Business people working with Switzerland are invited to network and dine in traditional Swiss style at a dinner featuring fine wines and Swiss cheese. More than 150 members of SwissCham China will attend along with business leaders from major industries and commercial sectors and Swiss government representatives.

18/03 - Shanghai

Swiss Education Fair China



The first Swiss Education Fair China will take place in Shanghai, where Swiss education institutions will showcase their latest programs and interact with prospective students and their parents. The fair is organized by the Swiss Business Hub China and supported by Swiss Consulate General in Shanghai.

03- Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and more

Francophonie: Adventurous music with LiA



After more than 200 concerts, LiA refined his artistic identity upon the release of his third album "Quand l'Homme s'endort" in 2015. Spontaneous and endearing, simple and sincere, he gives his view of the world with an extraordinary natural air that carries audiences to a dreamy wonderland.

03- Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and more

Francophonie: Film screening: My Life as a Zucchini



Stop-motion animated film Ma Vie de Courgette (My Life as a Zucchini) was Switzerland's entry for the Best Foreign Language Film at the 89th Academy Awards. The film tells the story of a young boy sent to a care center after the death of his mother, where he eventually finds comfort, acceptance and hope.

08/03 – 28/03– Beijing, Changsha

Francophonie: Pastry residency program



About 20 young pastry professionals from Francophonie countries and China will participate in this residency program for two weeks, working with professional pastry chefs to hone their skills and create new works. Their creations will be showcased during Francophonie.

08/03 – 28/03– Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and more

Francophonie: Book readings with author Daniel de Roulet



Throughout his 24-year writing career, award-winning Geneva author Daniel de Roulet has penned 10 novels comprising 18



historical figures and 29 characters, and is renowned for creating “dreamers” in his fictional stories. During his visit to China, de Roulet will share his life story and explain his creative process .

20/03– Swiss Embassy, Beijing

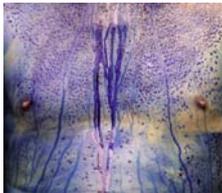
Francophonie: Dictée de Pivot in China



“The Dictée de Pivot” (“Pivot Dictation”) returns to China for its second time in March 2017. After their initial competition and selection through social media, finalists will be invited to the Swiss Embassy in Beijing for the competition. Winners will be awarded prizes by organizers.

30/03 – 12/04 - Ming Contemporary Art Museum, Shanghai and other cities

‘Blue Remix’ performance tour



Seated in a glass cage, Swiss performance artist Yann Marussich lets a blue-tinted biological liquid (symbolic of wisdom, serenity and dreams) ooze through layers of his skin, representing the movement of the body's inner processes. Event supported by Pro Helvetia Shanghai, Swiss Arts Council.

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