



Press release

Date: 8 April 2016

President Schneider-Ammann meets Chinese President Xi Jinping

Taking up China's invitation to pay a state visit to the country, President Johann N. Schneider-Ammann met with President Xi Jinping in Beijing on Friday, 8 April. The two sides agreed on an 'innovative strategic partnership'. This will give an added dimension and fresh impulse to Sino-Swiss bilateral relations. Prior to the meeting on Friday the Swiss president met Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and a number of other ministers. Also on the agenda was the opening of the Sino-Swiss Economic Forum and visits to a number of businesses. On Saturday the president will round off his visit in Shanghai.

With the Declaration on the establishment of an 'innovative strategic partnership', Switzerland joins the group of some 60 states with which China has entered into a strategic partnership. In addition to ways of consolidating the partnership, the talks between the two presidents on Friday covered economic, financial, trade and science policy issues, as well as the rule of law. International affairs and cooperation between the two countries in multilateral bodies such as the G20 and the WTO were also addressed.

The two presidents also addressed the subject of human rights where it was agreed, among other things, that the next round of the human rights dialogue should take place before the end of May. President Xi Jinping gave assurance of his support regarding the approval of new visa application centres and the opening of a consulate general in Chengdu. In future Switzerland will have observer status in the Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries (16+1).

During the president's visit to Beijing, seven agreements and protocols have been signed in a range of fields; three concern cooperation on matters of occupational safety, scientific cooperation and cooperation between Switzerland Innovation and Tsinghua University Science Park (TusPark), and four agreements concern the Sino-Swiss Low Carbon Cities (SSLCC) project, which aims to promote the sustainable growth of Chinese cities.

Meeting with Premier Li Keqiang

Prior to the reception the president met with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, the Chairman of the National People's Congress, Zhang Dejiang, and a number of other ministers. The topics covered included economic and trade policy issues as well as the application and development of the free trade agreement between Switzerland and China.

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The meeting also provided an opportunity to discuss cooperation in the areas of science and innovation and sustainable development. At midday the president opened the Sino-Swiss Economic Forum in the presence of the economic and science delegations that are accompanying him on his visit.

Shanghai second stop on presidential visit

On Saturday, 9 April, the Swiss delegations will move on to Shanghai where several business and innovation-themed meetings are on the agenda, as well as a working lunch with Han Zheng, the secretary of the Shanghai Communist Party.

The president will also open the new offices of the Swiss Center Shanghai (SCS) and tour the local Novartis research centre. The trip will be rounded off with an event at the China Europe International Business School (CEIBS), where the president will address business representatives and alumni on the subject of scientific cooperation and innovation.

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