



# Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis scheduled to visit China and Mongolia

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**The head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis, will travel to China and Mongolia next week for his first official visit outside Europe. Political, economic and bilateral relations between Switzerland and China will be the focus of his talks in Beijing on 2 and 3 April before he travels to Xi'an, a city in central China at the eastern end of the Silk Road. Mr Cassis will visit a project led by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in partnership with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, which aims to reduce harmful emissions in China and in neighbouring countries.**

Mr Cassis and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi will discuss strategic policy issues of interest to both countries in the Chinese capital on Tuesday. These include working together within the United Nations (UN) on the implementation by 2030 of the global Sustainable Development Goals and also the economic prospects that can be expected from the Belt and Road initiative – a new «Silk Road» aimed at boosting trade between Asia and Europe. In Beijing Mr Cassis will also meet Swiss business leaders and students living in China. In addition he is scheduled to meet Jin Liqun, president of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, of which Switzerland is a founding member.

On 5 and 6 April, Mr Cassis will be in Ulaanbaatar for a political dialogue with Mongolian Foreign Minister Tsogtbaatar Damdin, with whom he will talk about the close partnership between Switzerland and Mongolia, in particular through the SDC's development programmes. The development of Mongolia's considerable economic potential will also be discussed. The country has a subsoil rich in raw materials and is ideally located close to the economic giants China, Japan and South Korea. Mr Cassis will then pay a courtesy visit to President Khaltmaa Battulga.

Mongolia's economic development – with which Switzerland has been associated through the SDC since 2001 – is a success story. Situated between China and Russia, Mongolia stands out for its democratic political system and dynamic market economy. The SDC is active in several areas such as improving potato cultivation so that the country is self-sufficient in this area. Switzerland has also promoted and supported the development of vocational training and the modernisation of the country's administration by, for example, initiating the development of a network of one-stop shops which decentralises certain administrative services.

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## Further information:

[Bilateral relations Switzerland-China](#)

[SDC: Swiss contribution in Mongolia](#)

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