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Switzerland and China strengthen cooperation on scholarships for young academics

Bern, 14.09.2012 - The head of the Federal Department of Home Affairs Federal Councillor Alain Berset, and Vice Minister Du Zhanyuan of China's Ministry of Education have signed a Memorandum on Higher Education Cooperation during a working visit in Bern. The declaration of intent aims to consolidate and intensify cooperation between the two countries in the fields of science and research.

The memorandum concerns the promotion of academic exchange programmes for young researchers through government scholarships, cooperation between higher education institutions, the involvement of China's Ministry of Education in the Sino-Swiss Science and Technology Cooperation, a highly successful bilateral research programme, launched in 2008 after a pilot phase between 2004 and 2007. The new memorandum raises the number of scholarships offered by both countries from 20 to 25 per year. Up to 30 tuition waivers will also be available. Young academics from both countries can apply via the existing channels: the Federal Commission for Scholarships for Foreign Students (FCS), which awards several types of post graduate scholarship to foreign academics and artists, and the China Scholarship Council (CSC).

During their meeting, Vice Minister of Education Du Zhanyuan and Federal Councillor Berset also discussed bilateral relations in education, research and innovation.

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