



Media release

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Switzerland and China sign MOU on energy efficiency in buildings

The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland (FDFA) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for cooperation in energy efficient buildings with the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development (MoHURD) in China on Tuesday.

The Ambassador of Switzerland to China Bernardino Regazzoni met with Ni Hong, Vice Minister of China's Housing and Urban-Rural Development on Tuesday morning and signed the agreement.

Under the MOU, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, acting for FDFA, will strengthen project cooperation and exchange technological expertise in energy-efficient and zero-emission buildings with its counterpart from MoHURD.

"It is a great opportunity for the two countries to sign an MOU on energy efficient buildings this year as we are celebrating the 70th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Switzerland and China," said Ambassador Bernardino Regazzoni.

Switzerland and China, both signed the Paris Agreement, are committed to tackling Climate Change. The Federal Council of Switzerland plans to reduce its net carbon emissions to zero by 2050 whereas China has pledged to reach carbon neutrality by 2060.

Worldwide, the buildings and construction sector accounted for 36 percent of energy consumption and nearly 40 percent of energy and process-related carbon dioxide emissions in 2018, according to a report by International Energy Agency and the United Nations Environment Programme. During Tuesday's signing ceremony, both sides agreed energy efficiency in buildings plays an important role in achieving sustainable development goals.

"Energy efficient buildings will not only be good for Chinese people but for people around the world. I'm impressed by the technological innovation of Switzerland and very glad our two countries can jointly work on this issue," said Vice Minister Ni Hong.

Switzerland is in the front row of energy efficient constructions and has developed high standards for energy efficient buildings such as Minergie, a set of buildings standards that guarantee low energy consumption and maximize possible use of renewable energies.

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China, the world's biggest housing market, has been working on building energy efficiency and green buildings for many years. China implemented nearly zero-energy building standards last September.

The MOU will allow experts in building and construction sector from Switzerland and China to jointly develop building standards to achieve energy efficiency. Experts from the two countries will also be able to provide technical support in zero emission buildings projects under the MOU.

Vice Minister Ni Hong expressed his wish for more collaborations with Swiss companies in developing energy efficient buildings while Ambassador Regazzoni agreed that the two sides should plan joint events involving the private sector in the coming year.

Cooperation between Switzerland and China in building and construction sector goes back a long way - Swiss elevator maker Schindler formed the first ever Sino-foreign industrial joint venture in 1980. Since 1990s, Swiss companies including indoor heating and ventilation expert Zehnder and architectural design and engineering company Keller have made significant contribution to China's buildings and construction sector. Keller Technologies, for example, had successfully designed Beijing's first batch of energy efficient buildings like Beijing Tip-Top International apartment and MOMA apartment buildings.

The MOU, effective from Tuesday, will further deepen the two countries' collaborations in energy efficient buildings.

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

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