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Reader's Digest, 10 – 24 March 2017

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BILATERAL RELATIONS

[Swiss Federal Councillor, Head of the Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sports Visited to the Residence of Chinese Ambassador to Switzerland](#)

Published by china-embassy.org, 7th March 2017

On 6 March, the Chinese Ambassador to Switzerland Mr. Geng Wenbing invited Mr. Guy Parmelin, the Swiss Federal Councillor and head of the Department of Defense, Civil Protection and Sports to his official residence. Ambassador Geng said the current Sino-Swiss strategic partnership is at a comprehensive and rapid development stage. The pragmatic cooperation achieved significant results in various fields. He also expressed his willingness to take this opportunity to increase the high-level exchanges and visits and enhance the mutual understanding and cooperation, in order to promote the development of bilateral relations to a higher level. Mr. Parmelin also stated that Switzerland attached great importance to the friendly relationship and collaboration between China and Switzerland. He is willing to strengthen high-level exchanges as well in military reform, technical exchange, personnel training and other fields and make new contribution to Sino-Swiss relations.

[Ambassadors: China's Decisions Influence World](#)

Published by chinadaily.com.cn, 4th March

With the two sessions beginning, seven ambassadors discuss what they see as the major issues, including China's economic performance, its role in the international arena and the Belt and Road Initiative. Their views highlight the importance of the event on a global stage. Switzerland's ambassador, Mr. Jean-Jacques de Dardel spoke highly of speeches made by President Xi Jinping in January during his trip to Switzerland, de Dardel said that he hopes China will continue to be dedicated to openness and free trade. Also, he hailed China's Belt and Road Initiative as "a clever move", which he said shows China's "openness, wish to engage the world and the desire to take on responsibility that goes beyond self-serving aspects of the development of trade". During his visit to Switzerland, Xi invited Swiss

President Doris Leuthard to attend the Belt and Road Initiative International Cooperation Forum Summit in Beijing in May. The two leaders also witnessed the signing of 10 cooperative agreements.

[China and Switzerland Conduct Human Rights Dialogue](#)

Published by admin.ch, 3rd March 2017

The 15th round of human rights dialogue between Switzerland and China took place from 2 to 3 March in Bern. The confidential discussions allowed an open, constructive and mutually critical debate to take place on the human rights situation in both countries. The focus was on human rights issues such as the judicial and penal system, including the death penalty, the rights of minorities and strengthening the international human rights protection system. The priority topics discussed in this year's round of dialogue were the judicial and penal system and the rights of minorities. Switzerland expressed its concern over the criminal prosecution of lawyers and human rights defenders and the allegations of torture connected with these cases, underlining the procedural obligations such as access to and choice of legal counsel and family notification. The occasion was also used to discuss technical cooperation in the field of human rights and the further development of Switzerland and China's long-standing exchange of expertise in criminal justice.

BUSINESS NEWS

[Asian Markets Welcoming Swiss Wine](#)

Published by customstoday.com.pk, 8th March

Vaud, a French speaking Canton near Lake Geneva, was the sole focus at a Swiss wine tasting organized by Hong Kong's Swiss wine importer, Swiss Wine Shop, and its wine trade organization, Office des Vins Vaudois (OVV), this week in Hong Kong. Producing about 25% of the country's total wines, the region is home to a UNESCO site, Lavaux, an area known for its beautiful, terraced vineyards. The majority of its wines are consumed domestically and less than 2% of the wines are exported. Trailing behind Germany and the UK, Asia has slowly emerged on the map after Swiss wines were first exported here a few years back. In Shanghai, the wine seems to be taking off as well. "Chasselas is the wine that is very fresh, open and you can pair it with any kind of food. You know how people are like in China where they eat everything on the table. It's difficult to do a wine pairing, and Chasselas works very well even with spicy dish," said Philippe Huser, owner of Napa Wine Bar & Kitchen in Bund, which imports about 6,000 bottles of Chasselas to Shanghai. With the whole packaging of UNESCO and Swiss image, the wine became an instant hit, he added.

[Swiss Consumers Spent EUR 1.22 Billion Online at Foreign Stores](#)

Published by ecommercenews.eu, 2nd March

Consumers in Switzerland are shopping more and more products from foreign ecommerce websites. Last year, the total value of online purchases Swiss consumers made abroad was worth CHF 1.3 billion, which corresponds to EUR 1.22 billion. That's an increase of 18% compared to last year. And that growth is mostly due to Swiss consumers shopping online more and more from Chinese websites, a new survey by Swiss mail-order association VSV, GfK, Swiss Post and MediaFocus shows. According to this study, online purchases at foreign ecommerce websites have doubled between 2012 and 2016. And this development is likely to continue in the coming years. The study authors assume that cross-border ecommerce in Switzerland will continue to grow disproportionately. That's mostly because of the increased popularity of Chinese companies such as Alibaba. In 2015, a first wave of direct imports from China reached Switzerland and the study suggests this trend will continue until 2020, while generating extra price pressure

in the domestic ecommerce market.

[No Holes in the Plan as Swiss Cheese Reaches China by Rail](#)

Published by railwaygazette.com, 28th February

The cheese, chocolate and prepared milk travelled by rail from Duisburg in Germany to Chongqing in China via the Trans-Siberian route through Russia. There were two main obstacles that needed to be tackled to make the shipment possible. The first was keeping the dairy products at a steady and cool temperature. For this, FELB used 45ft containers with diesel powered refrigeration units and cool air circulation. The second and most significant obstacle was dealing with customs. 'Owing to Russian sanctions on foodstuffs coming from the EU, we had to forward documents to the Russian customs in advance to ensure no misunderstandings arose at the border with Russia and the train was not stopped', said Thomas Kargl, CEO of Far East Land Bridge. 'Swiss products are not subject to Russian sanctions against the EU. An agreement with FELB shareholder RZD Logistics enables containers to transit Russia, Belarus and Ukraine with minimal internal stoppages and custom checks.

[Swiss Gold Buying by China Declined Due to Chinese New Year](#)

Published by customstoday.com.pk, 25th February

Swiss customs data show subdued Chinese gold buying during January in the run-up to the country's New Year celebrations at the end of the month, said Commerzbank and MKS (Switzerland). "Chinese gold traders appear to have held back on gold purchases in the immediate run-up to the New Year's festival in January," said Commerzbank, citing data showing that 17.8 tons of gold was exported from Switzerland to China. MKS said the January total is down from some 157 tons in December and also a 58% reduction from the same time last year. Commerzbank and MKS add that exports to Hong Kong were likewise down. "On the physical front, demand from key physical markets around the globe has been lackluster to kick off the year," MKS said. In fact, MKS and Commerzbank both note that Switzerland was a net importer of gold last month.

CULTURE & SOCIETY

[Acceleration in Number of Swiss Emigrating](#)

Published by lenews.ch, 1st March

According to government statistics released today, the number of Swiss living abroad increased by 2.9% in 2016, reaching close to 775,000. This means around 1 in 9 Swiss nationals lives outside Switzerland. Growth in the number leaving has been accelerating. In previous years the growth rate was around 2%. The most popular places Swiss choose to live are France (26%), Germany (12%), USA (11%), Italy (7%), and Canada (5%), which together account for 60% of the total. The UK (5%), Spain (3%), Israel (3%) and Austria (2%), account for a further 16%. A further 11% live in the following ten countries: Argentina, Brazil, Thailand, South Africa, Belgium, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Mexico, and China (including Hong Kong). These top 20 nations together account for 87% of Swiss expatriates.

GENERAL INTEREST

[Swiss International Business Boot Camp - Go West in China](#)

Published by competence-center-china.org, 7th March

The Zurich university of applied sciences (ZHAW) conducts a unique student consulting program to benefit Swiss enterprises with business interest in china's new frontier – the southwest. The SIBBC student consulting project is a joint initiative by Swiss Universities (SERI), the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW) and our local partner Universities. The SIBBC offers best-in-class business students from Switzerland and China a platform to gain first-hand experience with business consulting to kick-start their careers. The program is co-funded by ZHAW and the participating Swiss enterprises to cover the project costs. For a period of three to four weeks in August, a small intercultural student team will work out a pre-defined consulting assignment with and for your executive team. Following your briefing of the business challenge at hand in early July, the team will immediately commence with the research at their home campuses. Participating companies will benefit from a systematic approach and methodology to international business consulting, including desk research, strategic analysis and solution generation. Results will be presented and handed over upon completion of the assignment.

[How can Your Company Benefit from the Shanghai Pilot Free Trade Zone?](#)

Published by swisscenters.org, 25th February

In 2016, the Waigaoqiao Pilot Free Trade Zone (PFTZ) was nominated by the Financial Times as the best free trade zone in Asia, and the runner-up best zone worldwide. Big name investors have flocked to the zone to establish their presence – Total, Panasonic, HP, Swatch Group, to name but a few. With proximity to the world's largest port, Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone (FTZ) offers investors the opportunity to export and import their goods with a preferential tariff system and reduced red tape. The Swiss Center Shanghai will organize the Seminar "How your company can benefit from the Shanghai Pilot Free Trade Zone?" launched in cooperation with SwissCham Shanghai. The one-day seminar is designed to share first-hand practical insights from government agencies and companies already established in the PFTZ, to inform how being in the FTZ can concretely benefit your business.

INDUSTRIES

Engineering / Manufacturing

[ABB Holds University Innovation Contest for the Sixth Year in a Row](#)

Published by abb.com.cn, 1st March

ABB kicked off the 6th university innovation contest (UIC 2017). University students are welcome to join the contest with their bold conception and creativity on the application of digital technologies in utility, industry, transport and infrastructure sectors, in line with the theme of this event, "Link Digitalization to Our Future". Today, digital technologies represented by the industrial Internet, cloud computing, big data, mobile computing and telecommunication, are increasingly integrated into our production and daily life, and they have pushed forward the reform and transformation of many industries. As a pioneering technology leader and global digital champion, ABB launched ABB Ability TM in 2016 to realize the full digital potential together with customers. ABB will use its profound knowledge of its customers' domains to plan, build and operate a unique digital offering which will deliver true operational differentiation for customers. The UIC 2017 is open to full-time undergraduates, postgraduate students and doctoral students in Greater China including Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and mainland China. It covers three topics: "Smart city", "Internet of energy" and "Digital factory" with several subtopics.

[SGS Supply chain Assessments and Solutions-China Legislation Updates on Social Responsibility](#)

Published by sgsgroup.com.hk, 1st March

Collecting and compliance with the legislation timely are keys to supply chain assessment. Regarding to the special labour protection for female employees, local regulations on implementation have been enacted by some provinces, such as Guangdong and Hebei Provinces, in China. For the comprehensive governance on safety of dangerous chemicals, guiding opinions on the industry development of dangerous chemicals are provided by the State. In order to coordinate the implementation on the management of pollutant discharge permit, the Interim Provisions on Administration of Pollutant Discharge Permit was issued by the State to standardize the application, approval and issuance, implementation, supervision and administration of pollutant discharge permit.

Bank / Finance / Insurance

[UBS AM Adds to China Bond Team, Eyes CIBM Access](#)

Published by asianinvestor.net, 25th February 2017

UBS Asset Management is looking to ramp up its China fixed income offering by adding credit specialists, moving to register funds to invest in the local interbank bond market and developing Hong Kong-domiciled products for the cross-border mutual recognition of funds (MRF) scheme. Other fund houses are making moves on this front, such as Bridgewater, Fullerton and Invesco, but some institutions and asset managers are taking a slower approach. The main reason for this is their lack of familiarity with the market, rather than because they are waiting for Chinese bonds to be included in the main global fixed income indexes, said Ashley Perrott, UBS AM's head of pan-Asia fixed income. But neither issue affects his firm's thinking, he told Asian Investor. "We are going in anyway. [China] is the third biggest bond market in world, and in five years it will be the second biggest. It will probably double in size (from RMB 63 trillion (USD 9 trillion)) in the next five years.

Hospitality / Tourism / Retails

[Global Swiss Watches Market 2017 Industry Trends, Sales, Supply, Demand, Analysis & Forecast to 2020](#)

Published by pressreleaserocket.net, 6th March 2017

Global Swiss Watches Market Outlook 2020 provides an in-depth study on the current state of world's highest-valued timepieces market. The industry is undergoing difficult times with year 2016 appearing as another challenging year for Swiss watch manufacturers. The report provides a basic overview of the luxury watches industry with four different price segmentations – exclusive luxury, accessible luxury, mid-price and low price. Swiss watchmakers have brands in all the aforementioned price tiers. Overall market size of renowned "Swiss-Made" watches with sales forecast has been provided in the report. Detailed trade analysis of Swiss watches with major finished watch export destinations such as China, Hong Kong, Germany USA and France are covered. Moreover, market share analysis with key statistics on Swiss watch by category, by materials, by competitors, price category and by region has also been presented in the report. Industry trends and development and market dynamics those driving and inhibiting industry's growth has also been elaborated in the report. SWOT analysis of leading Swiss watch brands such as Rolex, Cartier, Omega and Tag Heuer enhances Competitive landscape which includes valuable information on financials of leading Swiss watch brands.

Legal / Trade / Consulting / Services

[China Legal Briefing No.258 – February 2017](#)

Published by wenfei.com, 25th February 2017

The china legal briefing 258 was released. In this briefing, you can read: Measures on Labour Law of PRC; Promulgation of The Administrative Measures on Suitability for Securities and Futures Investors. As of 1 January 2017, the “Measures for Announcing Major Violations of Labour Security” (Measures) of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security of PRC (MHRSS) came into effect. The Measures shall strengthen the protection of employees' rights and punish unlawful acts of employers. As of 7 January 2017 the “Measures for the Suitability Management of Securities and Futures Investors” (Measures) of the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) came into effect. The Measures consist of important supplementary regulations of the security and future markets.

[DKSH at China Modern Manufacturing Magazine's 20th Anniversary](#)

Published by dksh.com, 20th February

DKSH, the Market Expansion Services provider with a focus on Asia, was invited to participate in the China Modern Manufacturing Magazine's 20th anniversary ceremony. Hanno Elbraechter, Head Business Unit Technology, got honored on behalf of DKSH and shared hot topics about industry 4.0, the fourth industrial revolution. During his speech, Hanno Elbraechter depicted that the fourth industrial revolution, driven by smart automation, will be most impactful to China. As the country continues to take action implementing its “China 2025” plan, it aims to transform itself and become the world leading manufacturing powerhouse. With vast resources, the country itself still has a huge potential for growth. Hanno also shared several success stories of how automated solutions provided by DKSH have made smart transformations in companies' manufacturing processes and brought industry 4.0 to life.

Looking for more news? Go to [SwissCham's Website](#).

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