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BILATERAL RELATIONS

[Chinese Ambassador to Switzerland Pays a Visit to the Deputy State Secretary of Foreign Affairs Department](#)

Published by fmprc.gov.cn, 20th March 2017

On 20 March, the Chinese Ambassador to Switzerland Mr. Geng Wenbing paid a visit to the Deputy State Secretary of Foreign Affairs Department. Ambassador Geng said the current Sino-Swiss Innovative Strategic Partnership is at a comprehensive and rapid development stage and that the state visit of President Xi was a success. The pragmatic cooperation achieved significant results in various fields. He also expressed his willingness to enhance the "Strategic Innovative Partnership", upgrade the FTA between the two countries and strengthen the cooperation under the construction of "One Belt One Road". The Deputy Secretary also stated that Sino-Swiss bilateral relationship achieved a remarkable development. Switzerland attaches great importance to the friendly relationship and collaboration between China and Switzerland. Facing the current world economic situation, the Sino-Swiss cooperation built a significant model.

BUSINESS NEWS

[Swiss Watch Demand Improving Thanks to China](#)

Published by finance.yahoo.com, 14th March 2017

Demand for Swiss watches has improved, driven by a rebound in Chinese purchases, the head of luxury group LVMH's watch business Jean-Claude Biver said on Tuesday. "There's a real rebound in Mainland China and, thanks to Chinese tourists, this will help watch sales elsewhere," Mr. Biver added on the sidelines of the launch of its new smartwatch. Swiss watchmaker TAG Heuer, owned by LVMH, with its partners Intel Corp and Google on Tuesday launched a connected watch that it hopes will seduce tech geeks and traditional watch lovers alike by letting them

swap the connected module for a mechanical movement.

[Alibaba Invest CHF 18 Million to Develop New AR-Enabled Car Navigation](#)

Published by [sinoptic.ch](#), 14th March 2017

WayRay, a Swiss developer of a holographic augmented reality (“AR”) technology for internet-connected cars, today announced that it has entered into a partnership with Banma Technologies to develop a new AR car navigation and infotainment system. WayRay also announced it has closed its Series B financing round which had come from existing investors as well Alibaba Group. Banma Technologies is an independent startup invested by Alibaba Group and China’s largest automaker SAIC Motor, dedicated to making developments in internet-connected cars. WayRay will work closely with this consortium to create an advanced AR HMI that integrates augmented reality navigation, driving assistant notifications, a virtual dashboard, and much more. The new system will be built into one of Banma’s 2018 car models, turning it into the world’s first vehicle in production with a holographic AR head-up display (HUD).

[Too Good To Be True: Swiss ‘Gold’ Discounts](#)

Published by [swissinfo.ch](#), 9th March 2017

With billions in sales, Chinese online retailer Alibaba Group reaches customers outside of Asia with its Amazon-like AliExpress – and now offers Swiss ‘gold bars’ along with Swiss Francs at a fraction of the going price. Among the offers on the online retailer’s website are one-ounce (28.3-gram) bars of “high quality gold plated bullion” selling for USD 2.90 (CHF 2.94) each. The bars contain the words “Credit Suisse” and an alleged serial number. Delivery is possible to the United States and some places in Europe – but not to Switzerland. However, the imitation items are nowhere near as valuable as the real thing, which sells for well more than CHF 1,000 per ounce, or over CHF 50 per gram. Credit Suisse told Swiss news portal *20min.ch*, which first reported on the fake gold bars, that it would confiscate any such purchases that might turn up at a bank counter, the same as with counterfeit bank notes.

CULTURE & SOCIETY

[Asian Cities Dominate Survey of World's Most Expensive Places to Live](#)

Published by [chinadaily.com.cn](#), 21st March 2017

Singapore and Hong Kong are the most expensive cities in the world, according to the latest survey by the Economist Intelligence Unit. Zurich in Switzerland is third. Meanwhile, Chinese cities also fell down the world rankings, because of the steady devaluation of the renminbi. Beijing fell 16 places to 47, while Suzhou, Guangzhou, and Tianjin fell more than 13 places to share 69th place. Despite the rankings, there is a wide variety between the cities in the costs of different goods and services. The survey is published twice a year and is aimed at human resource and finance departments, to help them calculate allowances and compensation packages for staff.

[Find Out What Sold at Art Basel in Hong Kong 2017](#)

Published by [news.artnet.com](#), 22nd March 2017

The fifth edition of Art Basel in Hong Kong got off to a great start on March 21, with dealers reporting a flurry of sales, cementing the city’s status as an important marketplace with growing significance. “Hong Kong is the market of the future,” Swiss collector of Chinese art Uli Sigg told artnet News at the fair. “But also a scene that is rapidly developing. The artists feel at home here and evidently the galleries do too. The legal framework probably has something to do with it,” he continued. “Easy import, easy export, and the fair is getting stronger every year.”

GENERAL INTEREST

[Swiss Watch Exports Tumble Ahead of Basel Trade Fair](#)

Published by france24.com, 22nd March 2017

The world's biggest watch fair will open in Switzerland this week, even as slumping exports of luxury Swiss timepieces appear to dash hopes of a market rebound. Global exports of Swiss watches slid 10% in February to CHF 1.5 billion (USD 1.5 billion, EUR 1.4 billion), the Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry (FHS) said Tuesday. The news cast a shadow over the looming Basel world trade fair, which opens its doors to the media on Wednesday and to the public a day later. The giant gathering in the northern Swiss city of Basel is the highlight of the year for watch and jewellery makers, with hoards of retailers looking to fill their showcases with pricey bling. Investors had been hoping this year's 45th edition would open on a more positive note amid signs that the market was stabilising and even on the verge of a rebound after two years of deep crisis.

[Cartier Watches are Top Choice for China's Wealthy](#)

Published by barrons.com, 22nd March 2017

Cartier was the top choice for Chinese consumers looking to buy a luxury watch in the next 12 months, according to a survey by RBC Capital Markets. The French watchmaker ranked above Swiss titans Rolex, Omega and Longines when Chinese consumers with an annual income of above CNY 450,000 were asked to pick a brand they would consider buying from a list of 38 high-end labels. Cartier was also king among millennial respondents. The strong showing by the four powerhouse watchmakers is unsurprising as brand history and technical reputation rank highly among Chinese watch buyers. However, price now has stronger bearing on brand choice than it did a year ago, with the percentage of respondents citing "reasonable price" as a key criteria jumping to 39% from 35% two years ago. Wealthy Chinese consumers are also venturing beyond the most established brands. Bulgari, Patek Philippe and IWC have enjoyed the biggest increase in brand preference compared to two years ago.

INDUSTRIES

Engineering / Manufacturing

[Global Manufacturing Giants Back China's Industrial Evolution](#)

Published by sarajevotimes.com, 19th March 2017

There is a factory in southwest China's Chengdu City, which, should you want to visit, has a one month waiting list. The attraction? A successful realization of China's ambitious industrial evolution plan "Made in China 2025." It leads an expected result: exceptional levels of productivity and quality. China's government understands that multinational companies have the potential to play a vital role in the renewal of its economy, but multinationals must also understand that China needs reliable partners, partners who think long term and do not sidestep the challenges ahead, CEO of Siemens pointed out. Many foreign manufacturers rushed to open factories in China, to capitalize on the cost effectiveness of "Made-in-China." With China well on track to boost its global competitiveness through "Made in China 2025," the widespread application of digital technology could further accelerate progress in energy efficiency and productivity, according to ABB CEO, Ulrich Spiesshofer. "Few countries are better positioned than China to embrace the digital revolution with the world's most Internet users, largest digital retail market and most machine-to-machine mobile connections", Mr. Spiesshofer added. He also said that "The challenge is to integrate Chinese enterprises into the digital economy by connecting their robots, machines and plants to the industrial Internet

and we could provide such information as well as digital know-how”.

Bank / Finance / Insurance

[Zurich General Insurance Guangdong Branch Opened](#)

Published by [finance.sina.com.cn](#), 22nd March 2017

On 21 March, Zurich General Insurance run officially their business in Guangdong Province and this is the third branch in China. Zurich General Insurance started the Beijing Representative Office in 1993 and became the first insurance company from European continent settling their representative office in China. By now, with the opening of Guangdong Branch, Zurich General Insurance completed the Chinese strategy plan. Zurich General Insurance showed strong confidence in the business opportunity provided by the “One Belt One Road” Strategy.

Hospitality / Tourism / Retails

[Nestlé Rolls out Pure Life Kids Still Water to China](#)

Published by [just-drinks.com](#), 16th March 2017

Nestlé has lined up a children's version of its Pure Life water brand for the Chinese market as it looks to capitalise on the trend towards healthier drinking. Nestlé Pure Life Kids Still Water will be piloted in Shanghai before rolling out to other regions, the firm said. The packs feature eight different designs from the film Zootopia in what the company called the “first water product customised for kids in China”. “In recent years, people have been increasingly aware of their health and paying more and more attention to hydration,” Nestle said. “The consumption is increasing and the market is gradually showing a trend of segmentation. Medium and high-end products catering to the needs of different groups embody the direction of the market. Among these products, bottled water for kids attracts tremendous attention.” Nestle will run a series of activities for children alongside the launch in a bid to educate them on healthy hydration. Nestle Waters has four factories in China - two in Shanghai, one in Tianjin and one in Yunnan.

[Swissôtel Expands in China with a New Deluxe Hotel in Changsha](#)

Published by [elitetraveler.com](#), 10th March 2017

International hotel group Swissôtel Hotels & Resorts continues to expand its presence in China. Their newest deluxe hotel, currently under construction, will be located in Changsha, the capital of Hunan Province and the transportation hub of south-central China. “Changsha is one of the most important economic centres in the country, and as the ‘entertainment capital of China’ it is a year-round attraction for visitors,” said Meinhard Huck, President of Swissôtel Hotels & Resorts. “Swissôtel Changsha is another important step in our expansion in China, where we already manage several five-star hotels, and it is significant for the growth of our brand recognition in Asia.”

Legal / Trade / Consulting / Services

[Business Review of Premier Li Keqiang’s Government Work Report](#)

Published by [pwc.cn.com](#), 20th March 2017

The annual Government Work Report, delivered by Chinese premier Li Keqiang at the Fifth Session of the 12th National People’s Congress on 5th March 2017, sent out many important message. Besides reviewing the achievements of 2016 and rolling out the government’s goals and priorities for 2017, the report discusses major investment opportunities that foreign companies should be mindful of and the kind of business environment they will operate in the coming year.

[Foundation Swiss Centers enters into strategic partnership to establish zero-energy Swiss House in Beijing](#)

Published by swisscenters.org, 20th March 2017

A new chapter of Sino-Swiss cooperation was ushered in with the signing of a strategic partnership between the Foundation Swiss Centers and Beijing INNO-Olympic Group. The new partnership aims to create opportunity for growth through the Swiss House Beijing, a center of Swiss innovation in China. The Swiss House Beijing will involve the introduction of Swiss energy-efficiency construction and building operation standards, further promoting Sino-Swiss cooperation in the continued development of Beijing into a world-class capital. Energy-efficient and environmentally-friendly buildings have become a key trend in global architecture to improve environmental protection efforts. China has stated its intention to improve buildings by introducing more advanced international energy-efficiency concepts and technologies.

[DKSH Drives Johnson & Johnson's Growth in Hong Kong](#)

Published by finance.yahoo.com, 14th March 2017

DKSH Business Unit Healthcare, Asia's leading Market Expansion Services provider for healthcare companies seeking to grow their business in Asia, has been appointed by Johnson & Johnson, a leading multinational healthcare company, to grow its consumer health business in Hong Kong. Under the agreement, a dedicated DKSH team will provide marketing, sales, distribution and logistics activities in both the retail and in professional healthcare outlets such as hospitals, clinics, doctors or pharmacies all over Hong Kong. The new partnership with Johnson & Johnson follows an earlier announcement where DKSH has been appointed by the consumer goods multinational Procter & Gamble to sell and distribute their brands in Hong Kong. The agreement is as well another proof that in more complex market conditions, clients tend to increasingly outsource parts of the value chain to market expansions services providers like DKSH.

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

<p>SwissCham Beijing 中国瑞士商会 - 北京 Room 611, Building 19 Xinyuanli West, Chaoyang District Beijing 100027, China 中国北京市朝阳区 新源里西 19 号 611 室 邮编: 100027 Tel / 电话: +86 10 8468 3982 Email / 邮件: info@bei.swisscham.org</p>	<p>SwissCham Shanghai 中国瑞士商会 - 上海 1133, 11F Carlton Building 21 Huanghe Road Shanghai 200001, China 上海市黄河路 21 号 鸿翔大厦 1133 室 邮编: 200001 Tel / 电话: +86 21 5368 1270 Email / 邮件: info@sha.swisscham.org</p>	<p>SwissCham Guangzhou 中国瑞士商会 - 广州 27th Floor, Grand Tower 228 Tianhe Lu, Tianhe District Guangzhou 510620, China 广州市天河区天河路 228 号 广晟大厦 27 楼 邮编: 510620 Tel / 电话: +86 760 8858 1020 Email / 邮件: info@swisscham-gz.org</p>
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