

swisscham.org

Reader's Digest, 18 November - 1 December 2017

Swiss and Chinese Business Related News in Switzerland and China

Bilateral Relations

Business

Culture & Society

General Interest

Industries



BILATERAL RELATIONS

[Switzerland Urges Joint Efforts To Resolve Rohingya Crisis](#)

Published by swissinfo.ch, 21st November 2017

This week's Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) meeting in Myanmar's capital Naypyitaw was beneficial both for Bangladesh and Myanmar, as it "obliged them to cooperate in finding a solution for the repatriation of the refugees", Switzerland's Secretary of State Pascale Baeriswyl told the Swiss News Agency on 21 November. She made her remarks at the end of the two-day gathering, attended by 51 states including Switzerland. The meeting had been scheduled in Myanmar before the outbreak of the Rohingya crisis. On 20 November, China proposed a three-stage approach to the crisis. It called for a first phase involving a ceasefire on the ground, followed by talks between Myanmar and Bangladesh to find a workable solution for the return of refugees, and the final phase should be to work towards a long-term solution based on poverty alleviation. The following day, Myanmar's de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi said she hoped talks with Bangladesh this week would result in a memorandum of understanding on the "safe and voluntary return" of Rohingya Muslims who fled to Bangladesh over the past three months. ASEM has been an interregional forum for multilateral exchanges between Europe and Asia since 1996. The Rohingya refugees were one of the main issues discussed during the meeting, as well as North Korea and Ukraine.

[Chinese Ambassador to Switzerland Meet Swiss Finance Minister Ueli Maurer](#)

Published by fmprc.gov.cn, 17th November 2017

On 16 November, Mr. Geng Wenbing, the Chinese Ambassador to Switzerland, met Mr. Ueli Maurer, the Swiss Federal Councilor and Finance Minister. The Ambassador introduced to Mr. Maurer the situation of the 19th NPC of the Communist Party of China and thanked the latter for his constant support and pragmatic cooperation. The Ambassador hopes that with the joint efforts of both sides, greater cooperation will be achieved in the financial and economic fields between China and Switzerland. Mr. Maurer said that Switzerland welcomes the further opening of China's economy and financial markets. It is in the common interest of both countries that Switzerland and China

deepen their cooperation in the financial and economic fields. Also, Mr. Geng said he welcomed Mr. Maurer would pay a visit to China and wished the full success of the Sino-Swiss financial dialogue in Beijing next month.

BUSINESS NEWS

[China's HNA Gave 'Untrue' Details During Gategroup Takeover: Swiss Watchdog](#)

Published by reuters.com, 26th November 2017

Chinese conglomerate HNA, under scrutiny at home and abroad over a debt-fueled acquisition spree, gave partially untrue or incomplete information during the takeover of Swiss airline catering firm Gategroup last year, the Swiss Takeover Board said. In a statement late on Friday, the regulator said the aviation and shipping group had failed to disclose that company executives held controlling stakes in the conglomerate and also gave incorrect shareholdings for the top two stakeholders - Bharat Bhise and Guan Jun - in the Gategroup offer prospectus. HNA said in a statement that it had provided all necessary information and the Gateway deal would not be affected. HNA's all-cash USD 1.5 billion deal for Gategroup was part of a USD 50 billion buying binge over two years that included stakes in Hilton Worldwide Holdings Inc and Deutsche Bank. Bankers have since voiced concern about HNA's leverage levels and ownership structure. The Swiss regulator said Bhise and Guan had acted as trustees holding shares for HNA co-chairmen Chen Feng and Wang Jian, Chief Executive Adam Tan and three other people, and they should have been listed as beneficial owners in the offer prospectus.

[P&G And Nestle Stand To Gain From China's Lower Import Taxes](#)

Published by gulf-times.com, 26th November 2017

China's new plan to slash import taxes on a wide range of consumer goods promises to boost the prospects of multinationals in the Chinese market, with everything from Procter & Gamble Co's diapers to Diageo products becoming more affordable to local consumers. Tariffs for 187 product categories will drop from an average 17.3% to 7.7% after the cut takes effect on December 1, the Ministry of Finance said in a statement on Friday, citing the need to help consumers access quality and specialty products that aren't widely produced locally. The new policy follows President Xi Jinping's call at the October Communist Party conclave to meet citizens' demands for improved living standards and better quality products in the world's largest consumer market. Foreign multinationals stand to benefit as middle-class shoppers seek out goods stamped with foreign brands, while the cuts also encourage consumers to spend at home rather than on trips overseas. Nestle generated some 7.3% of revenue in the Greater China region last year, with sales of 6.5bn francs (USD 6.6bn). Nestle is the market leader in China's USD 21.5bn baby-food market with a 17% share, followed by Danone with a 9.3% share, according to Euromonitor International.

CULTURE & SOCIETY

[Swiss Conductor And Composer Michel Rochat Becomes Honorary Citizen Of Yilan](#)

Published by roc-taiwan.org, 24th November 2017

The 86-year-old Swiss conductor and composer Michel Rochat was the first foreigner to receive the city key from Yilan. The city in northeastern Taiwan awarded him honorary citizenship on 27 October 2017. The internationally acclaimed Swiss was director at the Conservatoire de Lausanne and, from 1985, conducted the National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan, the Taipei City Symphony Orchestra, the Kaohsiung Symphony Orchestra, and directed the Rong Shing Children's Choir. From 1992 to 1999 he taught in the city of Yilan in northeastern Taiwan and worked with Chinese opera companies. He helped set up traditional Chinese music groups at Taiwan's elementary and junior high schools, and composed Chinese operas like "7 Words." Michel Rochat was invited to the Yilan International Art

Festival 2017, which brought together traditional music of various cultures from 1 to 5 November. On this occasion, he was awarded honorary citizenship for his services to Yilan music. Mr. Rochat said he was deeply touched to receive this award after years away from Yilan. He was born in Switzerland, but his heart belongs to Yilan.

[China-Swiss Women's Forum Promotes Innovation, Entrepreneurship](#)

Published by womenofchina.cn, 23rd November 2017

The Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, along with the Chinese Association in Switzerland, recently held a women's forum in Chengdu, southwest China's Sichuan Province, on the theme of "Global Cooperation: Sharing Inspiration for Innovation and Entrepreneurship". The 2nd Sino-Swiss Women's Forum was held to deepen bilateral relations and encourage further cooperation between women in the fields of commerce, culture, education and tourism. According to organizers, the forum focuses on women's development and highlighted their charm, aiming to provide a platform for enhancing communication, friendship, business opportunities and cultural exchange between women from the two countries.

[Chinese National Team Uses Zurich Snowboards](#)

Published by s-ge.com, 3rd November 2017

The Chinese sports minister Zhongwen Gou visited the snowboard manufacturer Oxess in the Greater Zurich Area to celebrate the conclusion of a supply contract. Oxess will equip the Chinese national teams with its snowboards. The snowboard company Oxess from the canton of Zurich welcomed a prominent visitor: the Chinese sports minister and president of the National Olympic Committee, Zhongwen Gou, led an eight-member delegation to the company's premises. The visit was prompted by a large-scale supply contract that will see Oxess supply the equipment for the Chinese women's and men's national teams in alpine snowboarding through to 2022. Oxess manufactures its snowboards and carving skis in accordance with the individual style of its users. For example, user data such as size and weight are taken into account when manufacturing the equipment. Athletes appreciate the improved experience as they don't have to adapt their racing style to "off rack" material. According to Oxess, the Chinese sports minister and his delegation were particularly interested in the manufacturing process, one that has made Oxess one of the most successful brands in the Snowboard World Cup. In 2017 in the categories snowboard cross, snowboard alpine and ski aerials, 18 of the 36 medals awarded went to athletes using its equipment – five of which were world championship titles.

GENERAL INTEREST

[China and Linux Dominate Supercomputing](#)

Published by datacenterknowledge.com, 22nd November 2017

If supercomputing was a game, there would be two winners at present: China and Linux. In the latest biannually released Top500 list of the world's fastest supercomputers, China not only has the world's fastest supercomputer, it has now passed the US as the country with the most supercomputers, while Linux has reached the milestone of becoming the operating system running all supercomputers on the list. Six months ago Titan was knocked down a peg after the Swiss upgraded Piz Daint, a Cray XC50 system located in Lugano, Switzerland. On the new list it went down again, due to an upgrade of Gyoukou, a ZettaScaler-2.2 system deployed at Japan's Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology which clocks at 19.14 petaflops and employs a record high 19,860,000 core.

[Neuchâtel Seduces His Chinese Alter Ego](#)

Published by arcinfo.ch, 22nd November 2017

Wuxi, the Chinese city that specializes in the Internet of Things, sent a delegation to the city of Neuchâtel. Regular meetings are planned. This Chinese city, six and a half million inhabitants, has much more in common with Neuchâtel than it seems at first sight: "We are a small town with a very old history, now we focused on hi-tech," says Zhan Yi, vice director of the international affairs bureau at Wuxi City Hall. Representative of the city designated by the Chinese government as specialized in the Internet of Things, Zhan Yi had received in May the visit of a delegation from Neuchâtel. A twinning? The Chinese city is officially allied with about fifty cities in the world. No Swiss city yet. The question is not officially mentioned but seducing the Chinese could open markets for both Swiss and Chinese companies in this sector of "Smart City", which Wuxi and Neuchâtel are planning to be.

[Hong Kong, Singapore Are Asian Stars In IMD Talent Ranking](#)

Published by [asia.nikkei.com](#), 21st November 2017

Hong Kong and Singapore were the top two finishers in Asia in this year's IMD World Talent Ranking, bright spots in otherwise mediocre results for the region. The list, compiled by IMD, a Switzerland-based business school, aims to measure the ability of countries to develop, attract and retain the qualified people that companies need to create long-term value. Europeans continued to dominate the list of 63 countries and regions. Switzerland came out on top, and 11 out of the 15 most talent-rich countries were on the continent. Hong Kong came in 12th, dropping three places from last year, while Singapore came in 13th, up two places. The third-place finisher in Asia was far down the pecking order: Taiwan came in at 23rd, unchanged from last year. Malaysia, at 28th, saw the biggest fall among Asian countries, dropping seven places. It was followed closely by Kazakhstan at 30th, Japan at 31st, South Korea at 39th and China at 40th. IMD said east Asia, that is, China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, "presents a balanced performance across the talent factors," and that they "perform fairly well in all the areas of talent competitiveness."

INDUSTRIES

Engineering / Manufacturing

[Switzerland-based Mettler Toledo starts production at its third plant in Changzhou National Hi-Tech District](#)

Published by [markets.businessinsider.com](#), 27th November 2017

Mettler Toledo (Changzhou) Measurement Technology started production at its new USD 34.42 million facility, the first phase of a new plant, on November 16, 2017. The firm is the third manufacturing subsidiary that Switzerland-based Mettler Toledo (Holdings) Group has established at Changzhou National Hi-Tech District (CND), following the establishment of two similar subsidiaries engaged in the production of industrial scales and systems as well as precision instruments. In 2015, Mettler Toledo increased its investment in the district when the Swiss company built a manufacturing facility for commercial scales. Mettler Toledo's subsidiaries established at CND plan to continue rolling out and leveraging world-class weighing technologies as part of its overall strategy to develop a wide range of products tailored for both the international and the Chinese domestic markets, including electronic truck scales, platform scales, rail scales, crane scales, counting scales, bulk scales, among other advanced mechanical and electrical integration products for which there is identifiable market demand. Owing to its advantageous geographical location, complete support facilities and ideal investment environment, CND now has over 1,000 foreign-invested firms that have located a facility within the district.

Bank / Finance / Insurance

[Swiss Re predicts price rises in non-life \(re\)insurance for 2018/19](#)

Published by [insurancebusinessmag.com](#), 22nd November 2017

Large natural catastrophe losses in 2017 and current low prices are expected to push up pricing in non-life insurance and reinsurance, according to Swiss Re Institute's Global Insurance Review 2017, and Outlook 2018/19 report. These losses, alongside generally low prices and a global economy in a cyclical upswing, should support growth in the insurance markets with global non-life premiums forecast to rise by at least 3% and life premiums by about 4% in real terms annually in 2018 and 2019, according to Swiss Re. Global non-life insurance industry profitability has declined in 2017, with return on equity (ROE) down to 3% from 6% in 2016. Premiums are expected to rise by 6% to 7% in real terms annually over the next two years, with emerging markets like China continuing to be the main driver for growth. Kurt Karl, Swiss Re's Group chief economist, partly attributes P&C growth to "very strong economic growth in Asia, driven by the rising middle class." As the middle class grows and gets wealthier, they buy cars and houses and their insurance needs go up, he said. There are "significant opportunities when it comes to China and the emerging markets," added Dan Ryan, Swiss Re Institute head of research.

[UBS Boosts China Bet With Mainland's First Foreign Stock Fund](#)

Published by thestreet.com, 21st November 2017

The Swiss banking giant UBS AG has a two-decade history of firsts in China, from obtaining a license in 2003 that allowed foreign investors access to the country's stock markets to a permit this year authorizing private fund management. This week, it notched another win, leveraging the most recent permit to introduce the first mainland China stock fund owned by a company outside the People's Republic. The UBS China Equity Private Fund Series 1, controlled by the company's Shanghai subsidiary, has completed its initial offering and will join the USD 45 billion in assets that the Zurich-based lender already manages in the world's second-largest economy. While Chinese stock markets, valued at USD 8 trillion at the end of 2015, are dominated by state-operated businesses, private companies are gaining share, particularly in consumer industries like health care, and investors now have broader access to them, UBS said in a report. Reforms such as "stock connect programs" that allowed investors in the open Hong Kong market to trade shares on both the more-restricted Shanghai and Shenzhen stock exchanges have opened about 80% of China's market cap to global buyers, including the "A" shares listed only on the mainland.

Hospitality / Tourism / Retails

[A 'Scan Do' Attitude: How QR Codes Revolutionized The Chinese Retail Landscape](#)

Published by 5starplusdesign.com, 9th November 2017

QR (quick response) codes are a type of barcode used with high frequency in China; however, people in the West may be unfamiliar with them. Although they started off within the automotive industry, QR codes can now be seen across visual merchandising, providing information and payment services. Every poster has a QR code leading to a webpage where you can buy the product, get more information or join in a conversation. In this article, we could see the role QR code play in retail, the benefits for both customer and business. Also, it analyzes the reasons why hasn't the West embraced QR codes yet.

Legal / Trade / Consulting / Services

[Chinese Wisdom Empowers Entrepreneurs To Respond To Trends For Collaborative Success](#)

Published by webforms.ey.com, 24th November 2017

EY today announced the winners of the EY Entrepreneur Of the Year 2017 China awards. Twelve entrepreneurs from Mainland China and Hong Kong have been selected as winners following a nearly six-month selection process. The winners will celebrate their achievements at an award gala to be held in Hangzhou tonight. At the gala, two of them will be honored as the country winners of EOY 2017 China. They will represent the Mainland China and Hong Kong/Macau regions to compete for the coveted World Entrepreneur Of The Year (WEOY) Award in Monte Carlo in

June 2018. Albert Ng, China Chairman and Greater China Managing Partner, EY, says: "At EY, we have long recognized the value of the entrepreneurial spirit. We believe that entrepreneurs who are zealous, aspiring and passionate should be encouraged and empowered. The EY Entrepreneur Of The Year Awards program, having been introduced in China for 12 years, aims to identify and recognize entrepreneurs with outstanding achievements and to inspire more people to innovate. China is currently striving to enhance the quality and efficiency of its economic growth and to seek development opportunities through further opening up of its policies. Meanwhile, many outstanding entrepreneurs are building a strong momentum in driving social wealth accumulation, job creation, economic and social development, and in strengthening China's comprehensive national power."

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>
--	--	---

Disclaimer: SwissCham's Reader's Digest is a bi-weekly publication. Editorial, advertising and news published in the Reader's Digest are for advertisement and/or information purposes only and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Swiss Chamber of Commerce in China, of its Board, its members or its staff. SwissCham therefore rejects any liability related to the accuracy of and/or views reflected in the newsletters.