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## Reader's Digest, 25 January – 14 February 2014

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### BILATERAL RELATIONS

#### [Chinese Spring Festival Activities at Section Romande de la Société Suisse-Chine](#)

Published by Chinese Embassy in Switzerland, 30th January 2014

On January 27, the Chinese Ambassador in Switzerland, Ms. XU Jinghu attended the Chinese Spring Festival activities hosted by Section Romande de la Société Suisse-Chine in Lausanne. Besides the President of Section romande de la Société Suisse-Chine, Mr. Gerald Beroud, representatives from the canton of Vaud and around 150 participants attended the ceremony. Ms. XU appreciated the invitation and expressed her best regards to all the friends. She also reviewed the historic year of 2013 on Sino-Swiss relations. In the year of horse, she hoped the Chinese economics will take on the hurdles and gallop and that the Sino-Swiss development would be further enhanced. The President of Section Romande de la Société Suisse-Chine also addressed the audience and wished to push forward the bilateral ties in the future, especially between the French speaking region of Switzerland and China.

#### [Hong Kong Looks To Enhance Swiss Trade Ties](#)

Published by tax-news.com, 30th January 2014

On a recent visit to Switzerland, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Gregory So promoted Hong Kong as a place for Swiss firms to do business, using both the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Hong Kong and the member states of the European Free Trade Association, and the Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) with China. On January 24, at a business luncheon jointly hosted by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Berlin, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and the Swiss-Hong Kong Business Association, So spoke about the great opportunities for Hong Kong and Switzerland to strengthen co-operation as Switzerland's hi-tech firms might get a foothold in the Chinese market, as well as markets across Asia.

#### [China's Reform Offers World 'Opportunities'](#)

Published by China Daily, 26th January 2014

On January 25, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said during the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meetings that China will provide the world with more "Chinese opportunities" in development as it is embracing a new round of comprehensive reforms. China's new reform drive will not only herald a new era for its own development but also have extensive and positive impacts on the world, Wang said in Davos, Switzerland. Meanwhile, he said that China would contribute more of the "Chinese power" to world peace, remain committed to the path of peaceful development, undertake more international obligations, and play an even more active and productive role in resolving hotspot issues, he said. The WEF Annual Meeting, scheduled for January 22-25, is themed "Reshaping of the World: Consequences for Society, Politics and Business."

## **BUSINESS NEWS**

### **[China now Switzerland's Third-Largest Trading Partner](#)**

Published by swissinfo.ch, 10th February 2014

China is now Switzerland's third-largest trading partner after Germany and the United States, according to a press release issued by the Swiss Center Shanghai SCS. In the last seven years it has overtaken Britain, France and Italy. Switzerland is one of very few countries which has a trade surplus with China and Hong Kong, writes SCS, a non-profit organization which supports Swiss companies setting up business in Asia. This currently stands at CHF 2.1 billion (USD 2.3 billion). SCS quotes Swiss Federal Customs Administration figures showing that Swiss goods to the value of CHF 14.9 billion were exported to China and Hong Kong in 2013, according to the, an increase of 3.6% over the previous year. In terms of value, Switzerland's trade with China and Hong Kong more than doubled between 2003 and 2013.

### **[Swiss Watch Exports to China Recover](#)**

Published by China Daily, 7th February 2014

Swiss watch exports to China rose in December, data showed on February 6, adding to signs a difficult spell for luxury goods makers in an important market may be coming to an end after Swatch Group's upbeat statements on February 5. Swiss watchmakers sold fewer watches in China last year after a government crackdown on gift-giving to officials hit demand for expensive timepieces. Continued weakness in the Chinese market is one of the main reasons why analysts expect luxury goods sales growth to slow in 2014, despite strong demand from the United States and emerging market tourists hunting for bargains in Europe. Recently, however, signs are mounting that demand for watches in China may be picking up again.

### **[Chinese Magnesium Producer Opens European Trading Hub in Switzerland](#)**

Published by Switzerland Global Enterprise, 30th January 2014

A leading Chinese metallurgy producer has opened its European Trading Hub in Zug, Switzerland, under the name Crown Metals Trading AG. The company is one of the leading Chinese producers of magnesium ingots and alloys, and non-ferrous metals. The core business of Crown Metals Trading is the trade in metals of all kinds, especially in magnesium ingots and alloys, and other non-ferrous metals. The Chinese holding company has already built up a European client base. By establishing the new company in Zug, market access and service for European clients can be handled more efficiently.

### **[Year of the Horse: Chinese Economy Aims to Take on the Hurdles and Gallop](#)**

Published by SinOptic, 30th January 2014

As hundreds of millions of Chinese greet the Year of the Horse with fireworks and celebrations, business leaders expect 2014 to be a turning point for the world's second largest economy. "The establishment of the Pilot Free Trade Zone in Shanghai is the starting signal for significant change and a new round of liberalization", states Nicolas Musy, Managing Director of the non-profit organization Swiss Center Shanghai (SCS). The recently started Shanghai Pilot Free Trade Zone is the first of many liberalization steps to come: Favorable policies for SMEs and foreign companies to strengthen private sector. Swiss Center Shanghai opens the Swiss Machinery and Trading Center in the Shanghai Pilot Free Trade Zone. In addition, Swiss companies in China are increasingly confident about business in 2014, according to a recent survey by the China Europe International Business School and the Swiss Center Shanghai.

## **CULTURE & SOCIETY**

### **[Top 10 Overseas Travel Destinations for Chinese Riches](#)**

Published by China Daily, 26th January 2014

China's high net worth individuals are busier than ever. They are inundated with 7% more business trips than last year - up to 7.5 days per month - leaving less free time available for leisure. Excluding national festivals, the high net worth community spent, on average, 7.5 days on holiday and worked more during the weekends, according to the Chinese luxury Consumer Survey released by Hurun on January 20. Australia was the most preferred overseas travel destination for Chinese riches in 2013. Followings are the top 10 overseas destination for Chinese riches: Top 10: New Zealand; Top 9: Singapore; Germany; Top 7: Japan; Top 6: United States; Top 5: Maldives; Top 4: Switzerland; Top 3: Dubai; Top 2: France; Top 1: Australia.

### **[The Ski Instructors One Swiss Town Uses to Lure Chinese Visitors](#)**

Published by skift.com, 25th January 2014

Davos has attracted Bill Clinton, Angelina Jolie and Bill Gates. Now the Swiss Alpine village is deploying a 27-year-old Chinese ski instructor to appeal to the world's most populous nation. Song Shuyao, who started skiing when she was 12, is one of eight Mandarin-speaking ski teachers paid by the local tourism board to spend the winter in the Swiss Alps this year, as Davos tries to break into China's skiing market. "I believe whoever touches the snow once will love skiing," she said in a phone interview during a break from a full day of lessons in Davos. "Whoever starts to love skiing will demand more from facilities and the environment. Therefore they want to try skiing in the Alps." While China's swelling middle class is a target for holiday destinations around the world, the country has been slow to embrace skiing. As the sport becomes more popular in China, Swiss ski resorts are pinning their hopes on Chinese guests, who spend twice as much as German visitors.

## **GENERAL INTEREST**

### **[2014 Taiwan Scholarship Program and Huayu Enrichment Scholarships for Swiss Students](#)**

Published by crus.ch, 7th February 2014

Taiwan Scholarship Program was established to encourage outstanding international students to undertake degree programs in Taiwan. Two scholarships are to be offered to Swiss students under this program in 2014. The 2014 Ministry of Education Huayu Enrichment Scholarships (HES) Program is to encourage international students and individuals to undertake Mandarin Chinese language study in Taiwan, the Ministry of Education (MOE) of the

Republic of China (Taiwan) established the Ministry of Education Huayu Enrichment Scholarship (HES) Program. 24 months of scholarships are available for Swiss students under the program 2014.

## **INDUSTRIES**

### **Engineering / Manufacturing**

#### **[Buhler Acquires Majority Stake in Yaoxian Machinery](#)**

Published by nzz.ch, 14th February 2014

The Buhler Technology Group expands in Asia and strengthens their market for installation production of Asian noodles. The company acquires a majority stake of 80% in the Chinese Yaoxian Machinery in Guangzhou, as Buhler tells on January 13. Yaoxian manufactures production equipment and components both in the field of instant as well as non-instant noodles. The company is profitable and is managed by owner Feng Xingyuan. Yaoxian employs approximately 50 employees and has a turnover approximately CHF 3 million. The former owner and key employees of the current management had agreed to stand for the operational business in the coming years. Both parties have agreed not to disclose the purchase price.

#### **[Syngenta will Sell GM Corn not Approved by China](#)**

Published by agprofessional.com, 7th February 2014

Syngenta AG, the world's largest crop chemicals company, has commitments to sell its entire supply of a genetically modified corn variety that is not approved by China, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said on Friday. Vilsack said whether or not China eventually approves the corn, known as Agrisure Viptera or MIR 162, it was still being sold and that Syngenta has "basically have sold out" of its supply for the 2014 growing season. Chinese authorities have rejected some 600,000 tonnes of U.S. corn since November because they contained MIR 162, which has not been approved for use there. Two leading U.S. grain groups asked Syngenta last month to suspend the commercial use of Viptera and Duracade, a new strain of corn that the company plans to roll out this year, until the Chinese approvals are sorted out.

### **Bank / Finance / Insurance**

#### **[Zurich Insurance Profit Increases 9% After New China Life Sale](#)**

Published by swissinfo.ch, 13th February 2014

Zurich Insurance Group AG, the biggest Swiss insurer, said fourth-quarter profit rose 9% following a gain of about USD 543 million from selling its entire stake in New China Life Insurance Co. to Swiss Re Ltd. Net income increased to USD 1.07 billion from USD 988 million a year earlier, the Zurich-based company said today. That missed the USD 1.26 billion estimate of 14 analysts surveyed by Bloomberg. After lowering its profit goal in December, the company signaled it was ready to sell some businesses to bolster earnings growth. The insurer will keep its dividend unchanged at a 12-year high of CHF 17.00 (USD 18.94) a share, after increasing the payout to that level for 2010.

### **Hospitality / Tourism / Retails**

#### **[Nestlé Waters Excited by Perrier's 'Hyper-Premium' Appeal to Chinese Sophisticates](#)**

Published by beveragedaily.com, 25th January 2014

Nestlé Waters told [beveragedaily.com](#) it is excited by Perrier's growth prospects in China where the carbonated mineral water commands an ultra-premium price. Muriel Koch, Nestlé Waters' marketing manager told this website that Perrier – which celebrated its 150th anniversary last year as it topped the 1bn+ package production mark – is keen to build volumes abroad. Explaining that Perrier sees Russia and Japan as promising markets, Koch turned to China. “We are preparing a very special launch for the brand. Perrier's been there for 20 years already, so is well known, but it's hyper-premium and only distributed in very high-end outlets in the big Tier 1 cities [Beijing, Shanghai, Guanzhou],” she said. “It's really a product to be seen with,” Koch added. “The Chinese people don't really drink at home. They save during the week in order to be seen at the weekend with a friend in Starbucks. “It's the same for Perrier, which marks people out as a connoisseur or a sophisticate, drinking a special water from France with a special taste,” Koch said, adding that despite tiny volumes given China's size and population, Nestlé Waters saw great promise for the brand.

## **Legal / Trade / Consulting / Services**

### **[When Life Revolves Around Planning Events](#)**

Published by China Daily, 6th February 2014

Organizing large-scale events in China, featuring thousands of people from all corners of the globe, is all in a day's work for Richard Rheindorf. The German-born executive is based in Beijing, a city which is becoming increasingly popular as a destination for events, conventions and conferences. Rheindorf is deputy managing director of MCI, a Switzerland-headquartered company that specializes in putting on mega events. It means organizing everything including booking and equipping the conference venues, securing hotel rooms, scheduling sight-seeing trips, fixing various dinners and banquets and catering to special requests. For Rheindorf it is a perfect job. He has been intrigued by China for much of his adult life before finally securing a posting to the country five years ago. It allows him to pass on two decades of expertise to local colleagues, ensuring that events in Beijing and Shanghai are staged seamlessly, and to be an integral part of the world's fastest-growing economy.

### **[Shanghai-Based SIM Separates into two Industry-Leading Consultancies](#)**

Published by [sim.biz](#), 29th January 2014

Mr. Michael Lehmann, Partner and General Manager of sim (selective international management) Co. Ltd, and Mr. Philippe Zwahlen, former Partner and Managing Director of sim, formally announce the split of sim into two companies. The restructuring of sim ownership and strategic separation allows Mr. Zwahlen to move forward with a new company, SST Co. Ltd, while Mr. Lehmann advances into sole ownership of sim. sim was founded in 2006 by Mr. Zwahlen as a business consultancy. Mr. Lehmann joined the company initially as a business developer, then in 2008 moved into the GM position and became officially a partner in 2010. In 2009, sim expanded, opening three liaison offices in Zurich, Berlin and Helsinki, while in 2011, sim Switzerland was established. As of January 2014, sim has announced plans to open a branch office in the Sino-Swiss Zhenjiang Ecological and Industrial Park as the acknowledged Swiss Consultancy of the Park. The latter is to be carried out as a shared initiative between the Chinese and Swiss governments. sim is further proud to stand as the official organizer of SwissWeek in China.

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

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