

PRESS RELEASE

Grand opening: Schneider-Ammann highlights competitiveness of Swiss companies in China

- **President Johann Schneider-Ammann** cut the ribbon on Saturday, April 9th, **at the official inauguration ceremony of Swiss Center’s “Machinery, Trade and Business Center”** in Shanghai.
- In his speech at the non-profit Swiss Center, the largest cluster of Swiss companies in Asia, Schneider-Ammann stressed the importance of the Swiss core values innovation, specialization and precision.
- Besides the newly opened facility in Shanghai, **the Swiss Center also expands in the North of China**, offering Swiss companies **first-class workshop and office space in the Tianjin and Beijing area.**

Shanghai (April 9, 2016) – “The footprints set by the Swiss companies present in China today represent the core values of Swiss competitiveness – innovation, specialization, precision and flexibility. I feel at home. I congratulate the Swiss Center and its team for all the achievements and contributions made to Sino-Swiss economic development for over 15 years”, said Swiss President Johann Schneider-Ammann before he cut the ribbon in front of the “Swiss Machinery, Trade and Business Center” in Shanghai’s Waigaoqiao area on Saturday, April 9th.

The new 4.400sqm location offering showrooms, warehouses and offices, is a facility of the Swiss Center, a non-profit organization that facilitates the market entry of Swiss companies in the Far East. In the 15 years of its activity, the Swiss Center became the largest cluster of Swiss companies in Asia. Together with its partners, it served more than 300 firms and set up more than 30 production companies and 50 commercial subsidiaries for Swiss enterprises. With the new premise in Shanghai and recently opened first-class workshop space in Tianjin and Beijing in China’s North, the Swiss Center is on the expansion track.

At the inauguration ceremony, President Schneider-Ammann headed a high-ranking delegation of approximately 60 people including representatives of the government, the business and the academia as well as the Swiss Embassy and Consulate. In his inauguration speech, Schneider-Ammann highlighted the importance of Swiss competitiveness, the core values of Swiss companies and he also addressed the growth of the Swiss Center. “The expansion in the North of China demonstrates on the one hand the dynamism and growing business opportunities, and on the other hand the strong commitment of Swiss Center in supporting Swiss business development here”, explained Schneider-Ammann.

After the ribbon cutting, the delegation headed into the building and visited the 18 participating companies showcasing their activities in China. The delegation had vivid exchanges with the representing CEOs and executives who shared their experiences of doing business in China. These include [Microdia](#), [Sonceboz](#), [Migros](#), [M-Industry](#), [Alpvision](#), [Dec](#), [Frewitt](#), [WDT Tooltech](#), [Haug](#), [Integra Biosciences](#), [LX Precision](#), [Rahn](#), [Inter](#), [KUK electronics](#), and [Leister](#).

Swiss Center and its member companies sharing their success in China

One of the Swiss Center member companies, Frewitt SA, a leading manufacturer of premium-quality mills since 1946, explained its journey in exploring the Chinese market. Frewitt China, founded in 2008 with the support of Swiss Center Shanghai, not only generates growing sales revenues from the Chinese customers, but also contributes to the group with local sourcing and development competence. "Our Chinese setup is very important to serve better our global customers," said Mr. Jerome Li, CEO of Frewitt China. "The development in the Chinese market helps reducing our cost and facilitates the market access to other Asian countries."

Sonceboz SA started with Swiss Center to establish an office in China in 2013. As a company creating, designing and producing electric actuators for demanding requirements, Sonceboz in China focuses mainly on automotive applications. "China is a huge market - by far the biggest in the world in volume - and better quality and service are expected, which means more opportunities for us", explained Arthur Raffard, Business Development Manager Asia. "Almost all our products contribute to reduced emissions and improved fuel efficiency. We anticipate that more stringent regulations will be implemented to tackle pollution issues, which will further help to sell our products."

"The Sino-Swiss FTA had a positive impact on business development of Sonceboz SA by decreasing import duties, which is a rather unique advantage for Switzerland and gives Switzerland a competitive edge versus other countries!" added Mr. Raffard. "It provides an opportunity for business growth and allows Sonceboz SA to remain competitive in a very cost driven environment."

The positive outlook on China's market growth is confirmed by the latest survey jointly conducted by the Swiss Center, the China Europe International Business School (CEIBS), the Swiss Embassy in China, Swissnex, SwissCham and China Integrated. "The respondents from Swiss companies as well as European, American and Chinese counterparts remain positive on growing sales and revenues even though a slowing economy is expected in the next 2-3 years in China", commented Nicolas Musy, Co-Founder and Delegate of the Board of Swiss Centers in China. Musy explained that the downturn, due to over construction and general overcapacity built up is temporary. China needs 2-3 years to absorb inventories and turn its economy around. "The future will bring even more interesting opportunities for Swiss companies, because growth will now occur in new, sustainable and high technologies, automation and precision equipment as well as quality consumer products. Sophisticated services in the finance, health, leisure and tourism areas are also fast growing fields. All these sectors are typically where Swiss companies excel so that they are particularly well positioned to serve China's needs in its next phase of growth."

The Swiss Center looks forward to continued cooperation with Swiss business and institutional circles to facilitate its mission of operational support to SMEs in China.



Picture legend: President Schneider-Amann inaugurated the Machinery, Trade and Business Center in Shanghai's Waigaoqiao area.

Picture source: swisscenters.org



Picture legend: Interesting exchanges with Swiss companies operating in China: President Schneider-Amann visited the Swiss Center Shanghai.

Picture source: swisscenters.org



Picture legend: Interesting exchanges with Swiss companies operating in China: President Schneider-Amann visited the Swiss Center Shanghai.

Picture source: swisscenters.org



Picture legend: Supporting Swiss companies in the Far East: Swiss Center Shanghai opened the Machinery, Trade and Business Center in Shanghai's Waigaoqiao area.

Picture source: swisscenters.org

About Swiss Center: Founded in 2000 as a non-profit, Sino-Swiss, public-private partnership, Swiss Center is by far the largest cluster of Swiss enterprises in Asia. With five locations strategically located on the dynamic East coast of China (Shanghai, Beijing and Tianjin), Swiss Center does not only offer virtual and instant office space as well as ready-to-use workshops and showrooms, but also supports member companies with government relations, technology transfer and a broad network of experts. Swiss Center served more than 300 companies in China – both SMEs and large enterprises. Among other, the Swiss Center experts have established 30 production companies and more than 50 commercial offices for Swiss companies. Swiss Center also conducts surveys and expert analyses of China's business opportunities and challenges, and at the same time promotes the *Swiss Made* brand and Switzerland as a country for innovation and an industrial leader. For more information, kindly visit: www.swisscenters.org.

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