

# 从丝绸之路到圣哥达山口

## From the Silk Road to the Gotthard



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在现代运输方式发明前，瑞士和中国之间的距离几乎是不可逾越的。中世纪时，威尼斯商人马可·波罗的探险经历向欧洲人描绘了中国这一遥远国度的图景。根据传说，这也可能带来了首批沿着著名丝绸之路到达圣哥达山口的货物。

在相反方向（尽管是多年以后），钟表作为最早已知的商品之一从瑞士运往中国，其中有些甚至成为了故宫博物院的藏品。因此，播威兄弟1822年在广州建立首家已知的瑞士贸易公司，向中国南部销售怀表，这绝非偶然。

外交关系紧随贸易往来，这常见于瑞士历史。在一项友好条约缔结三年后，瑞士于1921年在繁华的上海开设了第一个总领馆。

尽管双方的贸易关系在中华人民共和国成立后一度承受压力，但1950年瑞士政府较早承认（新中国）又为其恢复奠定了良好基础。这也是为何我们今年庆祝两国建交65周年的原因。

早在上世纪70年代，两国政府已开始合作搭建有利的贸易与投资框架条件，今年也正逢双边贸易协定签

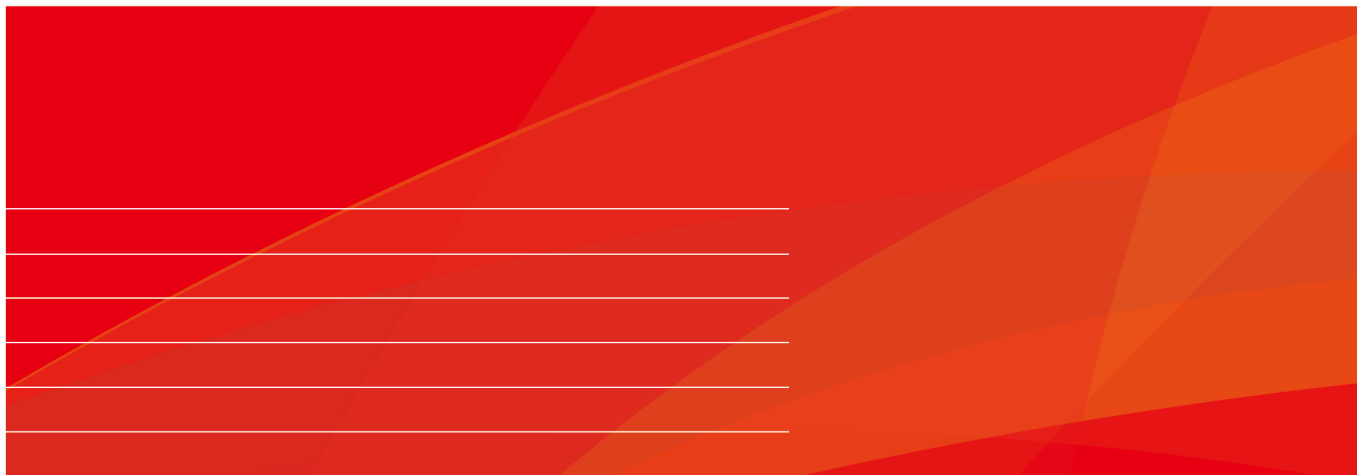
Before the invention of modern means of transportation, the distance between Switzerland and China was all but unsurmountable. In the Middle Ages, accounts of an adventurous journey by the Venetian merchant Marco Polo opened the horizon of Europeans to the existence of this faraway land called China. Together with the stories, it is likely that also the first goods travelled the famous Silk Road all the way to the Gotthard.

In the other direction (albeit many years later), watches were among the first known goods delivered from Switzerland to China. Some of them even found their way into the collection of the Forbidden City's Palace Museum. It was certainly no coincidence, that the Bovet Brothers founded in 1822 the first known Swiss commercial presence on Chinese soil in Canton (Guangzhou) from where they supplied the south of China with their pocket watches.

As was often the case in Swiss history, diplomatic relations followed in the footsteps of commercial ties. In 1921, Switzerland opened the first Consulate General in booming Shanghai after concluding a friendship treaty three years earlier.

Although commercial relations underwent some strains after the proclamation of the People's Republic of China, its early recognition by the Swiss government in 1950 provided a good basis for their recovery. That is why we can celebrate 65 years of diplomatic relations this year.

Already in the nineteen seventies, our two governments started working together to create favourable framework conditions for trade and investment. This year, we can also celebrate the 40th birthday of our bilateral trade treaty. It was thus more than a coincidence that a Swiss enterprise formed the first-ever industrial joint venture with a Chinese company. While the obligations from WTO membership and more recently our bilateral Free Trade Agreement have superseded those under the trade treaty, the latter still remains the basis of the Joint Economic Commission Switzerland-China. This body is the platform for our institutionalised dialogue on economic and trade matters and convenes regularly under the co-chairmanship of the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO and the Chinese Ministry of Commerce MOFCOM. It has served as starting point and an accompanying body to the fundamental transformation of our bilateral trade and investment relations over the last decades. As such, the Joint Economic Commission (JEC) remains to this day an exchange platform among officials and, as its special feature, it also includes representatives from the private sector from both countries. Over the years, the JEC created a number of working groups to address topics of particular interest, such as Intellectual Property Rights and "Industry Roundtables". Furthermore, the JEC also follows specific projects such as the Sino-Swiss Eco-Industrial Park in Zhenjiang (Jiangsu Province). At the beginning



署40周年。因此，瑞士企业参与创办中国第一家工业领域外资企业也就不只是巧合。世界贸易组织和新近的中瑞自贸协定规定的义务超越了贸易协定，但后者仍是瑞中经贸联委会的基础。这一机制在瑞士联邦经济总局和中国商务部共同主持下定期举行，是我们开展经济和贸易问题对话的平台，是两国贸易和投资关系在过去几十年发生根本转型的起始点和陪伴者。瑞中经贸联委会至今仍是官方交流平台，更特别的是也涵盖了两国私人部门的代表。多年来，联委会建立了数个工作组以探讨特别关注的议题，如知识产权和产业界圆桌会。此外，经贸联委会也关注中瑞镇江生态产业园等具体项目。该项目以联邦委员约翰·施耐德-阿曼和时任商务部长陈德铭签署的一项协议为基础，目前正在由私人部门推进。

如观察瑞中双边贸易发展，我们能看出中国2001年加入世贸组织带来的深刻影响。不仅是关税减免，它反映了中国经济转型的规模，这也反过来增加了对瑞士产品的需求。

过去几十年，伴随着全球化的扩大，瑞士的对外贸易也经历着深刻转变。周边的欧洲仍是瑞士最重要的经济伙伴，而瑞士与亚洲和美洲的贸易增长则特别引人注目。2010年起，中国成为瑞士在亚洲最大的贸易伙伴，2013和2014年双边贸易额均达到约300亿瑞郎（含黄金）。除了金锭，瑞士对华出口的主要是医药品、机械设备和钟表，自华进口机械设备、纺织和钟表及配件。

此外，两国服务贸易的重要性不断增强。例如，去年中国游客在瑞士过夜数量首次突破100万人次。瑞士企业也保持着投资步伐，累计对华直接投资已超过170亿瑞郎。

瑞中自贸协定去年生效为双边经济关系树立了新的里程碑。最初的经历证明，我们的经济参与者已开始利用并受益于协定带来的优惠措施。为了让企业真正受益于框架条件的改善，关联规则应当尽可能地为用户提供方便。当国际贸易变得越来越复杂，这一领域很有可能将成为最大挑战。伴随着包括自贸协定在内的每一次改善，正确付诸实践的成本也在增加。防止诸如人事、时间、资金等成本导致企业不利用某项协定，这符合我们的共同利益。以双边自贸协定为良好基础，加上经贸联委会的支持，我们已准备好克服这样或那样的挑战，将丝绸之路和圣哥达山口紧密相连。

of this singular project lays an agreement between Federal Councillor Johann N. Schneider-Ammann and then-Minister of Commerce Chen Deming, and it is now realised by the private sector.

Looking at the development of bilateral trade between Switzerland and China, we recognise the profound impact of China's accession to the World Trade Organisation in 2001. Beyond the mere reduction in tariffs, it reflects the scope of transformation of the Chinese economy which in turn stimulated demand for Swiss products.

Swiss foreign trade has also undergone a deep change with the spreading globalisation over the last decades. While surrounding Europe remains Switzerland's most important economic partner, the growth in trade with Asia and the Americas in particular catches the eye. Since 2010, China has become our biggest trading partner in Asia, with a bilateral trade volume (including gold) of approx. 30 billion Swiss Francs in both 2013 and 2014. Besides gold ingots, Switzerland exports primarily pharmaceuticals, machinery and watches to China, and imports machinery, textiles as well as watches and watch components.

Moreover, trade in services between our two countries continues to gain in significance. Last year, for instance, the number of overnight stays by Chinese tourists surpassed one million stays for the first time ever. Swiss companies also continue to invest considerably. The total of Swiss foreign direct investment in China exceeds 17 billion Swiss Francs.

The entry into force of the Switzerland–China Free Trade Agreement last year forms a new milestone in our bilateral economic relations. First experience shows that our economic operators are beginning to make use of and benefit from the preferential treatment the Agreement provides. For companies to actually profit from these improved framework conditions, the connected rules need to be as user-friendly as possible. It may well be that this area will prove to be one of the biggest challenges as the world of international trade becomes more and more complex. With each new partial improvement, like for example our bilateral Free Trade Agreement, the cost of its correct application grows as well. It is in our common interest to prevent that such costs in personnel, time and money can lead an enterprise to the decision not to make use of an agreement. On the sound basis of our bilateral Free Trade Agreement and with the support of the Joint Economic Commission, we are well set to overcome this and other challenges to connect the Silk Road with the Gotthard.