

SCCC Conducts Swiss China Summit in Celebration of 40 Years Chamber History



On June 25, 2021, the Swiss-Chinese Chamber of Commerce (SCCC) hosted the "Swiss China Summit" in celebration of its 40th anniversary. The event took place in a hybrid format, with some speakers present at the Swiss Re Centre for Global Dialogue in Rüslikon, Switzerland, and others dialing in live from around the world. The audience was able to listen to the presentations and panel discussions and participate virtually in Q&A with the speakers.

The chamber welcomed 26 guest speakers from various companies and industries to present their insights on specific topics. More than 170 participants joined the Swiss China Summit remotely to listen to the informative speeches and panel discussions and contributed to the great success of this event.

The Swiss China Summit was opened by the moderator, Richard Francis, Global Projects Advisor at Swiss Re, who guided the participants through the program. SCCC President Felix Sutter then welcomed all speakers and guests and presented his thoughts and the significance of the Chamber's 40+ years history. His Excellency Wang Shiting, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Switzerland, delivered the welcoming speech on the development of bilateral Sino-Swiss relations – followed by Ambassador Raphael Nägeli, Assistant State Secretary for Asia/Pacific at the FDFA, who provided a Swiss perspective on the bilateral cooperation.

The keynote speech was given by Dr. Katherine Xin, Associate Dean at China Europe International Business School. She explained how companies can leverage the technologies resulting from today's digital transformation to improve their business.

After these introductory inputs, participants had the opportunity to follow six different panel discussions in two consecutive rounds. The first round focused on the topics of China's macroeconomic development, financial industry reforms and developments in the field of innovation:

- During the panel discussion "China's Macroeconomic Landscape 2021 and Beyond", Philipp Stutzmann, Executive Director & Senior Relationship Manager Large Corporates Switzerland at ICBC Zurich Branch, led a discussion between Jinny Yan, Chief China Economist at ICBC Standard Bank, and Geoffrey Yu, Senior EMEA Market Strategist at BNY Mellon. They discussed the implications of China's new "dual circulation" concept for future economic development and provided guidance on trends in the internationalization of financial markets.

- The panel discussion “Market and Financial Service Industry Reforms in China” addressed the question of what to expect in terms of market liberalization in China. Roger Bieri, Head Multinationals & Swiss Corporate Clients International at UBS, together with his UBS colleagues Qing Dahinden-Zhou, Business Manager Corporate & Institutional Clients, Yannick Oberson, Head Governmental Affairs International, and Dr. Eugene Qian, Chairman UBS Securities Co. Ltd., presented the topic and how enterprises can benefit from these developments.
- In the panel “China: The Future Belongs to Innovation”, Stefan Kohler, Partner at VISCHER AG, discussed with Dr. William Pao, Head of Pharmaceutical Research & Early Development at Roche, Bin Sheng, Partner at Succeed Consulting GmbH, and René Wiedemann, Managing Director at Accenture Switzerland. They spoke about the latest developments in the Chinese R&D environment, shed light on the driving forces of Chinese innovation and explained what risks and opportunities arise for Western companies in this area.

The second round of panel discussions addressed sustainability and green development, intercultural aspects between China and Europe, and was enriched by a number of practical examples of doing business in China:

- In the panel “Sustainability and Green Development under the 14th FYP”, Felix Sutter, President of the SCCC, discussed with Markus Herrmann, Director at Sinolytics, and Dr. Gillian Rutherford-Liske, Head Reinsurance Sustainability at Swiss Re, how sustainability and green development are taken into account in China’s new five-year plan. They presented recent developments in this area and tackled the implications of these developments for businesses and competitiveness in general.
- During the panel discussion “Intercultural Aspects in the Cooperation Between China and Europe”, Dr. Esther Nägeli, Partner at Nägeli Attorneys-at-Law, and Dr. Hans Roth, Partner at EurAsia Competence, provided insights into the fundamental differences between Chinese and European culture. They also discussed how these differences manifest themselves in everyday business life and gave recommendations on how companies should respond to them.
- The panel discussion “Sharing Success Stories – Doing Business in China During Difficult Times” focused on the challenges and opportunities of doing business in China in the current times. Stefan Barny, Director Global Network at Switzerland Global Enterprise, Stefan Schmid, Partner, International Tax Services at PricewaterhouseCoopers, Olivier Glauser, Chairman at Cellap Laboratoire, Michael Hartl, Managing Director at Eugster/Frismag, and Robbert van der Feltz, Hilti, shared their experiences and success stories.

We sincerely thank all speakers for enriching the event with their presentations and discussions and for providing valuable insights into today's business and market environment in China.

A special thanks also goes to all guests for their participation and for adding an interactive component to this hybrid event through their participation in the Q&A sessions with the speakers.

For further comments or questions about the Swiss China Summit, please email us at info@sccc.ch.