

Joint media release

Geneva, 30 November 2009

China and Switzerland launch a joint feasibility study for a bilateral free trade agreement

The Minister of Commerce of the People's Republic of China CHEN Deming and the Minister of Economic Affairs of Switzerland Doris LEUTHARD, decided today in Geneva to launch a joint study to examine the feasibility of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between China and Switzerland as a way to further promote the economic relationship between the two countries.

The Joint Swiss-Chinese Feasibility Study will examine the topics covered by free trade agreements, such as trade in goods, trade in services, investment and other possible areas of cooperation. The Joint Study Group will present its findings and conclusions to the competent Ministers with a view to offer suggestions to both Governments to take a decision on future negotiations on a free trade agreement between China and Switzerland.

Both Ministers acknowledged today the successful results of the two Workshops on Industrial Exchange for a China-Switzerland Free Trade Agreement, held in Beijing and in Bern earlier this year. The two Workshops enhanced mutual understanding of the complementarity of the Chinese and the Swiss economies and of the opportunities and challenges for enhanced economic exchange and cooperation under a Free Trade Agreement.

The Workshops were held following the meeting on 27 January 2009 in Bern of Premier WEN Jiabao of the People's Republic of China and Swiss President Hans-Rudolf MERZ, where it was decided that a China-Switzerland Joint Study Group would be established in order to examine the feasibility of a Free Trade Agreement between China and Switzerland as a way to further promote the economic relationship between the two countries.

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