

**Press Review Taiwan**

Trade Office of Swiss Industries, Taipei, 1—31 May 2017

**Contents**

<b>Switzerland in the local press .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Switzerland returns 3.5 million euros to Tunisia (Taiwan News, 26.05.2017) .....	2
Swiss vote to withdraw country from use of nuclear power (Taiwan News, 21.05.2017) .....	2
New Swiss solar plane completes 1st test flight, aims higher (Taiwan News, 05.05.2017) .....	2
Germany urges Switzerland to cooperate in espionage probe (Taiwan News, 03.05.2017) .....	2
<b>Foreign Policy .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Renaming of agency helps cement Taiwan-Japan relations (Taiwan Today, 18.05.2017) .....	2
Taiwan delegation to attend APEC trade ministers meeting (Focus Taiwan, 17.05.2017) .....	2
Fiji is closing its representative office in Taipei (The China Post, 17.05.2017) .....	2
Taiwan-Indonesian immigration meeting ends with fruitful results (The China Post, 14.05.2017) .....	2
Visa-free entry for Filipino citizens postponed (Taiwan News, 13.05.2017) .....	3
<b>China Relation .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Chinese visitors to Taiwan fall 50.2% (Taiwan News, 05.05.2017) .....	3
Eviction of Taiwanese delegates panned (Taipei Times, 04.05.2017) .....	3
<b>Domestic Policy .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Imported goods over NT\$2,000 to be levied with customs duty (Eye on Taiwan, 24.05.2017) .....	3
Constitutional Court rules in favor of same-sex marriage (Taiwan News, 24.05.2017) .....	3
Government to form national investment company in six months (Focus Taiwan, 15.05.2017) .....	3
<b>Economy/Finance .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Taiwan's GDP growth forecast revised upward to over 2% (The China Post, 27.05.2017) .....	3
Taiwan's economy seeing sluggish growth (Eye on Taiwan, 26.05.2017) .....	3
Taiwan's industrial production ends 8-month rising streak (The China Post, 24.05.2017) .....	4
Taiwan's April export orders up for 9th consecutive month (Focus Taiwan, 22.05.2017) .....	4
Taiwan's jobless rate drops to 23-month low of 3.67% (Taiwan News, 22.05.2017) .....	4
Q1 manufacturing output growth hits 6-year high (The China Post, 20.05.2017) .....	4
Information service sector's sales expected to hit high in 2017 (Focus Taiwan, 15.05.2017) .....	4
Taiwan's national per capita debt remains NT\$240,000 in April (Taipei Times, 10.05.2017) .....	4
Taiwan April exports grow for 7th consecutive month (Taiwan online, 08.05.2017) .....	4
Foreign exchange reserves hit new high in April (Eye on Taiwan, 06.05.2017) .....	4
Consumer prices edge up in April (Focus Taiwan, 05.05.2017) .....	4
Manufacturing activity extends strong run in April (Taiwan News, 02.05.2017) .....	5
<b>Technology/Innovation .....</b>	<b>5</b>
ITRI develops world's first easy-to-use pesticide detector (Focus Taiwan, 23.05.2017) .....	5
Taiwan wins big at Paris invention fair (Taipei Times, 14.05.2017) .....	5
<b>Special Focus .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Taiwan's health minister holds 59 meetings on sidelines of WHA (Focus Taiwan, 27.05.2017) .....	5
WHO decides against Taiwan's WHA participation (Focus Taiwan, 22.05.2017) .....	5
Health minister in Geneva ahead of WHA meet's start (Taipei Times, 21.05.2017) .....	5
World Medical Association officials support Taiwan's WHA bid (Focus Taiwan, 21.05.2017) .....	5



## Switzerland in the local press

### Switzerland returns 3.5 million euros to Tunisia (Taiwan News, 26.05.2017)

Switzerland is transferring 3.5 million euros (\$3.9 million) to Tunisia in line with a stolen assets recovery process. The Office of the Attorney General of Switzerland ordered the transfer in response to a request from Tunisia for mutual legal assistance. The Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs says the assets had been frozen in connection with a close relative of Tunisia's former president and were being sent back with that person's consent.

### Swiss vote to withdraw country from use of nuclear power (Taiwan News, 21.05.2017)

Swiss voters are supporting a referendum to withdraw the country from nuclear power in favor of renewable energy. The projection for SRF public television showed 58 % of voters in favor and 42 % against the proposal. The Swiss government wants to ban the construction of new nuclear power plants and decommission the country's five existing ones at the end of their technically safe operating lives. The plan would also boost renewable energies such as solar and wind and make cars and electronic devices more energy efficient.

### New Swiss solar plane completes 1st test flight, aims higher (Taiwan News, 05.05.2017)

A group of Swiss adventurers say they have completed the first test flight of a new solar-powered airplane, SolarStratos, they hope will eventually reach the edge of space. SolarStratos project head Raphael Domjan circled the globe in a solar-powered catamaran in 2012. He aims to take the 82-foot (25-meter) wide two-seater plane covered in solar panels to an altitude of over 80,000 feet (24,384 meters) by 2019. Commercial planes fly at altitudes of between 10,000 and 60,000 feet.

### Germany urges Switzerland to cooperate in espionage probe (Taiwan News, 03.05.2017)

Germany's Foreign Ministry is urging Switzerland to cooperate with an investigation into a case of suspected espionage. The suspect, a 54-year-old identified only as Daniel M., was arrested in the German financial center of Frankfurt. The Welt newspaper reported that M. was sent to Germany by Switzerland's intelligence agency to identify German tax investigators involved in the purchase of confidential Swiss bank client data. Foreign Ministry spokesman Martin Schaefer said that it's in Germany and Switzerland's interest not to harm bilateral relations.

## Foreign Policy

### Renaming of agency helps cement Taiwan-Japan relations (Taiwan Today, 18.05.2017)

The renaming of the agency in charge of relations with Japan to the Taiwan-Japan Relations Association, formerly known as the Association of East Asia Relations and was established in December 1972, highlights the strength of ties between the two sides and bodes well for their further development, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). The minister said the new name better reflects the organization's mission, and will help bring ties to a new high for the benefit of both nations.

### Taiwan delegation to attend APEC trade ministers meeting (Focus Taiwan, 17.05.2017)

Led by John Deng, Minister without Portfolio and the head of Cabinet's Office of Trade Negotiations, a Taiwan delegation departs for Hanoi to attend the trade ministers' meeting at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum on May 20-21. The annual APEC meeting of Ministers Responsible for Trade will discuss priorities in 2017, including issues such as deepening regional economic integration; supporting multilateral trade systems; and strengthening micro, small and medium-sized enterprises' competitiveness and innovation.

### Fiji is closing its representative office in Taipei (The China Post, 17.05.2017)

Officials from Fiji have cleared out of their representative office in Taipei, which the South Pacific island nation is shutting down. The office served as Fiji's de facto embassy in Taiwan in the absence of formal diplomatic relations. Fiji's move was made to reallocate the country's resources to better meet its needs, MOFA said, but it stressed the unofficial bilateral ties between the two countries would not be affected by the move. Taiwan would maintain its representative office in Fiji.

### Taiwan-Indonesian immigration meeting ends with fruitful results (The China Post, 14.05.2017)

The 5th Immigration Bilateral Meeting between Indonesia's Directorate General of Immigration and Taiwan's National Immigration Agency (NIA), held on May 10, reached a spate of consensus on relevant immigration issues. Among the conclusions, both sides agreed to build a cross-border information sharing mechanism, exchange refugee accommodation practices, allow reciprocal visa-free stays for nationals of both countries, and enhance border security and customs clearance for tourists from either side.

[Top of Document](#)

**Visa-free entry for Filipino citizens postponed (Taiwan News, 13.05.2017)**

Taiwan's offer of visa-free access for Philippine citizens has been postponed, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) said. The implementation of the plan is being pushed back in order to complete related administrative procedures and negotiations. "The exact date for when the measure will take effect will be announced in September," MOFA said, adding that e-visa privileges will continue to be available for Philippine tourists to Taiwan.

**China Relation****Chinese visitors to Taiwan fall 50.2% (Taiwan News, 05.05.2017)**

Chinese tourist arrivals to Taiwan dropped 50.2 % in the first four months of the year to 610,524, compared with the same period last year, according to the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC). Of the 610,524 arrivals, 267,447 were in tour groups, a decline of 61 % y-o-y. Meanwhile, the number of independent Chinese tourists to Taiwan fell 36.3 % y-o-y to 343,077.

**Eviction of Taiwanese delegates panned (Taipei Times, 04.05.2017)**

An Australian newspaper, Sydney Morning Herald, characterized as "disgusting" and "extraordinary" scenes caused by a Chinese delegation as it sought to prevent a Taiwanese group from attending a conflict diamonds meeting hosted by Australia's foreign minister in Perth. The Chinese delegation noisily disrupted the official welcome ceremony and forced the suspension of at least one session. The Taiwanese delegation was ejected from the intergovernmental meeting at the request of the Chinese delegates. The MOFA said that China "has resorted to every conceivable means" to block Taiwan from international affairs.

**Domestic Policy****Imported goods over NT\$2,000 to be levied with customs duty (Eye on Taiwan, 24.05.2017)**

The Ministry of Finance (MOF) will lower the duty-free threshold for goods imported via mail to NT\$2,000 (US\$66.29) from the current NT\$3,000, probably starting from September. The MOF said the main reasons for the move are to provide a fair playing field for domestic online shopping companies to compete with their overseas rivals and to broaden the tax base.

**Constitutional Court rules in favor of same-sex marriage (Taiwan News, 24.05.2017)**

In a landmark ruling, Taiwan's Council of Grand Justices stated that the Civil Code provisions that does not ensure same-sex marriage rights is unconstitutional and asked the Legislature to amend relevant laws within two years to protect the interests of gay couples. The historic constitutional interpretation makes Taiwan the first country in Asia to effectively legalize same-sex marriage.

**Government to form national investment company in six months (Focus Taiwan, 15.05.2017)**

A national investment company will be set up if an initial NT\$2 billion (US\$66.48 million) fund designed to support Taiwan's startups in the Internet of Things (IoT) sector can be raised from the private sector in the next six months, said Chen Tain-jy, head of the Cabinet's National Development Council (NDC). The company is part of the "three-carriage" strategy to stimulate the economy by encouraging private sector investment. The two other carriages are creating an industrial innovation and transformation fund to encourage companies to invest in structural transformation and promoting investment in five innovative industries, including green energy, biomedicine, intelligent machinery, national defense and "Asia Silicon Valley."

**Economy/Finance****Taiwan's GDP growth forecast revised upward to over 2% (The China Post, 27.05.2017)**

The Directorate General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics (DGBAS) has raised its forecast for Taiwan's GDP growth this year to 2.05 % for 2017 (Q1: 2.60 %, Q2: 2.14 %, Q3: 1.87 %, Q4: 1.66 %), after the country's economy recorded stronger than expected growth in the first quarter. The DGBAS said the domestic economy has benefited from a global economic recovery as well as government stimulus measures, including investments in infrastructure and innovative industries, prompting the agency to raise its forecast.

**Taiwan's economy seeing sluggish growth (Eye on Taiwan, 26.05.2017)**

Taiwan's economy turned sluggish in April, with the overall monitoring index flashing "yellow-blue" for the first time after nine consecutive months of stable growth, according to the National Development Council (NDC). The economic slowdown in April was primarily due to the strong New Taiwan dollar caused business revenues to depreciate, which also dragged down the manufacturing sector composite, the NDC said.

[Top of Document](#)

**Taiwan's industrial production ends 8-month rising streak (The China Post, 24.05.2017)**

In April, the industrial production index fell 0.59 % from a year earlier to 102.05, reversing an eight-month gaining streak, at a time when some consumer electronics vendors were in a product-transition period, the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA) said. On a month-on-month basis, production of electronic components fell 9.28 %, with output of semiconductors and flat panels down 10.08 % and 17.16 %, respectively.

**Taiwan's April export orders up for 9th consecutive month (Focus Taiwan, 22.05.2017)**

On the back of solid global demand for electronic devices, Taiwan's export orders for April grew 7.4 % from a year earlier to US\$35.61 billion, marking the ninth consecutive month of increase, the MOEA said. In the first four months of this year, Taiwan's export orders totaled US\$146.46 billion, up 11.3 % from a year earlier.

**Taiwan's jobless rate drops to 23-month low of 3.67% (Taiwan News, 22.05.2017)**

Taiwan's unemployment in April fell 0.11 percentage points from the previous month to 3.67 %, the lowest level in 23 months, as the domestic economy continued to recover, the DGBAS said. There were 432,000 people out of work in April, down 13,000 from March and 19,000 from a year earlier.

**Q1 manufacturing output growth hits 6-year high (The China Post, 20.05.2017)**

The y-o-y growth in output of the local manufacturing sector for the first quarter of this year hit a six-year high, totaled NT\$3.17 trillion (US\$105 billion), up 11.35 % from a year earlier, the MOEA said. Due to Taiwan's competitive semiconductor industry in the global market, as well as solid global demand for flat screens, the output of the local electronic component sector, which accounted for almost 30 % of the manufacturing industry's total, gained 10.26 % from a year earlier to NT\$890.5 billion in the first quarter.

**Information service sector's sales expected to hit high in 2017 (Focus Taiwan, 15.05.2017)**

Sales of the local information service sector are expected to hit a new high to reach about NT\$270 billion (US\$8.94 billion) in 2017, up from NT\$265.8 billion in 2016, on the back of a wider range of applications in the Internet of Things (IoT), cloud computing, e-commerce and big data, the MOEA said. The raised awareness of information security, and an increase of licensing fees for mobile gaming software, also paved the way for gains in revenue for the sector.

**Taiwan's national per capita debt remains NT\$240,000 in April (Taipei Times, 10.05.2017)**

The national per capita debt at the end of April was about NT\$240,000 (US\$7,927), remaining flat for a third consecutive month at the end of April, according to the MOF. At the end of April, Taiwan's outstanding long-term debt with a maturity of more than one year totaled NT\$5.43 trillion, while the country's short-term debt was NT\$222.9 billion. Meanwhile, the national debt could soar, with the administration of President Tsai Ing-wen planning to spend NT\$880 billion over the next eight years on infrastructure projects.

**Taiwan April exports grow for 7th consecutive month (Taiwan online, 08.05.2017)**

Taiwan reported that exports for April grew y-o-y for the seventh consecutive month, on the back of strong global demand at a time when the global economy is recovering. According to the MOF, Taiwan's exports for April rose 9.4 % from a year earlier to US\$24.32 billion, while imports grew 23.5 % from the previous year to US\$21.53 billion. The trade surplus for April stood at US\$2.78 billion, down NT\$2.01 billion y-o-y.

**Foreign exchange reserves hit new high in April (Eye on Taiwan, 06.05.2017)**

As of the end of April, Taiwan's forex reserves was up US\$900 million from the end of March to US\$438.43 billion, a record high in the country's history. The Central bank said that due to a stronger euro, which got a boost from reduced fears over a victory of a populist candidate in France's presidential election, conversion of the European common currency into the US dollar raised the value of Taiwan's forex reserves in April.

**Consumer prices edge up in April (Focus Taiwan, 05.05.2017)**

Taiwan's consumer prices in April were up slightly from a year earlier, with a decline in vegetable and egg prices offset by higher prices for other food items as well as fuel and transportation. The DGBAS said the consumer price index (CPI) for April rose 0.12 % from a year earlier. The wholesale price index (WPI) moved higher in April for the fifth consecutive month, rising 1.12 % from a year earlier because of higher metal, crude oil and coal prices.

[Top of Document](#)

**Manufacturing activity extends strong run in April (Taiwan News, 02.05.2017)**

Activity in the manufacturing sector expanded for the 14th consecutive month in April as the economy at home and abroad continues to recover and boosts demand, the Chung-Hua Institution for Economic Research (CIER) said. The strong manufacturing sector also fueled the expansion of the country's service sector for a second consecutive month in April. While the manufacturing sector's purchasing managers index (PMI) for April fell 4.2 points from a month earlier to 61, the figure still signaled that the sector was expanding. At the same time, the non-manufacturing index (NMI) for the service sector rose 1.2 points in April to 56.3.

**Technology/Innovation****ITRI develops world's first easy-to-use pesticide detector (Focus Taiwan, 23.05.2017)**

The Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI) has developed a device that it said can detect the level of pesticides on fruits and vegetables as they are being washed, and it hopes the device can hit the market next year. The center is now discussing a transfer of the technology to companies and hopes it can be available commercially sometime next year. The center estimated the device will cost between US\$100 and US\$150.

**Taiwan wins big at Paris invention fair (Taipei Times, 14.05.2017)**

Taiwan took 74 medals, including 11 gold, 23 silver and 40 bronze, at the Concours Lepine International that closed on May 6 in Paris. The Concours Lepine International Paris, which has been held since 1901, is one of the world's most prestigious invention fairs. At this year's event, there were 562 items on display, including 77 entries from Taiwan, which has been a participant since 2010.

**Special Focus****Taiwan's health minister holds 59 meetings on sidelines of WHA (Focus Taiwan, 27.05.2017)**

Health Minister Chen Shih-chung returned to Taiwan from Geneva, where he held talks with representatives of countries participating in the World Health Assembly (WHA) despite being barred from the meeting due to China's obstruction. During his visit to Geneva, Chen said, he and his delegation held 51 bilateral talks with 28 countries and 23 organizations on the sidelines of the WHA. Meanwhile, 21 countries, including the US, Germany, Japan and Australia, spoke up for Taiwan at this year's WHA, according to Chen.

**WHO decides against Taiwan's WHA participation (Focus Taiwan, 22.05.2017)**

The general committee of the 70th World Health Assembly (WHA) ruled that a proposal on inviting Taiwan to participate in the WHA as an observer will not be included on the conference's provisional agenda due to China's strong opposition. Chinese representative said Taiwan has attended the WHA as an observer for the last eight years based on the "one-China principle" as the prerequisite for Taiwan's participation at the conference. Taiwan's exclusion from this year's WHA session was due to the Taiwan government's rejection of the "one-China principle."

**Health minister in Geneva ahead of WHA meet's start (Taipei Times, 21.05.2017)**

Minister of Health and Welfare Chen Shih-chung arrived in Geneva, Switzerland, where he is expected to hold talks with representatives of World Health Assembly (WHA) participating nations, as well as to protest to China over Taiwan's exclusion from this year's meeting. He said officials from many countries have agreed to hold talks with his delegation while in Geneva, but he would not name any of the countries. Taiwan had hoped to attend this year's WHA meeting — taking place from 22 through 31 May—as an observer, as it has done the past few years, but it did not receive an invitation from the WHO—likely as a result of Chinese opposition.

**World Medical Association officials support Taiwan's WHA bid (Focus Taiwan, 21.05.2017)**

Three top leaders of the World Medical Association (WMA) voiced their support for Taiwan's attempt to attend the World Health Assembly (WHA) during a meeting with Health Minister Chen Chih-chung in Geneva. The WMA previously sent an official message to the World Health Organization (WHO) asking it to send an invitation to Taiwan to attend this year's assembly. But even with the support, Chen admitted that it was "nearly impossible" for his country to get invited to this year's WHA.

[Top of Document](#)