



The Consulate General of Switzerland presents its compliments to the Department of Commerce and Industry and has the honour to revert to the talks held in Hong Kong on September 24, 1973, when Ambassador Raymond Probst, Delegate of the Swiss Federal Council for trade agreements, had the privilege of being received by a high-ranking delegation of the Colonial Authorities, headed by the Acting Director of Commerce and Industry, Mr E.P. Ho, concerning problems emanating from the counterfeiting of Swiss watches.

Although it is regretted that the Swiss proposal to conclude a formal treaty between Switzerland and Hong Kong for the protection of industrial property does not seem practicable to the Department under present circumstances, the Swiss Government highly appreciates the attention given by the authorities of the Colony to the serious concern expressed by Ambassador Probst about the extent of counterfeiting in Hong Kong and elsewhere involving misuse of Swiss origin and trade marks.

In the meantime Ambassador Probst had the pleasure of receiving Mr D.H. Jordan, Director of Commerce and Industry, on the occasion of his recent passage in Berne. Mr Jordan availed himself of that opportunity to hand over to Ambassador Probst a memorandum on the subject, expressing the desire to assist the Government of Switzerland to resolve any problem of watch counterfeiting which may exist in Hong Kong, to increase for this purpose

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the investigatory activities of the Commerce and Industry Department into this category of offences and to prosecute such cases as may be appropriate for action in the courts of Hong Kong.

This welcome information and the encouraging results already brought about have been highly appreciated in Switzerland. The Department's willingness to consider on its own the prosecution of suitable cases involving the copying of Swiss trade marks will certainly prove particularly helpful. The Department of Commerce and Industry can rest assured that bearing in mind the close trade relationship of long standing between Hong Kong and Switzerland, the Swiss Authorities, the Swiss Consulate General, and the Swiss watch industry are desirous to co-operate closely within the newly established liaison committee in Hong Kong.

In the last paragraph of its memorandum the Department returns to the suggestion previously made that a representative of the Swiss watch trade and industry should be appointed with residence in Hong Kong to deal with all matters affecting the protection of Swiss origin and trade marks for watches in co-operation with the Hong Kong authorities. In confirmation of recent pressreports, the Consulate General has the pleasure to inform the Department that the Swiss watch industry decided to appoint a permanent delegate to Hong Kong to help co-ordinate efforts in the fight against watch counterfeiting in the Middle and Far East jointly with the Swiss diplomatic and consular representations and with the authorities of the countries concerned. The delegate in question, Mr Dominique Thomas, already known to the Department and well acquainted with the conditions of this region, will have his official residence at the centre of his activities: in Hong Kong. He is to take up his duties in the second half of February. The Swiss Authorities would be particularly

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grateful to the Department if the Government agencies involved in this fight could give Mr D. Thomas their support in the discharge of his duties.

The Consulate General of Switzerland avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Department of Commerce and Industry the assurance of its highest consideration.

Hong Kong, January 17, 1974.