

Potential for implementation of the agreements reached

Intergovernmental joint commissions for cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and other countries are one of the most important instruments for the implementation of mutually beneficial projects of an economic nature aimed at intensifying and further expanding trade and economic interaction, more fully realizing the potential available in bilateral relations, which would make it possible to increase and diversify the mutual trade turnover of goods and services. These commissions are created for effective interaction between the business community and the state at the international level. The main goal of these commissions is to create favorable conditions for the development of foreign economic relations of Belarus, to assist businessmen and entrepreneurs in cooperation with foreign partners. At these meetings, the parties consider topical proposals and issues on improving foreign economic relations with partner countries and also find ways to resolve them. Cooperation with intergovernmental commissions gives an opportunity to position exporters in the foreign market as a reliable and attractive partner. How these structures operate in today's conditions is discussed in this paper.



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Belarus-Turkey: partnership ties focused on the future

In 2023, the Republic of Turkey turned one hundred years old. Today, it is a dynamic, future-focused state with achievements in a number of specific spheres and major logistics and energy projects that link Asia and Europe. Belarus traditionally views Turkey as an important and promising partner and a reliable friend. It should be recalled that it was this country that "became the first foreign state to recognize the state independence of the Republic of Belarus"¹. In March 2022, Minsk and Ankara celebrated the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations. In 1996, the **Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation** between the two countries was signed during the first visit of the Belarusian head of state to Turkey.

The visit of Turkish President R.T. Erdogan to Belarus in November 2016, the first ever visit of the two countries in the history of bilateral relations, was also a milestone in the Belarusian-Turkish relations. First, it set a goal of reaching one billion dollars in mutual trade turnover. Secondly, the parties decided to focus on the maximum use of the potential of trade and economic interaction with an emphasis on the creation of "joint production of complex technical products in the regions of Belarus and Turkey, including for the purpose of their promotion to the markets of third countries"² and the organization of joint industrial zones.³ In April 2019, President of the Republic of Belarus A. Lukashenko paid an official visit to Turkey, during which he identified priority areas of Belarusian-Turkish cooperation in trade and investment, implementation of joint projects in machine-building, agriculture, construction, finance, chemical and light

¹ Political relations [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://turkey.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/political/relations/

² Official visit of the President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan [Electronic resource]. - 2016. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/ofitsialnyj-vizit-prezidenta-turtsii-redzhepatajipa-erdogana-14820/

³ Official visit to Turkey [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/ofitsialnyj-vizit-v-turtsiju-20884/

industry, as well as outlined concrete steps to build up contacts in the areas of technology, innovation, education, intensification of interaction "in the field of joint scientific developments, academic and scientific research, and joint cooperation in the field of scientific and technological cooperation".

The seriousness of the parties' intentions to actively develop cooperation in **science, technology and humanitarian areas** is evidenced by the fact of signing a number of documents following the April (2019) talks between the leaders of Belarus and Turkey - an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in education, a roadmap for cooperation between the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (NAS) and the Scientific Research Council of Turkey for 2019-2021, a memorandum on scientific and technical cooperation in the Antarctic between the NAS of Belarus and the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Turkey, a memorandum on scientific and technical cooperation in the Antarctic

In particular, the **intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in education** aims to establish and develop direct contacts between higher education institutions and scientific organizations of the two countries so that students and specialists from Belarus and Turkey can participate in events aimed at demonstrating the educational, scientific, technical, and innovative potential of their countries. The parties intend to provide space for higher and postgraduate education in relevant institutions, to inform each other about mutual recognition of documents on training, education and academic degrees, as well as to create all the necessary conditions "to expand and deepen contacts between the countries in the whole range of educational activities, to attract Turkish citizens to study in Belarus"⁴.

⁴ Belarus and Turkey are interested in the development of contacts between universities and scientific organizations [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsija-zainteresovany-v-razvitii-kontaktov-mezhdu-vuzami-i-nauchnymi-organizatsijami-344261-2019/>

The cooperation agreements signed by the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus in 2002 with the Turkish Research Council for Science and Technology and in 2009 with the Turkish Academy of Sciences laid the foundation for the interaction between the scientific communities of the two countries. In 2016, the governments of Belarus and Turkey signed an **agreement on cooperation in science and technology**. A year later, there were memoranda of understanding between the National Intellectual Property Center of the Republic of Belarus and the Turkish Patent and Trademark Agency; and memoranda of cooperation between the Belarusian Innovation Fund and the Scientific and Technical Research Council of Turkey. And in November 2018, the **first meeting of the joint Belarusian-Turkish Commission on Cooperation in Science and Technology** was held, during which the parties agreed to "intensify bilateral cooperation in the line of innovation structure entities, in particular between technology parks of Belarus and Turkish science parks"⁵. At the same meeting of the commission it was stated that "scientists of Belarus and Turkey intend to develop cooperation in the field of polar research"⁶.

Adopted in April 2019, the **roadmap** for the **development of cooperation** for 2019-2021 was designed to intensify joint activities of Belarusian and Turkish scientists in the most promising areas of scientific and technological cooperation. "These include optics for space observation of the Earth's surface, unmanned aerial vehicles, batteries for electric cars and other vehicles, composite organomineral materials, mineral enrichment,

⁵ Belarus and Turkey will hold a competition of joint innovation projects [Electronic resource]. - 2018. - URL: http://www.gknt.gov.by/news/2018/belarus_i_turtsiya_provedut_konkurs_sovmestnykh_innova_tsionnykh_proektov/

⁶ Belarus and Turkey intend to develop cooperation in the field of polar research [Electronic resource]. - 2018. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsiya-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-oblasti-poljarnyh-issledovanij-324445-2018/>

and the use of information technologies for forecasting dangerous natural phenomena"⁷.

In addition, the adopted roadmap envisaged the organization of a joint competition of projects in priority areas of science and technology development along the lines identified during the joint workshops: in 2018 - in Gebze; in 2019 - in Minsk. In particular, in March 2019, the State Committee for Science and Technology of Belarus, with the support of the Belarusian Innovation Fund and the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey, announced a **competition for joint innovative scientific and technological projects for 2019-2020** to provide them with "direct financial support at an early stage of development"⁸ in such priority areas of Belarusian-Turkish cooperation as information and communication technologies, optoelectronics, nanomaterials, and drones. As for the road map, the document also contained measures to develop, improve the organization and increase the efficiency of joint scientific and technical activities and joint works of the Belarusian Republican Foundation for Fundamental Research and the Research Council of Turkey.

In early December 2020, the **second meeting of the joint Belarusian-Turkish commission for cooperation in science and technology** was held, during which the parties confirmed their mutual desire to develop scientific and technical cooperation in the fields of energy, information and communication technologies, medicine, chemical technologies, and new materials. It should be noted that these partnerships intensified after the signing of the already mentioned intergovernmental agreement on

⁷ Belarus and Turkey signed a roadmap of scientific cooperation until 2021 [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsija-podpisali-dorozhnyu-kartu-nauchnogo-sotrudnichestva-do-2021-goda-344282-2019/>

⁸ Belarus and Turkey announced a competition of joint scientific and technical projects [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsija-objavili-konkurs-sovmestnyh-nauchno-tehnicheskikh-proektov-338588-2019/>

cooperation in science and technology in November 2016.⁹In this document, the parties agreed to provide comprehensive assistance to cooperation between organizations of both countries in such priority areas as "energy; agro-industrial technologies; industrial and construction technologies and production; medicine and medical technologies, pharmacy; chemical technologies; nano- and biotechnologies; information and communication technologies (e-services, cyber security); aerospace technologies; new materials; environmental management; prevention and elimination of consequences of natural disasters; and the development of new technologies.

¹⁰At the same second meeting of the joint commission on cooperation in science and technology, it became known that the joint project of the Joint Institute of Informatics Problems of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Turkish company "Novosim Engineering Services" on the development of the warehouse autonomous multi-robotics system, which "will be designed to move goods in automatic mode inside both designed and existing warehouses, logistics centers, taking into account information about their configuration" has already been accepted for funding xml-ph-0000@dee In addition, the Turkish side was considering two more innovative projects of Belarusian scientists, which also received a positive expert evaluation.

Another topical area of Belarusian-Turkish scientific and technical interaction that was discussed at the second meeting of the Joint Commission for Cooperation in Science and Technology was the **interaction between Turkish and Belarusian technoparks**. For the Belarusian side this topic is relevant because "Belarus has 25 subjects of innovation infrastructure: 16

⁹ Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Government of the Republic of Turkey on cooperation in science and technology [Electronic resource]. - 2016. – URL: <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=12551&p0=101600046&p1=1>

¹⁰ Belarus and Turkey plan to develop cooperation in the spheres of energy, ICT and medicine [Electronic resource]. - 202-. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-turtsija-planirujut-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sferah-energetiki-ikt-i-medsiny-418159-2020/>

technoparks (including 3 private ones), 8 technology transfer centers and the Belarusian Innovation Fund. The network of technoparks covers all regional centers"¹¹. There were also technoparks in Pinsk, Navapolatsk, Horki and Liakhovich district. Plans for 2020 included their opening in Baranovich, Bobruisk, Borisov, Orsha and Molodechno. All this said that Belarus was implementing systematic measures to develop technoparks as regional innovation platforms for the organization of high-tech industries. That is why it was especially important for the Belarusian side to master the best foreign experience in this area. And Turkey, it should be said, had such experience.

Technoparks or technopolises in this country began to be created in 2001. By mid-2019, their number here had increased to 84, of which 63 are operational, and another 21 were undergoing infrastructure works. "Now there are technoparks in 54 provinces of the country, more than 5 thousand companies work on the territories of technological development zones"¹². The most technoparks were in Istanbul - 11. Next are Ankara - 9, Kocaeli - 5, Izmir - 4. Their aim is to contribute to the development of high-tech production and services, to provide cooperation between entrepreneurs, researchers and scientists. The scale of activities of Turkish technology parks was also very eloquently spoken about by such figures. As of mid-2019, almost 33 thousand projects had been realized in them, and about ten thousand more were under development. And the number of jobs there exceeded 55 thousand. Finally, the export of resident companies of technoparks as of July 2019 amounted to more than four billion dollars. And all this - in less than twenty years. There is something to be learned from Turkish partners for their Belarusian colleagues.

¹¹ Shumilin, A. Forecast to 2040 - about the prospects of science development and international cooperation / A. Shumilin // [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/prognoz-do-2040-goda-o-perspektivah-razvitiya-nauki-i-mezhdunarodnom-sotrudnichestve-7168/>

¹² 84 technology parks have been established in Turkey [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://restproperty.ru/news/v-turtsii-sozdano-84-tekhnoparka/>

Let us now turn to the most relevant events on the Belarusian-Turkish agenda of the current year. In November 2023, Ankara hosted the **11th meeting of the Belarusian-Turkish Joint Intergovernmental Commission (JIC) on Economic Cooperation**, which focused on systematizing the entire volume of bilateral trade and activating mechanisms in logistics, transport, partnerships in industrial cooperation, and agriculture, as well as a detailed review of the state of the legal framework and outlined priority areas and concrete steps to expand it. It should be noted that today "interaction with Turkey is carried out in the widest range of directions and is supported by political contacts and dialog at the highest level, at the level of intergovernmental communication, interparliamentary communication and serious interagency cooperation"¹³. As a result, the parties noted that trade and economic cooperation between Minsk and Ankara is developing very effectively. And there have already been significant successes in achieving the strategic goal of increasing mutual trade turnover to one and a half billion dollars and reducing the imbalance in mutual trade. "In the last two years our trade turnover has exceeded \$1 billion, but this year [2023] we expect to reach a historical maximum. According to Turkish statistics, in the first 10 months of this year, trade turnover has already totaled \$1.6 billion."¹⁴

A separate conversation is about the participation of the Belarusian side in the work on the **reconstruction of Turkish areas** affected by the February 2023 earthquake. Belarus paid "attention to the restoration of infrastructure that was destroyed as a result of the crushing earthquake in 11

¹³ On holding a meeting of the Belarusian-Turkish Joint Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/fd86a4d2dbb3f651.html

¹⁴ Belarus and Turkey will reach the historical maximum in trade turnover at the end of the year [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-turtsija-poitogam-goda-vyjdet-na-istoricheskij-maksimum-v-tovarooborote-599138-2023>

provinces of Turkey"¹⁵ . In these nine months since the disaster, Belarus has tripled the volume of supplies of construction materials, which are being used to rebuild primarily social infrastructure. The commission confirmed Belarus' readiness to further expand the volume of Belarusian supplies, which are in demand in this country. The Turkish side received a catalog of products, additionally prepared by the ministries, departments and economic entities of Belarus, which will be carefully considered by the Turkish partners. In addition, a project to design and build a plant of reinforced concrete structures in the Turkish town of Kilis is at the initial stage of development, which "will also make a good contribution to the reconstruction of earthquake-affected regions of Turkey"¹⁶ .

Strengthening cooperation in the **agricultural** sector is among the main tasks for the development of bilateral interaction. In 2023, Belarusian supplies of dairy products to the Turkish market started moving forward. And there are serious prospects for increasing exports of meat products and beef from Belarus. This year, a number of Turkish firms have already announced their readiness to cooperate with Belarus in the food sector. For example, "Zirhlioglu Corporate Group expressed its interest in establishing direct contacts with Belarusian enterprises on the supply of specific products and further cooperation with the National Marketing Center"¹⁷ . It is noteworthy that more than 30 Belarusian enterprises - producers and processors of food products - participated in the videoconference in September 2023 on this topic. Returning to the meeting of the

¹⁵ Aleynik stated about serious prospects for increasing supplies of dairy products to Turkey [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/alejnik-zajavil-o-serjeznyh-perspektivah-dlja-uvelichenija-postavok-molochnoj-produktsii-v-turtsiju-599135-2023>

¹⁶ Turkish corporation is interested in cooperation with Belarus in the food sector [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/turetskaja-korporatsija-zainteresovana-v-sotrudnichestve-s-belarusju-v-prodovolstvennom-sektore-587699-2023/>

¹⁷ Aleinik: Belarus is interested in supplying goods through Turkey to the countries of the Global South [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/alejnik-belarus-zainteresovana-postavljat-tovary-cherez-turtsiju-v-strany-globalnogo-juga-598312-2023/>

intergovernmental commission, we note that the parties also reached an agreement to "finalize the procedures on the veterinary questionnaire sent by the Belarusian side by the end of 2024, as well as the intention to hold the second meeting of the Working Group on Agriculture, without delay, at the beginning of the next [2024] year"¹⁸.

In the field of **logistics and transport**, the parties in the format of the Mixed Commission on Road **Transport** determined the quota of permits for Belarusian carriers for 2024 within the framework of the 11th meeting of the IGC, discussing the implementation of urgent new tasks. In addition, they "considered the possibility of creating an alternative certification center for digital tachograph cards in Turkey, as well as extending for 2024 the pilot project on permit-free performance of bilateral and transit traffic on the territory of Belarus and Turkey"¹⁹. After all, from January 1, 2023, Belarusian carriers do not need permits for cargo transportation between the two countries, as well as for transit through Turkey. This simplified regime is still operating as an experiment until the end of 2023.

Active and regular interaction with the Turkish-Belarusian Business Cooperation Council under the Foreign Economic Relations Committee of Turkey, the Association of Independent Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, as well as with other associations of Turkish business, including exhibition companies, was named as important elements of the development of **trade and economic** relations between the two countries at the IGC meeting. In this regard, the parties "signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the National Center for Marketing and Price Study and the Association of Turkish Businessmen (ASRIAD), their representatives plan to participate in

¹⁸ Speech by Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Aleinik at the plenary session of the Belarusian-Turkish Joint Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation (November 8, 2023, Ankara) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/d72f4b731323cb1d.html

¹⁹ Belarus and Turkey discuss the extension of the simplified regime of transport communication [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsija-obsuzhdajut-prodlenie-uproschennogo-rezhima-transportnogo-soobschenija-598317-2023/>

a joint business forum in Belarus in the first quarter of 2024"²⁰ . And in February next year, the International Yarn and Fibers Istanbul Yarn Fair will be organized in Istanbul, which will be of interest to Belarusian light industry, chemical and petrochemical enterprises.

Recall that the high level of Belarusian products could be judged by the participation of exporters from Belarus at this exhibition forum - International Istanbul Yarn Fair, which was held in early June 2023 in Istanbul and where 650 companies from different countries, including China, India, Uzbekistan, Germany, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and the Republic of Korea, were represented. Belarusian petrochemical enterprises participated in the Made in Belarus exposition, demonstrating "a wide range of manufactured products based on the best world technologies, including various types of fibers, yarns and materials used in the textile, knitting and garment industries"²¹ .

Thus, Naftan OJSC demonstrated at the exhibition acrylic fibers used in the production of yarn and artificial fur, and Polotsk-Steklovolokno OJSC - glass fiber and products based on it. The Belarusian chemical company "Mogilevkhimvolokno" offered a wide range of polyester fibers and yarns used in the production of yarn, fillers and artificial fur, and also presented polyester fabrics indispensable in the production of roofing materials and carpets. The branch "Khimvolokno Plant" of JSC "Grodno Azot" at the exhibition demonstrated cord fabrics for reinforcing pneumatic tires, polyamide yarns for production of ropes and fishing gear and polyamide-6. Also at the stand of the enterprise were presented polymer composite materials, which are widely used at the enterprises of automobile, aviation

²⁰ Belarus and Turkey intend to hold a joint business forum in the first quarter of 2024 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-turtsija-namereny-provesti-sovmestnyj-biznes-forum-v-pervom-kvartale-2024-goda-598314-2023/>

²¹ Belarusian enterprises presented their products at the international exhibition in Turkey [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-predprijatija-predstavili-produktsiju-na-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-v-turtsii-569846-2023/>

and oil industries. SvetlogorskKhimvolokno OJSC showed special fabrics, yarns and fibers intended for application in the automotive industry. As a result, Belarusian exporters held very effective negotiations not only with Turkish partners and counterparties, but also with representatives of companies from other countries. So let us hope that the exhibition in Istanbul in February 2024 will be a continuation of new interesting joint projects.

Another important aspect of the partnership ties between Belarus and Turkey, which was noted at the 11th meeting of the IGC, is the further expansion of the **legal framework**. Statistics say that more than 40 intergovernmental, interdepartmental agreements have already been included in this base. A new document in this regard is the protocol of the 11th meeting of the Commission, which contains a list of eight agreements, on which the parties agreed to accelerate joint work. In fact, this final protocol is "a new program of action, a kind of roadmap for the development of bilateral economic relations in the short and medium term and will allow Belarus and Turkey to make fuller use of the available opportunities for cooperation"²².

And already in November 2023, within the framework of this program, the Belarusian-Turkish Research Center was opened in Minsk on the basis of the Institute of Philosophy of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, which became another step towards the development of relations between the two countries. "Its main tasks are to coordinate and conduct joint research works, individual projects in the field of historical, cultural and philosophical heritage of Belarus and Turkey, to improve the qualification of scientific personnel by studying Turkish, as well as to translate the works of Turkish and Belarusian philosophers, scientists into Belarusian and

²² Belarus is working out new investment projects with Turkey [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-prorabatyaet-s-turtsiej-novye-investitsionnye-proekty-598324-2023/>

Turkish"²³. At the moment the new center is focused on "Philosophical and spiritual-cultural heritage of Belarus and Turkey: history and modernity". Turkish researchers are preparing a "Review of the main achievements of Turkish philosophy", while their Belarusian colleagues are researching "The influence of Belarusian-Muslim tradition on the formation of cultural and national identity". In addition, the center is expected to perform educational and popularization functions, as scientists of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus will study the Turkish language on its basis, and various lectures and master classes are planned.

Let us summarize the results. Over the past three decades of diplomatic relations, Minsk and Ankara have not only identified the priority areas of Belarusian-Turkish cooperation, but also clearly built a multilevel system of interstate, intergovernmental and interdepartmental cooperation, which jointly moves towards the realization of new strategic objectives. And in this regard, the decisions of the 11th meeting of the Belarusian-Turkish Joint Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation are yet another weighty confirmation of partnership ties that are focused on the future.

²³ Belarusian-Turkish research center opened in NAS [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belorusko-turetskij-issledovatel'skij-tsentr-otkrylsja-v-nan-597558-2023/>

Belarus - Latin America: an important platform for integration

The Republic of Belarus today maintains diplomatic relations with all 33 States of Latin America and the Caribbean. This region of the globe is of interest to our country as an important platform for integration into global trade and economic ties. And this contributes to the rapprochement of the Belarusian side with a number of Latin American states. For example, "with some countries of the region the relations have already reached the level of strategic partnership, while with others the expansion of interaction in political, trade and economic, educational, scientific, technical and other spheres is becoming more and more progressive"²⁴. Recall that Belarus has embassies in Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia and Cuba. The year 2023 saw many interesting and significant events in the relations of our republic with a number of countries of the region.

Let us start with the **Republic of Nicaragua**. In October 2023, Minsk hosted the third meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, which discussed the current state of interaction between Minsk and Managua and outlined further steps to expand bilateral partnerships. In particular, opportunities and prospects "in the field of housing and industrial construction, building up bilateral trade, cooperation in the spheres of investment, food, light industry, pharmaceuticals, culture, strengthening business contacts between the two countries, establishing ties between the capital authorities of Belarus and Nicaragua" were considered²⁵.

The first two meetings of the commission were held in September 2014 in Minsk and in September 2015 in Managua. During this period,

²⁴ Belarus and the countries of Latin America [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/bilateral/america/latin_america/

²⁵ About the meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan joint commission on trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/b2665dfb1e8ad9b4.html

Belarusian exports were based on agricultural machinery and components, "horticultural and forestry equipment, parts for internal combustion engines, and bearings. In the commodity structure of imports, the largest specific weight was occupied by supplies of bananas, coffee and strong alcoholic beverages"²⁶. And in May 2023, the parties stated that they aimed to seriously intensify trade, economic and humanitarian ties in order to constantly fill them with new projects and cooperation programs. At the same time, a number of important bilateral documents were signed in Minsk: A general agreement between the governments of Belarus and Nicaragua on the provision of export credits; a basic agreement on the supply of Belarusian machinery to the Nicaraguan market; and "an agreement on cooperation in education, which will provide a legal basis for interaction between the parties and the establishment of working contacts between educational institutions of the two countries"²⁷. In June 2023, the parties discussed the possibilities of cooperation in agriculture and agreed to work out the prospects of organizing cooperation in such areas as "exchange of genetic material of agricultural crops, livestock breeding, internships for scientists and specialists, training of Nicaraguan specialists at the master's and postgraduate schools of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus"²⁸.

In July 2023, a Belarusian delegation headed by Foreign Minister S. Aleinik visited Nicaragua to discuss at the highest and highest levels "investment projects, contracts for the supply of Belarusian machinery, prospects for Belarus' participation in major infrastructure projects in Nicaragua, cooperation in agriculture, logistics and opportunities to use port

²⁶ Trade and economic relations between the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Nicaragua [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://cuba.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/N/trade/

²⁷ Zalesky, B.L. When partners have respect, trust and friendship / B.L. Zalesky // Materiały XX Międzynarodowej naukowo-praktycznej konferencji, "Aktualne problemy nowoczesnych nauk - 2023". Volume 1. Przemysł: Nauka i studia. - C. 41.

²⁸ Belarus and Nicaragua discussed areas of cooperation in agriculture [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-nikaragua-obsudili-napravlenija-sotrudnichestva-v-selskom-hozjajstve-573073-2023/>

infrastructure, credit and finance, and options for joint work in the markets of Latin America.²⁹ . Following the visit, Belarus and Nicaragua adopted another package of bilateral agreements and contracts. In particular, they signed intergovernmental agreements on mutual visa abolition and on the resumption of the work of the joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, as well as approved the Roadmap of Cooperation in Agriculture. In addition, MTZ signed a framework contract to supply products of the Belarusian plant to Nicaragua for a two-year period. <...> MAZ and the mayor's office of Managua also signed a contract for the supply of Belarusian machinery. An agreement was reached to supply 236 units of AMKODOR machinery for the construction industry and municipal services in Nicaragua"³⁰ . In the field of culture, the Bolshoi Theater of Belarus, the Ruben Dario National Theater, and the Nicaraguan cultural foundation Incanto signed a memorandum of cooperation.

During the 3rd meeting of the joint commission, the Belarusian side emphasized that it considers Nicaragua an important political, trade and economic partner in the Latin American region and a reliable ally in the international arena. As for the supply of Belarusian machinery to the Nicaraguan market, further steps have already been outlined. The products of Minsk Automobile Plant, Amkodor, Minsk Tractor Plant and other giants of the national industry will be in demand in the Latin American country "when implementing ambitious infrastructure projects planned by the current government. There are serious developments in the agricultural sector, in

²⁹ The Belarusian delegation held extended negotiations with the economic bloc of the Nicaraguan government [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskaja-delegatsija-provela-rasshirennyye-peregovory-s-ekonomicheskim-blokom-pravitelstva-nikaragua-577785-2023/>

³⁰ . About the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus S. Aleinik to Nicaragua. Aleinik's visit to Nicaragua [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/a423b01505b9ac36.html

particular, the application of Belarusian agricultural technologies in Nicaragua"³¹ .

Note that Nicaraguan land is very fertile. But only less than half of it is cultivated. "That is, 50% of the fertile land is not cultivated because there is not enough machinery and not enough people. The government of the country <...> is moving in the right direction. They have built 4,000 kilometers of roads"³² . In this regard, the Nicaraguan side expressed interest in organizing the supply of a large batch of machinery of the Ministry of Industry of Belarus for various purposes - road-building, agricultural, passenger - "for municipal needs, as well as for the implementation of large infrastructure, transport and logistics projects"³³ . As a result of the negotiations, the parties agreed to form a list of necessary types of equipment for the preparation of commercial offers and delivery terms. On the whole, the successful implementation of the agreements will bring the relations between Belarus and Nicaragua to a new, higher level of development.

Another strategic and very important partner of Belarus in Latin America is the **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**. It should be recalled that the two countries established diplomatic relations back in February 1997. Six years ago, in October 2017, Minsk hosted official talks between the presidents of Belarus and Venezuela, during which the parties declared their desire to increase cooperation in all areas in the coming years, despite the fact that this country has been going through a rather difficult period recently. As for the interaction with the Belarusian side, "due to the difficult

³¹ Transcript of the approach to the press of Deputy Minister E. Shestakov following the meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan Joint Commission (October 4, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/ab8c63a09ebb1fec.html

³² Dried milk to Cuba and machinery to Nicaragua. The Ambassador told about the directions of Belarusian exports [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/suhoe-moloko-na-kubu-i-tehnika-v-nikaragua-posol-rasskazal-o-napravlenijah-belorusskogo-eksporta-579482-2023/>

³³ Rogozhnik discussed with the delegation of Nicaragua the issues of intensification of supplies of Belarusian equipment [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rogozhnik-s-delegatsiej-nikaragua-obsudil-voprosy-intensifikatsii-postavok-belorusskoj-tehniki-591732-2023/>

situation in the world, the pace of implementation of joint projects has slowed down"³⁴ .

It should be noted that the parties established long-term trade, economic and cooperation ties back in 2007. Since then, Belarus has built four plants in Venezuela - for the production of ceramic blocks, tractors, municipal and road-building machinery. And in this country there were "JV MAZVEN to assemble MAZ trucks, JV VeneMinsk Tractores to assemble Belarus tractors, a plant to assemble heavy road-building machinery Makinarnyas Barinas"³⁵ . Since the same year of 2007 in Venezuela operated a joint venture for oil and gas production "Petrolera Belo-Venezolana", which focused on seven oil and six gas fields, four of which are located in the west of the country - on Lake Maracaibo, the rest - in the Venezuelan east. During the work of this JV, the financial effect for the Belarusian side amounted to about 70 million dollars. "Over 8.4 million tons of oil and 6.4 billion cubic meters of gas were produced between 2008 and 2016"³⁶ .

As for construction, in addition to the opening of the largest brick factory in Latin America, Belarusian CJSC Belzarubezhstroy has been involved since 2007 in the construction of housing on Venezuelan soil, where they realized three contracts for the construction of 19968 apartments. Finally, in the field of agriculture, while building the first agro-industrial town in Venezuela, Belarusian specialists "erected 176 dwelling houses and a warehouse of mineral fertilizers, laid more than 20 km of roads and cleared 2.5 thousand hectares of shrubbery. More than 400 units of specialized

³⁴ Negotiations with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/peregovory-c-prezidentom-bolivarianskoj-respubliki-venezuela-nikolasom-maduro-17221/

³⁵ Matveev, V. Belarus and Venezuela agree to intensify the work of assembly plants by supplying raw materials / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-venezuela-dogovarivajutsja-ob-aktivizatsii-raboty-sborocnyh-proizvodstv-za-schet-postavok-269845-2017/>

³⁶ Matveev, V. Additional investments are needed for the development of JV "Petrolera Belo-Venezolana" - General Director of "Belorusneft" / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/dlja-razvitija-sp-petrolera-belovenesolana-nuzhny-dopolnitelnye-investitsii-gendirektor-belorusnefti-269858-2017/>

machinery from Belarus were supplied, and 1.2 thousand hectares of territory were sown³⁷. It was believed that all this would amount to only one fifth of what Belarusian representatives still had to do in Venezuela's agriculture.

As we can see, the two countries really did not need to start from scratch, renewing the agreements already reached in the field of industry and construction, as well as in agriculture and hydrocarbon extraction. Especially since Venezuela then adopted a national program of Bolivarian development of the post-oil economy, which included 15 directions, ranging from food production to the most modern equipment, "including projects in industry and agriculture. Belarus can assist in their realization"³⁸. That is why at the meeting of the two presidents in Minsk it was decided to significantly intensify the activities of the joint intergovernmental commission and to hold its 7th meeting in the very near future in order to outline a concrete action plan for the implementation of both prospective and currently implemented joint projects.

In the sphere of production cooperation, the discussion was about bringing the existing joint ventures to their full capacity so that at least half of their output could be sold on the Venezuelan domestic market and the other half could be exported. As for the oil and gas industry, "Belarus is interested in increasing oil production in Venezuela up to 2-3 million tons per year"³⁹. For this purpose, it would be necessary to significantly intensify cooperation between JV Petrolera Belo-Venezolana and the Belarusian industry research and design institute BelNIPIneft, whose strategic task in

³⁷ Venezuela asks to build five more agro-towns on the Belarusian model [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/venezuela-prosit-postroit-esche-pjat-agrogorodkov-po-belorusskoj-modeli-269901-2017/>

³⁸ Belarus plans to build new plants in Venezuela and increase production volumes of the existing ones [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-postroit-v-venesuele-novye-zavody-i-uvelichit-objemy-proizvodstva-dejstvujuschih-270308-2017/>

³⁹ Belarus is interested in increasing oil production in Venezuela to 2-3 million tons per year [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-uvelichenii-dobychi-nefti-v-venesuele-do-2-3-mlnt-v-god-270309-2017/>

this Latin American country was "to increase the efficiency of oil and gas deposits development through the introduction of new production technologies and rational selection of geological and technical measures"⁴⁰ . In agriculture, while Venezuela imports \$10 billion worth of food annually, it was planned to build dairy complexes, poultry farms, a slaughterhouse, a meat processing plant, and milk processing plants with the help of Belarusian specialists. Finally, in the field of construction, "agreements were reached on the allotment of new neighborhoods for the construction of housing in Venezuela by Belarusian specialists"⁴¹ . All these facts showed that Minsk and Caracas both then and now intend to focus on the most important issues in the development of partnership in order to fully realize the existing potential of cooperation.

Now let us return to the present day. In November 2023, Minsk hosted the 8th meeting of the Belarus-Venezuela Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, at which the parties discussed the most important aspects of the development of promising areas of cooperation, found compromise solutions to existing problematic issues and outlined concrete steps for further implementation of projects in industry, construction, agriculture, food, transportation, petrochemicals, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, science and technology, education and tourism. It should be specified that in November 2017, at the 7th meeting of the joint commission, the parties adopted a roadmap for bilateral cooperation in the medium and long term, which, unfortunately, was not implemented due to global events. Nevertheless, as of mid-October 2023, 32 interstate, intergovernmental and interagency agreements had been signed between

⁴⁰ Venezuela plans to expand cooperation with Belarus in the oil sector [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/venesuela-planiruet-rasshirit-sotrudnichestvo-s-belarusju-v-neftjanoj-sfere-269908-2017/>

⁴¹ Matveev, V. Chernyi: there are agreements on the allocation of new neighborhoods for housing construction in Venezuela / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/chernyj-est-dogovorennosti-po-otvodu-novyh-mikrorajonov-dlja-stroitelstva-zhilja-v-venesuele-269871-2017/>

Belarus and Venezuela. And at the 8th meeting of the joint commission the parties outlined the task of the current moment "to return by joint efforts to the main highway of strategic interaction between our brotherly states, despite all the obstacles and difficulties, and to realize the huge potential that exists in the relations between the Republic of Belarus and Venezuela"⁴². And for this reason, 13 more documents were signed in Minsk to implement projects in various areas.

In particular, the parties adopted an important document on the creation of a high-level group for strategic planning of the joint commission to monitor the implementation of "new structural mechanisms in bilateral relations that will increase trade turnover between our countries, organize efficient logistics and production chains"⁴³. In addition, an agreement was signed in the scientific sphere, which provides for the exchange of experience between the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Venezuelan Institute of Geography in the field of geography, hermetics, geodata, as well as documents in the field of tourism and health care, and in the industrial sphere.

All these facts suggest that the 8th meeting of the joint commission may become a new starting point for the preparation of an updated draft roadmap for the short, medium, and long term. Moreover, the parties have already identified eight most pressing issues that should be resolved as soon as possible: 1) resumption of assembly operations of Belarusian machinery in Venezuela; 2) intensification of projects in construction; 3) discussion of options for cooperation in forestry and woodworking; 4) consideration of

⁴² Parkhomchik: Belarus and Venezuela are political and economic partners, as well as close friends and allies [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/parhomchik-belarus-i-venezuela-politicheskie-i-ekonomicheskie-partnery-a-takzhe-blizkie-druzija-i-602138-2023/>

⁴³ Vice-President of Venezuela: our countries are bound by ties of friendship, we need to continue to stick together [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/vitse-prezident-venesuely-nashi-strany-svjazyvajut-uzy-druzhy-nam-i-dalshe-nuzhno-derzatsja-drug-602296-2023/>

opportunities for joint projects in the mining industry; 5) cooperation between the parties in agriculture and food supplies; 6) cooperation between the two countries in the construction industry; 5) cooperation in the supply of foodstuffs; and 6) cooperation in the construction industry.

Of course, one of the most important topics on this list is the resumption of the work of tractor and truck assembly plants in Venezuela. It should be noted that over the past years, the Venezuelan side has purchased more than 1,300 machine kits from Belarus, "which were assembled in Venezuela and are used in the national economy. More than 3 thousand Belarusian tractors work in the fields of our country [in Venezuela], and trucks drive on the roads"⁴⁴. The urgent task of these plants is to reach the design capacity of 10 thousand tractors and 5 thousand trucks, and to sell them in the markets of neighboring countries of Latin America. On the basis of these enterprises a multi-brand center will be created to support the equipment that will be produced there. And "specialists of MTZ and MAZ will work in this center. They will perform tasks related to education, training, support, service. On the basis of this center will also be formed warehouses of spare parts for production and repair of produced machinery"⁴⁵. In addition, a very important issue is in the mining industry, as Belarus is interested in supplying quarry equipment to Venezuela, especially since this equipment has already been supplied to this country. For this reason, the parties agreed to "additionally create a narrow working group that would work out a plan of interaction in this direction"⁴⁶.

⁴⁴ Vice-President of Venezuela: the participation of Belarus in the life of our country is of great importance and weight [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/vitse-prezident-venesuely-uchastie-belarusi-v-zhizni-nashej-strany-imeet-bolshoe-znachenie-i-ves-602178-2023/>

⁴⁵ It is planned to create a multi-brand center on the basis of Belarusian-Venezuelan enterprises [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/na-baze-belorussko-venesuelskih-predpriyatij-planiruetsja-sozdat-multibrendovyj-tsentr-602259-2023/>

⁴⁶ Belarus is interested in supplying quarry equipment to Venezuela [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-postavkah-karjernoj-tehniki-v-venesuelu-602262-2023/>

As for the agro-industrial complex, the first meeting of the Belarusian-Venezuelan working group on agriculture and food was held within the framework of the joint commission in Minsk, where the prospects for cooperation in crop production, livestock breeding, veterinary medicine, and agrarian education were discussed. For reference, we note that "in the first 9 months of this year, Belarus' trade turnover with Venezuela increased by 27.9% compared to the same period last year [2022]. The main export item is dried milk whey, and the main suppliers are Slutsk Cheese Factory OJSC and Molochny Mir OJSC. The main import item is ethyl alcohol"⁴⁷. As a result, the parties agreed to exchange experience in the field of agrarian education, exchange visits of technical specialists for internship, advanced training and retraining in the field of agriculture, animal husbandry and fish farming.

Speaking about the intention to expand cooperation in the field of education and science, the Venezuelan side outlined the main directions in this interaction as well. "These include artificial intelligence, bio- and information technologies, as well as the field of social sciences"⁴⁸. On the Belarusian side, the Belarusian State University is already actively involved in these partnerships, having signed a cooperation agreement with the Simon Rodriguez National Experimental University back in 2007.

During the plenary session of the joint Belarus-Venezuela Commission in November 2023, the parties stressed that the organization of efficient transport communication is also of paramount importance for the two countries. In this regard, there was a proposal for "the possibility of direct air communication between our countries and joint steps to organize

⁴⁷ Belarus is interested in supplying a wide range of food products to Venezuela [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-postavkah-shirokogo-assortimenta-prodovolstvennoj-produktsii-v-venesuelu-602273-2023/>

⁴⁸ Belarus and Venezuela intend to expand cooperation in education and science [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-venesuela-namereny-rasshirit-sotrudnichestvo-v-oblasti-obrazovaniya-i-nauki-594268-2023/>

the transportation of goods by sea"⁴⁹. In general, the two countries see great opportunities for cooperation in other areas - construction, forestry, woodworking, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, tourism. This gives Belarus and Venezuela a reason to plan cooperation not only for the next three to five years, but also for the long term.

The Federative Republic of Brazil is the main partner of the Republic of Belarus in foreign trade with Latin American countries and is among the top ten partners of the Belarusian state in the world. Again, let us make a small excursion to the past, when the first meeting of the Belarus-Brazil Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation took place in November 2017. This fact very eloquently illustrated the state of relations between the two countries, the essence of which was that "despite its geographical remoteness, Brazil has been and remains for Belarus the most important trade and economic partner in Latin America"⁵⁰, therefore, the Belarusian side was very interested in a significant intensification of contacts with Brazilian partners in the economic, political, scientific, technical, and cultural spheres. After all, Belarus, on the one hand, is a major importer of Brazilian sugar, iron, tobacco, leather and fruit, and, on the other hand, exports a lot of fertilizers, textiles and machinery to this Latin American country. Suffice it to say that in 2016, the Belarusian-Brazilian trade turnover exceeded half a billion dollars. But, according to the parties, "the economic potential of our countries indicates that we can multiply mutually beneficial cooperation in trade, scientific and technical, educational and other areas"⁵¹. That is why in July 2017, the foreign ministries of the two countries signed a memorandum

⁴⁹ Belarus proposes to establish direct air transportation with Venezuela [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-predlagaet-naladit-prjamoe-aviasoobschenie-s-venesueloj-602159-2023/>

⁵⁰ Congratulations to the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil Michel Temer [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/pozdravlenie-prezidentu-federativnoj-respubliki-brazilija-mishelu-temeru-17019/

⁵¹ Interview of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus E. Shestakov to the publication "Brasilia in Foco" (July 8, 2017, Brazil) [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/c98f377693514952.html>

on the establishment of the Joint Belarusian-Brazilian Commission for Economic Cooperation, which was to become one of the most important instruments for the implementation of mutually beneficial economic projects aimed at intensifying and further expanding trade and economic interaction, more fully realizing the potential available in the bilateral relations, which would allow to increase and diversify mutual trade turnover.

There were three main areas that looked most promising for Belarusian-Brazilian interaction at that time: first, increasing mutual trade turnover in goods and services; second, applying more complex forms of cooperation between Belarusian and Brazilian economic entities; and third, transition to the establishment of joint ventures in sectors of mutual interest - machine-building and agriculture, oil and gas, and the high-tech sector. In this respect, the first meeting of the Belarusian-Brazilian Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation can be considered quite effective.

First, the parties agreed to locate assembly production of Belarusian tractors at one of the sites in the agro-industrial district of Anapolis in the state of Goiás. To this end, Minsk Tractor Works, the Ministry of Industry of Belarus, and the Secretariat for Economic Development of the State of Goiás signed a memorandum of intent. Secondly, "a number of commercial contracts worth more than 40 million USD were concluded"⁵². In particular, the Orsha Flax Mill and the Baranovichi Cotton Association alone will supply Brazil with almost one and a half million dollars worth of fabrics. In addition, Belarusian exporters were expected to interact with Brazilian partners in such interesting and mutually beneficial areas as "supplying the Brazilian market with blended fabrics with viscose; resumption of cooperation with Belarusian manufacturers in the production and supply of men's shirts; expanding the range of linen fabrics supplied to Brazil. It is also

⁵² Anatoly Kalinin made a working visit to the Federal Republic of Brazil [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7680>

planned to supply the Brazilian market with blackout fabrics, bed linen and towels"⁵³. In particular, a trial batch of its goods to the Brazilian company Viner Brasil Tecnologia Ltd was to be supplied by OJSC "Mogilevkhimvolokno". Brazil was supposed to supply Belarus with tannery semi-finished product "vet-blue" to ensure the capacity utilization of Belarusian tanneries.

As for other promising areas of cooperation, they looked very promising: first, the desire of Embraer, one of the world's largest Brazilian aircraft-building companies, to open its service center in Belarus; second, the signed agreement on technical cooperation between PA Belorusneft and Viner Brasil Tecnologia Ltd; third, the adopted contract for the supply of potash fertilizers between Belarusian Potash Company and Camporico; fourthly, a "trilateral memorandum of intentions between MTZ, Bobruiskagromash and Geoterra on working out the issue of entering the Brazilian market with Belarusian tractor machinery, attachments and trailed equipment"⁵⁴; fifthly, an agreed memorandum of cooperation between the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Belarus-Brazil Chamber of Commerce and Industry. All these concrete steps to strengthen Belarusian-Brazilian cooperation were expected to yield positive results in the near future.

Now let's look at the present day. Note that "in 2021, bilateral trade amounted to \$782.9 million. The volume of bilateral trade amounted to \$782.9 million (growth rate of 108.9%). Exports amounted to \$585.1 million. USD 585.1 MILLION (108.3% GROWTH RATE)"⁵⁵. At that time,

⁵³ Orsha Flax Factory and BPHO will supply fabrics to Brazil for \$1.4 million [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/orshanskij-lnokombinat-i-bpho-postavjat-v-braziliju-tkanej-na-14-mln-279290-2017/>

⁵⁴ Contracts worth over \$40 million concluded during the visit of the Belarusian delegation to Brazil [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/kontrakty-na-summu-bolee-40-mln-zakljucheny-vo-vremja-vizita-belorusskoj-delegatsii-v-braziliju-278631-2017/>

⁵⁵ Trade and economic relations [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://brazil.mfa.gov.by/ru/exportby/tev/>

Belarusian supplies were based on petrochemicals and products of the Belarusian Metallurgical Plant. In 2022, due to a number of limiting factors, the figures of the Belarusian-Brazilian trade turnover slightly decreased. But since January 1, 2023, Brazil has undergone significant changes: a new president of the country has taken office and a new government is already functioning. These changes have to some extent affected the relations between Belarus and Brazil, which were established more than 30 years ago - in February 1992. It can be said that today the two states, which are separated by 14 thousand kilometers, "have all grounds for the progressive development of bilateral cooperation both in the political and economic spheres"⁵⁶. The dynamics of 2022-2023 demonstrates the recovery of foreign trade volumes. In particular, "trade turnover for the first nine months of the current [2023] year amounted to almost \$700 million. This is twice as much as last year's figures"⁵⁷. Judging by the available facts, two areas of cooperation stand out in the interaction between the two countries today - agriculture and education.

With regard to the first area, we recall that "Brazil has about 5 million agricultural enterprises, of which 70% are small businesses. They need equipment, tractors <...>. For example, BELARUS-152 and BELARUS-622 models, which are just suitable for such farms"⁵⁸. The Brazilian side believes that the machines of Minsk Tractor Plant (MTZ) are of high quality, easy to operate, and help to increase productivity. This can be judged, for example, by the results of the International Agricultural Exhibition-Fair AgriShow,

⁵⁶ Lukashevich: the volume of trade of Belarus with Brazil is hundreds of times higher than with some neighboring countries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/lukashevich-objem-torgovli-belarusi-s-braziliej-v-sotni-raz-vyshe-chem-s-nekotorymi-sosednimi-stranami-555506-2023/>

⁵⁷ Trade turnover between Belarus and Brazil amounted to almost \$700 million for nine months [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tovarooborot-belarusi-i-brazilii-za-devjat-mesjatsev-sostavil-pochti-700-mln-600698-2023/>

⁵⁸ Ambassador: Brazil has a high interest in Belarusian machinery [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/posol-brazilii-v-nashej-strane-est-vysokij-interes-k-belorusskoj-tehnike-582274-2023/>

which was held in May 2023 in the Brazilian city of Ribeirão Preto. This business forum is "the largest agricultural event in South America, which is attended by all representatives of agribusiness of the continent without exception. In terms of its characteristics, the exhibition is more like a district or even regional center: the number of participants and visitors exceeds 200 thousand people, and exhibition areas and pavilions occupy an area of 520 thousand square meters"⁵⁹.

In 2023, AgriShow had a record number of participants - from more than 90 countries. And at this agro-industrial summit, Belarus presented MTZ tractors for the first time: not only small and maneuverable models for individual farmers, but also large multifunctional machines for large farms. Specialists of Minsk Tractor Plant, Smorgon Aggregate Plant, Bobruisk Plant of Tractor Parts and Aggregates, Borisov Metalist Plant worked at the exhibition. And at the same time the "niche for Belarusian agricultural machinery was defined: low-powered basic tractors with a capacity of up to 20-25 horsepower, which can become an indispensable assistant for family farming, which is the basis of agriculture in Brazil"⁶⁰.

Back in March 2023, Belarus and Brazil agreed to build two factories for the production of MTZ tractors in this country. Consent has already been received from the governors of two Brazilian states - Ceará and Goiás, "project activities are underway. <...> specialists have already started discussing these nuances, there are positive signals"⁶¹. And in July of this year, a roadmap for the project on the creation of joint Belarusian-Brazilian assembly plants, including small tractor machinery oriented at family farms,

⁵⁹ Belarus presented its tractors at the largest agricultural exhibition in South America [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavila-svoi-traktory-na-krupnejshoj-agrovystavke-v-juzhnoj-amerike-564485-2023/>

⁶⁰ Belarus plans to help Brazil create its new tractor [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-pomoch-brazilii-sozdat-svoj-narodnyj-traktor-564487-2023/>

⁶¹ Belarus and Brazil agreed on the construction of two plants for the assembly of MTZ tractors [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-braziliya-dogovorilis-o-stroitelstve-dvuh-zavodov-po-sborke-tractorov-mtz-555498-2023/>

has already been signed. And this interesting initiative in the field of industrial cooperation may have an impressive result.

Speaking about the development of cooperation between Belarus and Brazil in the field of education, we would like to recall that the Agreement on Cooperation in this area was signed in August 2015. However, even earlier, Belarusian universities started developing ties with Brazilian partners. For example, Belarusian State University (BSU) adopted relevant documents on cooperation with the universities of Brasilia (2012) and Uberlandia (2014). In 2015, the Belarusian State Agricultural Academy signed a Cooperation Agreement with the same University of Uberlandia. In 2020, the Memorandum of Cooperation was adopted by P.M. Masharov Vitebsk State University and the Federal University of the State of Paraná.

In 2023, the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), which was founded in 1927 and today ranks 10th in the rating of the best universities in Latin America, joined the partnership with Belarusian universities. More than 40 thousand students study there and more than three thousand teachers work there. The structure of the university includes 20 academic departments and 25 libraries. In September of this year BSU and FUMJ signed a memorandum that envisages educational and scientific interaction, development of academic mobility, as well as "the parties plan to cooperate in the preparation of joint educational programs, publications, implementation of research projects, to hold conferences, seminars, workshops, <...> exchange students and teachers, educational and scientific materials"⁶².

In September 2023, the partners of the Brazilian university also included the Belarusian State Economic University (BSEU) and the

⁶² Memorandum of Understanding signed between BSU and the Federal University of Minas Gerais in Brazil [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-podpisan-mezhdu-bgu-i-federalnym-universitetom-minas-zherajs-v-brazilii-588360-2023/>

Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics (BSUIR), which adopted the relevant memoranda with AHIF, which became the first step towards fruitful Belarusian-Brazilian cooperation in this area. In particular, BSEU and AHIF have already identified specific areas of partnership. First, "the focus is on teaching Portuguese for Belarusian students and Russian for Brazilian students"⁶³. Secondly, it is the creation of joint programs in English in the specialty "World Economy". In addition, the Center for Latin American Studies has already been "established and is successfully functioning at the Faculty of International Business Communications of BSEU, where joint projects are conducted by scientists from both universities. A center for the study of the Portuguese language will also be developed"⁶⁴. All these joint projects, which are interesting for both sides and are already being implemented in the near future, will certainly serve to bring the two peoples - Belarusian and Brazilian - closer together. A rapprochement that will only deepen.

⁶³ Memorandum of Understanding signed between BSEU and Brazilian Federal University of Minas Gerais [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-podpisan-mezhdu-bgeu-i-brazilskim-federalnym-universitetom-minas-zherajs-588101-2023/>

⁶⁴ Rector of the Brazilian university: cooperation in education will serve to bring our countries closer together [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/rektor-brazilskogo-universiteta-sotrudnichestvo-v-obrazovanii-posluzhit-sblizheniju-nashih-stran-588136-2023/>

Belarus-China: cooperation between the regions reaches a new level

In March 2023, in Beijing, the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China adopted at the highest level a joint statement on the basic principles of developing exemplary relations of all-weather and all-round strategic partnership between the two countries in the new era. At the same time the parties signed the plan of the Year of Regions of Belarus and China for 2023. This document "contains more than 80 bilateral agreements and initiatives to attract at least 150 million dollars of direct Chinese investment by each Belarusian region and Minsk by 2026"⁶⁵. In September 2023, the third meeting of the working group on interregional trade and economic cooperation of the commission on trade and economic cooperation of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee took place in the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park "Great Stone", where they discussed topical issues of interaction between the regions of the two countries and prospects for its development. The parties noted that certain economic indicators of cooperation between Belarus and China have reached a fairly high level. "In the first half of 2023, mutual trade turnover exceeded \$4 billion, with Belarusian exports approaching the landmark mark of \$1 billion."⁶⁶.

Minsk Region is one of the active participants in deepening trade and economic, scientific and technical, and socio-cultural cooperation between the regions of the two countries. In 2022, the trade turnover of the Belarusian capital region with the Chinese side exceeded two billion dollars, with exports of Minsk Region amounting to almost one billion dollars. At the

⁶⁵ Zaleskii, B. New Realities for Partnership. Chronicle of international cooperation under conditions of economic mobilization / B. Zaleskii. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 13.

⁶⁶ Chebotar: Belarus aims to expand trade and economic cooperation with the regions of the People's Republic of China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chebotar-belarus-natselena-na-rasshirenie-torgovo-ekonomicheskogo-sotrudnichestva-s-regionami-knr-590444-2023/>

beginning of 2023, the list of items of Minsk region products supplied to the Celestial Empire has already exceeded the mark of more than a hundred. "Products of milk processing enterprises and other municipal enterprises of the region are especially in demand. All milk processing enterprises of the holding "Minoblmyasomolprom", as well as Slutsk and Stolbtsy meat processing plants have an export license"⁶⁷. And for five months of the current year the capital region has already provided export supplies to China for more than five hundred million dollars.

Among interesting partners of Minskshchina among Chinese regions we should mention **Guangdong province**, which is home to more than 127 million people and is attractive not only as a part of the market for products, but also as a supplier of technologies in the field of mechanical engineering and agriculture. After all, the province is one of the most developed provinces in China, with strong machinery and processing companies. In 2022, the parties celebrated the tenth anniversary of the signing of the cooperation agreement. In May 2023, the Belarusian region and the Chinese province agreed on the prospects of cooperation. And now the roadmap for the development of bilateral relations is already being supplemented and updated. Note that "in the first half of 2023, trade turnover between the regions increased by 20%. Exports reached Br646.2 million. Poultry meat, beef, flax fiber are supplied to China from Minsk region. The main imports are machines for automatic information processing, textile products, auto parts"⁶⁸. In addition, the parties are discussing the issue of attracting investments from Guangdong Province to the economy of Minsk region, as well as options for cooperation between major companies producing

⁶⁷ What production of Minsk region in the near future can appear in the market of China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://mlyn.by/01032023/kakaya-produkcziya-minskoj-oblasti-v-blizhajshee-vremya-mozhet-poyavitsya-na-rynke-kitaya/>

⁶⁸ Minsk Regional Executive Committee discussed the road map of cooperation with the Chinese province of Guangdong [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-minskom-oblispolkome-oblispolkome-obsudili-dorozhnuju-kartu-sotrudnichestva-s-kitajskoj-provintsiej-guandun-583608-2023/>

household appliances and cars, including electric cars, at production sites that are located in preferential zones of Minsk region, such as the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park "Great Stone", where in the first nine months of 2023 "12 new residents were added"⁶⁹.

As for another partner of Minsk Region in China - **Zhejiang Province**, the parties intend to expand cooperation in the field of traditional Chinese medicine. As is known, a relevant center has been established on the basis of Minsk Regional Clinical Hospital. In June 2023, during the talks between the delegations of the Zhejiang Provincial Health Committee and the Main Health Department of the Minsk Regional Executive Committee, they discussed the directions of development of this center, "supply of medicines from China, the possibility of training doctors of the capital region in new methods. The Belarusian side also proposed to consider the issue of organizing joint production of biologically active additives, herbal medicines"⁷⁰. In addition, the task is to expand the capabilities of the mentioned Center of Traditional Chinese Medicine, where such procedures as acupuncture, manual therapy, and massage are already performed on its basis.

Finally, one of the promising partners of Minsk Oblast among Chinese regions should be noted the **city of Chongqing** - the only municipality of central subordination of China, which is also the economic center of the upper reaches of the Yangtze River, where more than 32 million people live. This city is the anchor point of China's development strategy in the western part of the Middle Kingdom and the hub of the Belt and Road project.

⁶⁹ The Ministry of Regional Executive Committee told what the Chinese province of Guangdong is interesting for the economy of the region [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-minoblispolkome-rasskazali-chem-dlja-ekonomiki-oblasti-interesna-kitajskaja-provintsija-guandun-593552-2023/>

⁷⁰ Minsk region and Zhejiang province intend to develop cooperation in the field of traditional medicine [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/minskaja-oblast-i-provintsija-chzhetszjan-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-traditsionnoj-574675-2023/>

Logistics hubs, ports and customs infrastructure are being built here to participate in the logistics development of the China-Europe Express. Chongqing is China's modern manufacturing base, with a full chain of electronic information industry and automobile manufacturing. Suffice it to say that in 2022 the output of automobiles here amounted to more than two million cars, and 284 thousand units were exported.

As for interregional ties, Chongqing and Minsk Region established twinning relations in 2017. With the launch of the regular service of the Chongqing-Minsk China Railway Express, the trade turnover between the two sides has been growing every year. "In 2022, imports and exports between Chongqing and Belarus exceeded 500 million yuan, up 54.8% year-on-year. Belarus is an important supplier of meat products and butter to Chongqing. Belarusian dairy products and confectionery products are highly popular among the city's residents"⁷¹. In 2023, the parties are taking new concrete steps to further deepen trade and economic cooperation, establish humanitarian and cultural contacts. In particular, within the framework of the Exhibition of Chinese Goods and Services - 2023, which took place in late June - early July this year in the industrial park "Great Stone", where about 180 Chinese companies presented their products, the thematic exposition of the Exhibition Pavilion of export goods of the city of Chongqing was also shown. More than 20 city enterprises on the area of about 300 square meters placed the products of mechanical engineering, including cars, motorcycles and components. In addition, official representatives of Minsk Region and Chongqing "discussed cooperation in

⁷¹ More than 20 enterprises from Chongqing will take part in the Exhibition of Chinese goods and services in "Great Stone" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bolee-20-predpriyatij-iz-chuntsina-primut-uchastie-v-vystavke-kitajskih-tovarov-i-uslug-v-velikom-kamne-573747-2023/>

mechanical engineering, food supplies to the Chinese region, and logistics"⁷²

Vitebsk Region is also among the active participants in the Belarusian-Chinese interregional cooperation. In 2022, it almost doubled the volume of supplies to China, which amounted to over USD 55 million. And in fact, back in 2006, the basis of exports of the Belarusian region to the Celestial Empire was represented by only 12 consolidated items, of which 97 percent was a bundle of synthetic yarns. "And at the end of 2021, the export basket of Vitebshchina expanded to 28 items, and its basis began to be formed by supplies of agricultural products (meat, milk and dairy products) - about 70 percent"⁷³. Today, these supplies also include dry confectionery, rapeseed oil, polyethylene, acrylic tourniquets, glass fabrics, flax processing and woodworking products, peat, and alcoholic beverages.

But recently the interaction between Vitebsk region and China has gone beyond buying and selling, as the parties are moving "to the next level - exchange of technologies, assistance in their refinement, in their research, in the development of new types of products"⁷⁴, to enter the plane of attracting investors, investing Vitebsk funds on the Chinese territory and mastering new technologies. Besides, the stake in the development is made on the educational, scientific and cultural segments. It should be reminded that Vitebsk region has signed eight bilateral documents - agreements, protocols, programs - on cooperation, established and maintained regular

⁷² Machine building, medicine, tourism: Minsk region and Chongqing discussed areas of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/mashinostroenie-meditsina-turizm-minskaja-oblast-i-chuntsin-obsudili-napravlenija-sotrudnichestva-574541-2023/>

⁷³ Mishin, A. What are the prospects of cooperation between Vitebsk region and the provinces of China? / A. Mishin // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://vitbichi.by/news/ekonomika/analitik_obyasnit_kakovy_perspektivy_sotrudnichestva_vitebskoy_oblasti_i_provintsii_kitaya/

⁷⁴ Subbotin: cooperation with China goes beyond buying and selling, into the plane of investment projects [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/subbotin-sotrudnichestvo-s-kitaem-vyehodit-za-ramki-kupli-prodazhi-v-ploskost-investproektov-598640-2023/>

contacts at the level of executive authorities, organizations and companies with four provinces and one city of China. In addition, 19 bilateral documents on cooperation between cities and districts of Vitebsk region and Chinese partners have been concluded.

The Belarusian northern region has the most intensive interaction with **Heilongjiang Province, which is** located in the north of China, where rice is grown and agriculture is generally very developed. Over the past 18 years, the parties have created a good legal framework of mutual relations: 1) Agreement on cooperation in trade, economic, scientific-technical, humanitarian-cultural and other spheres (2005); 2) Agreement on the establishment of twinning relations (2011); 3) Cooperation Development Program for 2016-2020. "Twinning agreements with the cities of this region of the Celestial Empire were once concluded by Polotsk, Novopolotsk and Vitebsk"⁷⁵. In May 2023 at the XI International Economic Forum "Innovation. Investments. Prospects" in Vitebsk, enterprises from Heilongjiang Province expressed interest in partnership with Vitebsk producers of meat products, as well as "expect to establish mutually beneficial cooperation with Orsha and Dubrovensk flax processors in the near future, to share their experience and discuss the possibility of supplying modern equipment"⁷⁶. And in June this year at the international trade and economic exhibition in Harbin - the administrative center of Heilongjiang - a memorandum of intentions to establish friendly relations between the Vitebsk concern "Meat and Dairy Products" and an enterprise from the city of Suihua from the same province was already signed. In addition, the

⁷⁵ Pushnyakova, A. Food products, MDF boards: Vitebsk region will present in June in Harbin the potential of the region / A. Pushnyakova // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/prodovolstvennye-tovary-mdf-plity-vitebskaja-oblast-predstavit-v-ijune-v-harbine-potentsial-regiona-567209-2023/>

⁷⁶ Pushnyakova, A. Chinese industrialists intend to establish cooperation with the enterprises of Vitebsk region / A. Pushnyakova // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kitajskie-promyshlenniki-namereny-naladit-sotrudnichestvo-s-predpriyatijami-vitebskoj-oblasti-567149-2023/>

Belarusian side is interested in cooperating in the production of electrical equipment and instrumentation, as the Chinese partners have great competence in this area. So, new promising projects in this regional interaction may appear in the near future.

Another - new - partner of Vitebsk region in China is **Jiangxi province**, with which the Belarusian region signed an agreement on cooperation in trade, logistics, investment, economy, education, healthcare, sports and tourism in October 2022. "As another practical step, it was decided to establish direct interaction between FEZ Vitebsk and special economic zones of Jiangxi province and their residents in order to work out the creation of joint production facilities in Belarus and the use of cross-border trade mechanisms by Belarusian exporters to China"⁷⁷. They also discussed the expansion of supplies of Belarusian products to China by the reverse container train Orsha-Nanchang and the exchange of practical experience in the investment sphere. After all, the city of Orsha has established cooperation with the administrative center of this province - Nanchang - in the field of innovative and traditional medicine at the level of individual medical institutions. In December 2022, a document of intent on cooperation was signed by the city hospital No. 2 of the Orsha Central Polyclinic and the Hongdu Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine, which "provides for the exchange of practical and scientific experience, medical technologies, mutual internships and advanced training of medical workers, as well as the implementation on the basis of the Orsha Central Polyclinic of projects in the field of traditional Chinese medicine, including physiotherapy, reflexology, electro-acupuncture, acupuncture, qigong"⁷⁸.

⁷⁷ FEZ "Vitebsk" and special economic zones of Jiangxi province will establish direct interaction [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-vitebsk-i-osobyje-ekonomicheskie-zony-provintsii-tszjansi-naladjat-prjamoe-vzaimodejstvie-566987-2023/>

⁷⁸ Orsha and Chinese Nanchang agreed on the exchange of medical experience [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/orsha-i-kitajskij-nanchan-dogovorilis-ob-obmene-meditsinskim-opytom-540364-2022/>

As for the third Chinese partner of Vitebsk region - **Shandong Province**, back in 2005 the parties signed a memorandum of cooperation, and in October 2019 adopted an Agreement on the establishment of relations of friendship and cooperation, in which they "identified as priorities for the development of partnership ties the development of an effective mechanism of interaction in the field of trade and investment, the development of cooperation ties..."⁷⁹. In February 2023, an agreement on establishing friendly ties between Novopolotsk and the city of Liaocheng in Shandong Province was signed. The parties noted the importance of developing interregional ties as one of the key links in bilateral cooperation. They also discussed the implementation of a number of joint projects. It should be noted that in order to strengthen Belarusian-Chinese ties, Vitebsk region and Shandong province regularly hold joint events, as well as conclude bilateral documents. "Earlier agreements on the establishment of friendly relations at the municipal level between the cities of Vitebsk and Jinan, Novopolotsk and Weihai, Orsha and Qingdao, Polotsk and Dezhou, Glubokoe and Jining were signed"⁸⁰. And in September 2023, three more memoranda on cooperation were signed: in innovation, education and youth policy. "Based on them and on the results of the negotiations, roadmaps for interaction on specific projects and areas of activity will be developed"⁸¹.

Finally, in November 2023, within the framework of the 6th China International Import Expo in Shanghai, where more than 10 enterprises of the Belarusian northern region took part, including - Vitebsk concern "Meat

⁷⁹ Zalesky, B. From Regions to Innovations. Features of the Belarusian-Chinese strategic partnership / B. Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2021. - C. 11.

⁸⁰ Novopolotsk and Chinese Liaocheng established friendly ties [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novopolotsk-i-kitajskij-ljaochen-ustanovili-druzhestvennye-svjazi-550863-2023/>

⁸¹ Kochetov, S. Vitebsk region and the Chinese province of Shandong intend to develop and expand partnership in innovation, education and youth policy / S. Kochetov // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.vitbichi.by/news/ekonomika/vitebskaya-oblast-i-kitayskaya-provintsiya-shandun-namereny-razvivat-i-rasshiryat-partnerstvo-v-inno/>

and Dairy Products", Polotsk Dairy Plant, Verkhnedvinsk Creamery, branch "Lepelsk MCC" of Vitebsk Meat Processing Plant, confectionery factory "Vityba", plant "Naftan", The Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee signed a memorandum of cooperation with the company Zonghai Business Management (Jinan) to create the China Industry Park in Vitebsk, as well as the Belarusian Industry Park in Shandong Province - on the site of Qingdao, where enterprises will be able to present their products and work out the issues of their sales in different regions of China. This will be one of the leading platforms from where Vitebsk goods will be distributed. It will be a point of growth of export of Vitebsk region, which they want to "maximally utilize, and not only for the sale of goods. <...> This is probably one of the most fresh and promising projects"⁸². All this in general suggests that in 2024 Vitebsk region intends to develop cooperation with Chinese regions even more actively in a wide range of areas, including economy, trade, science, engineering, technology, education, health care, and sports.

And now let us turn once again to the 6th China International Import Expo 2023 in Shanghai, where the Day of **Brest Region** was held in November this year, where the economic, cultural, tourist, educational, medical potential of the Belarusian region was presented with an emphasis on exporting goods and services to China. It should be noted that this exhibition forum was attended by "more than 150 countries representing the regions of Asia, Africa and Europe"⁸³ and featured various thematic sections, including automotive industry, high-tech equipment and information technology, medical equipment and pharmaceuticals, consumer goods, trade

⁸² Subbotin: import exhibition in Shanghai helps enterprises to make themselves known and find partners in China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/subbotin-vystavka-importa-v-shanhae-pomogaet-predpriyatijam-zajavit-o-sebe-i-najti-partnerov-v-kitae-598641-2023/>

⁸³ What will be the national exposition of Belarus at the international import exhibition in Shanghai [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kakoj-budet-natsionalnaja-ekspozitsija-belarusi-na-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-importa-v-shanhae-582374-2023/>

in services, food and agricultural products. In this regard, the participation of Belarusian companies at the Import Fair in Shanghai is of strategic importance. After all, China is one of the largest and most dynamically developing markets in the world and "provides an opportunity for Belarusian companies to expand their horizons and establish business ties with potential partners and buyers, including Chinese state corporations"⁸⁴. An important detail: if at the 5th forum China International Import Expo 2022 in Shanghai, 27 organizations from the food industry, logistics, science and education participated in the Belarusian exposition, this time more than 70 representatives from Belarus took part in the exhibition.

As for **Brest Oblast**, it is among the leaders among Belarusian regions in terms of trade and economic relations with China. Suffice it to say that "for eight months of the current [2023] year, the volume of trade turnover [with China] amounted to almost \$280 million and increased almost one and a half times. Thanks to contacts with businesses, Chinese foreign direct investment has already increased by 40%."⁸⁵. At the import exhibition in Shanghai Brestchina demonstrated a wide range of goods and services that interested consumers not only from China, but also from other countries. In particular, at the collective stand of "Brestmyasomolprom" concern Brest meat processing plant, Bereзовsky meat canning plant, Kobrin butter and cheese factory, Luninetsky dairy plant, Pruzhany dairy plant presented their products with tasting. The educational potential of the region was presented by Brest State Technical University, and the medical potential was presented by Brest Regional Clinical Hospital.

⁸⁴ International import exhibition opened in Shanghai [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mezhdunarodnaja-vystavka-importa-otkrylas-v-shanhae-597935-2023/>

⁸⁵ Chinese partners are interested in the creation of production and logistics companies in Brest region [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kitajskim-partneram-interesno-sozdanie-proizvodstv-i-logisticheskikh-kompanij-v-brestskoj-oblasti-598059-2023/>

As a result, representatives of the Belarusian region "signed 18 bilateral documents at the exhibition: seven agreements, four memorandums, six commercial contracts, and one action plan. They concern different areas, including trade and economic cooperation, cooperation in education, health care, tourism"⁸⁶. For example, the Brest Regional Executive Committee signed agreements with two corporations involved in the creation of freight forwarding centers and the development of electronic commerce; Brest State Technical University signed agreements with the Hubei Institute of International Business and Economics. As for the memorandums on the development of cooperation, they were concluded by: the free economic zone "Brest" and the Brest branch of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry with the administration of the Coastal Park of the Integrated Bond Zone in the city of Shenyang, which is the administrative center of Liaoning Province; the Department of Sports and Tourism of the Brest Regional Executive Committee with the Belarusian-Chinese Center for Culture and Development of the PRC. Speaking about commercial contracts, they primarily concern supplies of Brest foodstuffs, mainly meat and dairy processing products, and are estimated at more than twenty million dollars.

A separate conversation is about the twinning ties between Brest region and its Chinese partners. Brestchina has four twin cities in China - Liaoning, Shanxi, Anhui and Hubei provinces. In November 2023, in addition to the import exhibition in Shanghai, representatives of the Belarusian region held active negotiations in **Anhui province**. The agreement to establish friendly ties with it was signed back in September 2017. This time, the parties adopted an action plan to develop trade, economic, scientific, technical, scientific and cultural cooperation for 2023-2025. In addition, agreements were concluded on the establishment of

⁸⁶ Gorodetsky, D. In China concluded commercial contracts and new cooperation agreements / D. Gorodetsky // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/v-kitae-zakljuchili-kommercheskie-kontrakty-i-novye-soglashenija-o-sotrudnichestve-8970/>

twinning relations between the cities of Brest and Hefei, Berezovsky district and the city of Benbu, and Brest Regional Clinical Hospital agreed on cooperation with Anhui Medical University. We would like to add that Brest and Hefei already intend to draw up a roadmap for cooperation. The main points to find points of contact are "production sphere, transportation and logistics, educational, medical, cultural..."⁸⁷

Speaking about the economic aspect of twinning, the Chinese partners are particularly interested in setting up production and logistics companies in the Belarusian region. In turn, the Belarusian side "is ready to offer services for the conversion of railcars from narrow European gauge to broad gauge, as well as the implementation of a project to create a transport and logistics hub in Brest region"⁸⁸. The fact is that Brest is a nodal point of the Chinese "Silk Road" and an important element of the cross-border corridor to promote the project "Freight trains from China to Europe". In addition, Brest region is ready to provide the Chinese side with a site for the implementation of the project to build an educational center. And this is only the beginning of new joint mutually beneficial projects.

All these facts suggest that Belarusian-Chinese interregional interaction is gradually reaching a new level of cooperation in an all-weather and all-round strategic partnership. So, in the near future, the parties will demonstrate even more innovative approaches to make it much easier and simpler for the regions to work on joint projects and programs.

⁸⁷ Brest and Chinese Hefei intend to draw up a roadmap for cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brest-i-kitajskij-hefej-namereny-sostavit-dorozhnuju-kartu-dlja-sotrudnichestva-599168-2023/>

⁸⁸ Brest and Bereza got twinned in the Chinese province of Anhui [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brest-i-bereza-obzavelis-pobratimami-v-kitajskoj-provintsii-anhoj-598126-2023/>

Belarus-Africa: concrete projects are the key to cooperation

In September 2023, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus held a meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on the development of cooperation with African countries, at which the Belarusian government outlined the main areas of focus on this continent: medicine, education, ensuring food security of African countries, supply of agricultural machinery, and industrial cooperation. Assessing the objective foreign trade situation, Belarusian Prime Minister R. Golovchenko emphasized that Africa has a huge development potential and is a driver of international growth, but the accumulated political capital of Belarus has not yet been converted to a proper extent into successful trade and economic projects. "In 2022, exports of Belarusian goods to Africa amounted to just over \$200 million and show some downward trend. The maximum volume of exports - over \$400 million - was reached in pre-Kovy 2019..."⁸⁹. Note that this continent is home to more than one and a half billion people. For this reason, the government of Belarus has set a clear task - every effort should be made to find the right tools and formula to reverse the negative dynamics in cooperation with the countries of this continent. The tools include "forming road maps, looking for concrete projects that can be implemented"⁹⁰. And then a practical result will be obtained.

It is important to note that the Belarusian side tries to come to African countries with its own technologies, trains them, and provides service and maintenance of the supplied machinery. In particular, especially large machinery from Belarus extracts various minerals that this continent is rich

⁸⁹ Roman Golovchenko on cooperation with Africa: The potential is huge, we need to ensure significant growth of exports [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10698>

⁹⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs: it is necessary to form roadmaps for cooperation with African countries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mid-nuzhno-sformirovat-dorozhnye-karty-sotrudnichestva-so-stranami-afriki-591013-2023/>

in. For example, Belarusian dump trucks operate in Zimbabwe, the Republic of South Africa, Angola, Algeria, and Morocco. Among the new potential partners is Kenya, where the first agricultural machines were delivered about six months ago. Serious dialog begins and continues with such countries as Nigeria, Egypt, Algeria, Sudan. Even "the distant South African Republic has received our tractors of Minsk Tractor Plant, now they are being tested and there is confidence that the supply of our machinery there will increase dramatically"⁹¹.

The Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Belarus pays special attention to the development of supplies to African countries, as the industry offers "the entire range of machinery of the machine-building complex - tractors, combines, trucks. It is also household appliances - TV sets produced by Gozizont Holding, refrigerators"⁹². For example, "Gomselmash" plans to supply a large batch of its equipment to these countries. Currently, already 80 units of Gomselmash machinery are working mainly in Zimbabwe and Kenya. And up to 80 more units will be shipped to the African region in the near future. Moreover, "a center of Belarusian machinery has been created in Africa, which accompanies and maintains all the equipment that is supplied to the continent"⁹³. And on the way out - a contract for delivery to Zimbabwe. Contacts are being worked out in Togo and Malawi.

Another African country that is paying attention to Belarusian trucks is Ethiopia. In August 2023, it became known that Minsk Automobile Plant may set up an assembly plant for trucks in this African country, as "Ethiopia

⁹¹ Technique, training, export: Parkhomchik told about cooperation with African countries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tehnika-obuchenie-eksport-parhomchik-rasskazal-o-sotrudnichestve-s-afrikanskimi-stranami-587303-2023/>

⁹² Combines, tractors, TV sets. Rogozhnik told about the range of industrial products for delivery to Africa [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kombajny-traktory-televizory-rogozhnik-rasskazal-ob-assortimente-promproduktsii-dlja-postavok-v-afriku-586805-2023/>

⁹³ "Gomselmash" plans to supply a large batch of machinery to the African region [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomselmash-planiruet-postavit-krupnuju-partiju-tehniki-v-afrikanskij-region-586884-2023/>

has a high demand for trucks, which is currently not fully satisfied"⁹⁴. And Ethiopian firm Ethio - Engineering Group is interested in organizing the assembly of Belarusian cars from the supplied vehicle components at the company's existing facilities. In the same August this year, Belarusian holding AMKODOR and Ethiopian company Epitychia General Trading discussed the prospects of cooperation and possibilities of joint production in Minsk. During the talks, "it was decided to return to the discussion after a deeper analysis of the construction machinery market, which can most effectively support the needs of projects in Ethiopia"⁹⁵.

The African region is one of the promising and quite familiar destinations for food and agricultural exports from Belarus. Suffice it to say that "in January-April of this [2023] year, Belarusian products were supplied to such African countries as Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, and Uganda. The nomenclature of export supplies includes dried dairy products, horned hoof raw materials, offal, beef, poultry meat, alcoholic beverages and other products"⁹⁶. This year, Belarus continues to discuss with its African partners promising areas of cooperation in agriculture. The discussion is not only about mutual trade, but also about mechanization, irrigation, fertilizers, cooperation in education and science, including training of students from African countries in Belarus.

In particular, in June 2023, a communiqué was signed between the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of Belarus and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Investment of Kenya, in which the parties agreed to further

⁹⁴ MAZ can create assembly production of trucks in Ethiopia [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/maz-mozhet-sozdat-sborocnoe-proizvodstvo-gruzovoj-tehniki-v-efiopii-582045-2023/>

⁹⁵ "AMKODOR" and representatives of Ethiopia discussed the possibilities of joint production [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/amkodor-i-predstaviteli-efiopii-obsudili-vozmozhnosti-sovmestnogo-proizvodstva-581985-2023/>

⁹⁶ Export of products, cooperation in education. Ministry of Agriculture and Food on the work with the regions of Africa [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-produktsii-sotrudnichestvo-v-obrazovanii-minselhozprod-o-rabote-s-regionami-afriki-573991-2023/>

cooperation in agriculture. The fact is that in this African country there are no problems with food, but there are problems with its storage. Also, they have a lot of small farmers, but no large farms. In addition, "another problem is the small percentage of cultivated land"⁹⁷. That is why Kenyan partners are interested in mechanization of agriculture in the country and, accordingly, in increasing its efficiency, as well as in Belarus's experience in agricultural mechanization and personnel training in order to "equip the industry with machine systems, carry out mechanization and provide our [Belarusian] agricultural technologies"⁹⁸, create enterprises for processing and storage of products. Apparently, representatives of the country's leading regions will soon come from Kenya to further build trade and economic relations.

Zimbabwe has also become a new market for Belarus. In June 2023, at the first meeting of the Belarusian-Zimbabwean working group for cooperation in agriculture in Minsk, the leadership of the Belarusian Ministry of Agriculture and Food said that it looked forward to long-term cooperation with Zimbabwean partners. In particular, "another important area of cooperation is the development of dairy cattle breeding"⁹⁹ in Zimbabwe, as well as the supply of Belarusian agricultural machinery and equipment, the use of advanced Belarusian experience and technologies in the establishment of agro-industrial enterprises on Zimbabwean soil. In

⁹⁷ The supply of tractors and potash fertilizers from Belarus to Kenya was discussed in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/postavku-traktorov-i-kalijnyh-udobrenij-iz-belarusi-v-keniju-obsudili-v-minselhozprode-570585-2023/>

⁹⁸ Mechanization of agriculture, processing plants. What Kenya is interested in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mechanizatsija-selskogo-hozjajstva-pererabatyvajuschie-zavody-chem-v-belarusi-zainteresovalas-kenija-570564-2023/>

⁹⁹ Brylo: Belarus counts on long-term cooperation with Zimbabwe in the sphere of agro-industrial complex [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/brylo-belarus-rasschityvaet-na-dolgosrochnoe-sotrudnichestvo-s-zimbabwe-v-sfere-apk-571063-2023/>

addition, "the Zimbabwean side was particularly interested in grain dump trucks and tractor-trailers with semi-trailers"¹⁰⁰.

To expand the geography of supplies from Belarus, domestic exporters continue to work to ensure access of agricultural products, machinery, and equipment to promising markets of the "black" continent. In February 2023, OJSC "Managing Company of Bobruiskagromash Holding" signed a contract with Bemaco from Madagascar for the supply of 24 units of machinery of the Belarusian company - mounted plows, disk harrows, universal pneumatic seeders. And "in the near future it is planned to expand the range of Belarusian machinery supplied to the Republic of Madagascar, including new samples of plows, seeders, trailers and harrows"¹⁰¹. At the same time, Bemaco was awarded a certificate to extend the status of the official dealer of Bobruiskagromash for 2023.

Another African country that is interested in expanding trade and economic cooperation with Belarus is Ghana. In June 2023, the two states celebrated the 31st anniversary of the establishment of Belarusian-Ghana diplomatic relations. And the parties expressed their common mood for intensive work to expand contacts at all levels. Recall that Ghana is the largest producer of high-quality fruits and cocoa and is ready to supply the Belarusian market in any volume. As for Belarus, it is "ready to participate in Ghana's agricultural mechanization programs, supply this country with a wide range of municipal and municipal equipment, medicines, introduce the latest technologies in the agro-industrial complex, train Ghanaian students in Belarusian universities in various specialties"¹⁰².

¹⁰⁰ Zimbabwe is interested in dump trucks-grain trucks and truck tractors MAZ [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zimbabve-zainteresovano-v-samosvalah-zernovozah-i-sedelnyh-tjagachah-maz-571222-2023/>

¹⁰¹ "Bobruiskagromash" will supply more than 20 units of machinery to Madagascar [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bobrujskagromash-postavit-bolee-20-edinit-tehniki-na-madagaskar-549344-2023/>

¹⁰² Pivovar, E. Belarus is ready to participate in the programs of mechanization of agriculture in Ghana / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL:

And one more interesting point. At the end of November 2023, an exposition of Belarusian producers Made in Belarus will be organized in West Africa - the city of Accra (Ghana) - as part of the 6th international exhibition Agrofood Ghana, where exporters "in the fields of agriculture, food processing and packaging, ingredients, bakery and confectionery, food and hospitality in West Africa" will be presented¹⁰³. Last year, 98 exhibitors from 22 countries, namely Belgium, Burkina Faso, Egypt, France, Germany, Ghana, Ghana, Hungary, India, Iran, Italy, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Poland, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and the United States of America participated in the forum. This time in Accra, suppliers from Belarus will also show their "goods face", and hopefully, they will get a good practical result from this exhibition forum.

In short, Belarusian supplies in this direction are growing. It is believed that in the next two or three years, with the help of African countries, it is possible to achieve food exports in general within ten billion dollars. For reference, we note that "based on the results of work for nine months [2023], Belarusian agricultural exports amounted to about \$5 billion"¹⁰⁴.

Finally, another African country that appeared on the map of Belarus's business partners in 2023 was Equatorial Guinea. The fact is that in June 2023, a very important event took place in the Belarusian-African relations: it was the first ever visit of Belarusian Foreign Minister S. Aleinik to this country. Aleinik's first ever visit to this country. The visit resulted in the

<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-gotova-uchastvovat-v-programmah-mehanizatsii-selskogo-hozjajstva-gany-570335-2023/>

¹⁰³ Belarus will present its exposition at the agricultural exhibition in Ghana [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavit-ekspozitsiju-na-selskohozjajstvennoj-vystavke-v-gane-587952-2023/>

¹⁰⁴ Hare: exports of Belarusian agricultural products amounted to about \$5 billion in nine months [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zajats-eksport-belorusskoj-selhozproduktsii-za-devjat-mesjatsev-sostavil-okolo-5-mlrd-597077-2023/>

signing of a Joint Statement on the development of political dialogue, as well as "cooperation in trade, economy and investment, cooperation in trade, economy and investment, cooperation in cooperation, food security, health care, medicine, maternal and child welfare, education, science and technology, mining and petrochemical sector, security and defense"¹⁰⁵. The parties outlined practical steps to expand the contractual and legal framework of bilateral relations, where agreements on cooperation in agriculture and agro-industrial complex will also be developed. And in September 2023, President of Equatorial Guinea Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo paid his first visit to Belarus, during which seven documents were signed aimed at developing relations across a wide thematic spectrum, from the economy to the humanitarian sphere, including the establishment of the Joint Permanent Commission between the two states.

At the first meeting of the commission in October 2023, where from the African side "more than 20 representatives of practically all key ministries, agencies, including 8 heads of ministries came"¹⁰⁶, the participants in the discussion decided to create a number of subcommissions or working groups to achieve results as soon as possible on the main sectors of the Belarusian-Equatoguinean interaction. "These are the spheres of industry, agriculture, science and technology, health care and pharmacology. These four priority areas have been identified and highlighted separately"¹⁰⁷. The two sides agreed to ensure continuous growth of trade turnover to bring it in line with the potential of the two countries, as well as to promote specific

¹⁰⁵ About the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus S. Aleinik to Equatorial Guinea. Aleinik's visit to Equatorial Guinea [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/fa2023a57e9ef156.html

¹⁰⁶ "A good start of cooperation has been given". Aleynik on the first meeting of the intergovernmental commission with Equatorial Guinea [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/dan-horoshij-start-sotrudnichestvu-alejnik-o-pervom-zasedanii-mezhpravkomissii-s-ekvatorialnoj-gvineej-594724-2023/>

¹⁰⁷ Transcript of the approach to the press by Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Aleinik following the meeting of the Permanent Joint Commission of Belarus and Equatorial Guinea (October 19, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/ed7ba0f461785b44.html

projects in the areas of industry, technological development, agriculture, health, science, technology, education, culture, and construction. Minsk and Malabo identified as priority areas of cooperation "agriculture; health care; industry; construction; woodworking and forestry; cooperation in the oil and gas sector; cooperation in banking, finance and taxation; digitalization of the economy; cooperation in the field of culture, including museum, archive, library; cooperation in the field of tourism; cooperation in the field of sports; and environmental protection, among others"¹⁰⁸.

In particular, with regard to industry, the Belarusian side is already working on supplies of cargo, passenger, trailer, special-purpose machinery, and dump trucks for the needs of Equatorial Guinea's growing economy, as the country's task is to shift from the raw materials sector to a more technological, knowledge-intensive, and innovative way of development. Belarus is also ready to "supply optoelectronic products, multifunctional unmanned aircraft, robotic systems, create closed-cycle enterprises for the production and processing of meat and dairy products"¹⁰⁹.

African partners are interested in the Belarusian experience of efficient livestock breeding, improvement of veterinary services and food quality control, development of crops with the highest resource potential, and creation of a high-quality and effective system of personnel training. Especially since "Equatorial Guinea has a great need for dairy and meat products, which we [Belarus] produce in sufficient quantities"¹¹⁰. In addition, this country is very promising for the enterprises of

¹⁰⁸ Joint communiqué on the results of the first meeting of the Permanent Joint Commission for Cooperation between Belarus and Equatorial Guinea (October 19, 2023) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/cba05c3a89729e69.html

¹⁰⁹ Speech by Minister S. Aleinik at the opening of the meeting of the Joint Commission for Cooperation between Belarus and Equatorial Guinea (October 18, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/c32017cdfb25123b.html

¹¹⁰ Belarus is ready to help Equatorial Guinea in the development of agro-industrial complex and training of agricultural specialists [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-gotova-pomoch-ekvatorialnoj-gvinee-v-razviti-apk-i-podgotovke-selhozspetsialistov-586755-2023/>

Belgospischeprom Concern. For example, in mid-September 2023, "the first batch of products [malt] was shipped to Equatorial Guinea. This is a trial batch, this market is new and interesting for us"¹¹¹.

As for medicine, in accordance with the agreement on cooperation in healthcare signed in Minsk during the first meeting of the commission, it is planned to establish a training center at one of the medical universities of Belarus to train students from Equatorial Guinea and other African countries, as well as to improve the qualifications of doctors. The parties identified cooperation in forestry and environmental protection as one of the new areas of cooperation.

In addition, in this African country "it is planned to create a production and logistics hub of Belarusian products"¹¹², which will be used, among other things, to supply and promote products from Belarus to the neighboring countries of Central and West Africa. After all, Equatorial Guinea is one of the leading economies in Africa, which ranks third in oil production on the continent and has a developed port infrastructure. Over the past quarter century, its gross domestic product has increased more than 52 times and ranks among the leading per capita economies in Africa. In addition, "Equatorial Guinea is a member of the African Continental Free Trade Area, which brings together 54 States, as well as the Economic Community of Central African States, which includes 11 States"¹¹³.

In short, the first meeting of the Belarus-Ekwatoguinea Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation showed that the parties intend to

¹¹¹ Zhidkov: African continent is promising for export of Belarusian food products [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zhidkov-afrikanskij-kontinent-perspektiven-dlja-eksporta-belorusskoj-pischevoj-produktsii-588012-2023/>

¹¹² Aleinik: the issue of creating a hub of Belarusian products in Equatorial Guinea is under consideration [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/alejnik-prorabatyvaetsja-vopros-sozdaniya-v-ekvatorialnoj-gvinee-haba-belorusskoj-produktsii-594535-2023/>

¹¹³ Machine building, roadmap, opening of embassies. Minsk and Malabo have defined the prospects of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/mashinostroenie-dorozhnaja-karta-otkrytie-posolstv-minsk-i-malabo-opredelili-perspektivy-594759-2023/>

expand long-term cooperation and develop and adopt the Roadmap to 2030 by the end of this year. In addition, plans have been outlined to develop the legal framework and sign new bilateral agreements in order to reach the level of trade turnover of at least \$100 million by 2030 in terms of economic activity.

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Belarus - Zimbabwe: from economy to education

The Republic of Zimbabwe is an African country with which the Republic of Belarus established diplomatic relations back in April 1992. The new stage of cooperation with this South African state dates back to January 2023, when a Belarusian delegation paid a state visit to Zimbabwe. At that time, "a package of important bilateral documents was signed, which includes basic economic agreements that are designed to ensure the development of industrial cooperation and economic cooperation..."¹¹⁴. The two governments then approved a roadmap for the implementation of the agreements. "The document includes 65 measures in various areas: political-diplomatic, trade and economic, agricultural, military-technical, health care and medical science, investment, energy, supply and maintenance of equipment. In addition, Belarus will continue to participate in the program to modernize and mechanize Zimbabwe's agriculture"¹¹⁵.

Speaking about the economic component of this partnership, "the trade turnover between Belarus and Zimbabwe has increased eightfold since 2018"¹¹⁶. At the same time, the parties have significantly expanded trade and economic interaction, established humanitarian cooperation and strengthened the legal framework of bilateral relations. As for the 2022 figures, "Belarus and Zimbabwe traded more than \$39 million, which is almost 57% more than the level of 2021. At the same time, Belarusian exports amounted to almost \$30 million. Belarus supplied Zimbabwe with tractors and tractors, machines and mechanisms for harvesting and threshing

¹¹⁴ Zalessky, B. Export growth strategy. Opportunities and challenges of open economy in modern conditions / B. Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 30.

¹¹⁵ Frederick Shava: Zimbabwe has achieved a lot in terms of food security thanks to Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/frederik-shava-zimbabwe-mnogogo-dostiglo-v-plane-prodovolstvennoj-bezopasnosti-blagodarja-belarusi-557640-2023/>

¹¹⁶ Parkhomchik: the trade turnover between Belarus and Zimbabwe has grown eight times since 2018, it is important to maintain the dynamics [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/parkhomchik-tovarooborot-belarusi-i-zimbabwe-s-2018-goda-vyros-v-vosem-raz-vazhno-sohranit-dinamiku-586362-2023/>

of crops, parts and accessories for cars and tractors"¹¹⁷. In addition, a single center of Belarusian enterprises has been established on Zimbabwean soil, which provides a whole range of services for all types of machinery supplied from Belarus and where one can get education in the field of vehicle management, necessary recommendations, purchase spare parts, and services for performing routine maintenance on Belarusian machinery.

In March 2023, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of the Republic of Zimbabwe F. Shava visited the Belarusian capital. During his official visit, he said that the Zimbabwean side was interested in identifying additional opportunities for economic cooperation with Belarus. As for official Minsk, it "wants to bring the relations with Zimbabwe to the level of a comprehensive strategic partnership"¹¹⁸. Following the talks at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, the parties adopted a joint statement and reviewed the implementation of agreements in the trade and economic sphere, in particular, the progress of implementation of contracts for the supply of agricultural and firefighting equipment to Zimbabwe, construction and modernization of grain storage facilities, as well as discussed cooperation in the spheres of industry, agriculture, energy, mining, light industry. In particular, Belarus will continue to make its significant contribution to the achievement by the Government of Zimbabwe of the goals of the long-term development strategy of this southern African country "Vision 2030".

In addition, the parties continued to expand the legal framework of the Belarusian-Zimbabwean bilateral relations, which already includes more than twenty intergovernmental and interdepartmental agreements. In March

¹¹⁷ The meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Belarus and Zimbabwe was held in Minsk [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/vstrecha-ministrov-inostrannyh-del-belarusi-i-zimbabve-prohodit-v-minske-557558-2023/>

¹¹⁸ Belarus wants to bring relations with Zimbabwe to the level of comprehensive strategic partnership [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-hochet-vyvesti-otnosheniya-s-zimbabve-na-uroven-vseobshchego-strategicheskogo-partnerstva-557622-2023>

2023, this list of documents was supplemented by the Memorandum of Understanding between the National Centre for Marketing and Price Study of the Republic of Belarus and the National Organization for the Promotion and Development of Trade in Zimbabwe "Zim Trade", which "will become an additional incentive and support for the intensification of interaction between business circles, enterprises and economic entities of the two countries"¹¹⁹.

Speaking about the nearest plans, more than 130 fire trucks will be delivered by the end of 2023, "they are now at different stages of delivery. Contracts were signed for the delivery of 3,161 tractors, 80 harvesters, by the end of the year we [the Belarusian side] will start to fulfill these contracts, and we will try to solve these issues in 2023-2025. We have also reached agreements on the delivery of grain drying complexes there"¹²⁰. In the medium term, Belarusian exporters are only ready to increase their supplies to the Zimbabwean market. For example, the Belarusian Automobile Plant is interested in developing fruitful cooperation with mining companies in Zimbabwe, as the mining industry of the country, which has large reserves of minerals, including coal, copper, gold, diamonds, is developing rapidly. After all, 55- and 130-ton dump trucks from Belarus are now involved in mining of coal and diamonds in Zimbabwean quarries, Belarusian special-purpose machinery - bulldozers, loaders, tractors and irrigation and drainage machines - is also in operation. And "BELAZ is ready to offer for the mining industry of Zimbabwe not only efficient quarry machinery, but also ready-

¹¹⁹ Transcript of the approach to the press of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus S. Aleinik following the talks with the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Zimbabwe (March 27, 2023). Aleinik following the talks with the Head of the Foreign Ministry of Zimbabwe (March 27, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/fd375850144e9b08.html

¹²⁰ Parkhomchik: exports of Belarusian goods to Zimbabwe increased eightfold [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/parhomchik-eksport-belorusskih-tovarov-v-zimbabwe-uvlechilsja-v-vosem-raz-587300-2023/>

made complex solutions for the supply of machines with all the necessary infrastructure, equipment and software on a turnkey basis"¹²¹ .

Belarusian manufacturers of agricultural machinery also have interesting plans to export to this South African country. After all, agricultural mechanization in this region of Africa is now receiving increased attention. Suffice it to say that "last year [2022] Zimbabwe harvested a record wheat crop for the last 25 years thanks to Belarusian-made agricultural machinery"¹²² . And there are plans to promote joint projects to provide agricultural machinery from Belarus, including tillage units, cotton growing machines, and tractor trailers. It should be noted that only Minsk Tractor Plant "in 2023-2024 it is planned to supply 3,575 tractors to Zimbabwe, their shipment has already begun"¹²³ . In addition, this year, the use of improved agricultural machinery from Belarus has made the harvesting season in this country problem-free. The fact is that in Zimbabwe in 2023, a record harvest of cereals is expected, which will exceed 440 thousand tons. As of early November, wheat harvesting is almost complete across the country. "To harvest faster before the rainy season, the government has deployed 249 state-of-the-art Belarusian combine harvesters. The flagship GS12 combine harvester handles at least 40 hectares a day"¹²⁴ . So the purchase of machinery from Belarus has been a success.

Another relevant topic of Belarusian-Zimbabwean interaction is the establishment of joint ventures for food production. Back in May 2023, the

¹²¹ BELAZ is interested in developing cooperation with mining companies in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belaz-zainteresovan-v-razviti-i-sotrudnichestva-s-dobyvajuschimi-kompanijami-zimbabve-581975-2023/>

¹²² "Bobrujskagromash" and the Ambassador of Zimbabwe discussed projects to provide the region with Belarusian agricultural machinery [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bobrujskagromash-i-posol-zimbabve-obsudili-proekty-po-obespecheniju-regiona-belorusskoj-selhoztehnikoj-582296-2023/>

¹²³ MTZ intends to continue cooperation with partners from Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-nameren-prodolzit-sotrudnichestvo-s-partnerami-iz-zimbabve-581256-2023/>

¹²⁴ Belarusian machinery helps to harvest a record harvest in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorusskaja-tehnika-pomogaet-ubirat-rekordnyj-urozhaj-v-zimbabve-597984-2023>

Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus discussed with partners from Zimbabwe the issues of organizing supplies of Belarusian foodstuffs, as well as "setting up joint ventures for processing dried milk into whole milk products"¹²⁵. In addition, the issues of beef and poultry meat processing were discussed. And in Grodno region last spring with Zimbabwean partners discussed the issue of cooperation in the field of baby food. "At the first stage it can be the supply of ready-made baby food with the subsequent transfer of part of technological operations to the territory of Zimbabwe with the subsequent possibility of building a full-fledged production and performing the whole list of works"¹²⁶. And taking into account the capacities of the Hrodna plant Bellakt, the geographical location of Zimbabwe and active interaction with its neighbors, it would be possible to consider the possibility of joint production, which would cover not only the needs of Zimbabwe, but also other African countries.

Another example. In June-July 2023, the first deliveries of Zimbabwean cotton fiber arrived in Belarus. The partners from South Africa are ready to cooperate on other issues as well. For example, "Zimbabwe has a school program and about 2 million schoolchildren dress in business style. Zimbabwe imports fabrics only from China, so we [Belarusian specialists] showed the Zimbabwean representative a number of samples of polyviscose fabric and fabric with a wool content of 20-30%"¹²⁷.

Another interesting idea in cooperation between the two countries, which may well materialize in the not-too-distant future, is that "Zimbabwe

¹²⁵ The Ministry of Agriculture and Food will discuss with Zimbabwe the creation of joint ventures for the processing of milk powder [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minselhozprod-obsudit-s-zimbabwe-sozdanie-sovmestnyh-predpriyatij-po-pererabotke-suhogo-moloka-566042-2023/>

¹²⁶ "Bellakt" plans to create the production of dry infant formulae in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bellakt-planiruet-sozdat-proizvodstvo-suhih-detskikh-smesej-na-territorii-zimbabwe-560414-2023/>

¹²⁷ The first deliveries of Zimbabwean cotton to Belarus are expected in June-July 2023 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pervye-postavki-v-belarus-zimbabvijskogo-hlopka-ozhidajutsja-v-ijune-ijule-2023-goda-557867-2023/>

may become a major hub in South Africa for trade in Belarusian products"¹²⁸. For this purpose, the Belarusian-Zimbabwean initiative with the participation of another state in Southeast Africa - Mozambique - could be realized. This is a country that is washed by the Indian Ocean. "The most promising area of Belarusian exports to the markets of Mozambique could be mechanization of the agricultural complex of this country with subsequent servicing of Belarusian machinery"¹²⁹. The introduction of knowledge-intensive technologies, electrification and improvement of railroads, creation of the necessary logistics infrastructure, and promotion of renewable energy sources could also be key points on the way to diversifying Belarusian exports to Mozambique. Given the high demand for medicines, niches for the promotion of pharmaceutical products remain in the country. In short, the Southern African market is very promising for Belarusian exports and can further increase activity in various areas.

A special talk is about the interaction between Minsk and Harare in the educational sphere. In May 2023, Belarus and Zimbabwe signed a roadmap for 2023-2025 in the field of higher education and university science, which identified the development of joint educational programs and training of Zimbabweans in Belarusian universities in demanded specialties as promising areas of Belarusian-Zimbabwean cooperation. "Also among the promising areas are the organization of resource centers for vocational education and training, expansion of joint scientific, scientific-technical and innovative projects, including in the field of geomechanics, biotechnology, biomechanics"¹³⁰.

¹²⁸ Frederick Shava: Zimbabwe can become a major hub for the supply of Belarusian equipment in South Africa [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/frederik-shava-zimbabwe-mozhet-stat-krupnym-habom-po-postavke-belorusskoj-tehniki-v-juzhnoj-afrike-557809-2023/>

¹²⁹ Mozambique [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://export.by/mozambique>

¹³⁰ Belarus and Zimbabwe signed a road map for 2023-2025 in the field of higher education and science [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-zimbabwe-podpisali-dorozhnyu-kartu-na-2023-2025-gody-v-sfere-vysshego-obrazovaniya-i-nauki-565748-2023/>

In addition to the roadmap, the Belarusian and Zimbabwean sides also signed over 40 bilateral agreements in the field of education in May. It should be noted that "this is a very serious legal framework for training specialists for a wide range of specialties in industry, agro-industry, health care, and energy"¹³¹. It is expected that in this connection between the educational institutions of the two countries will be implemented a program of training not only specialists at the level of higher education, but also on the creation of centers of competence in the territory of Zimbabwe to train specialists in working professions. For this purpose, a center for studying Russian as a foreign language is being established, where Zimbabwean citizens will be able to undergo training in order to both work at joint ventures in Zimbabwe and continue their studies in Belarus.

The Belarusian State University (BSU) is an active participant of interaction with Zimbabwean partners. In 2019, it signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education, Science and Technological Development of Zimbabwe. In February 2023, BSU became a partner of six universities of this country at once. And in May this year it expanded the range of existing agreements. In particular, a Cooperation Agreement with the Harare Institute of Technology and a Memorandum of Understanding with the Midlands State University were signed, which will allow developing academic exchanges, conducting fundamental and applied research, joint scientific conferences, exhibitions, symposiums and seminars. In addition, "initiatives on cooperation in the field of ecology, soil science, biology were voiced. The possibility of developing modern digital technologies, geoinformation systems, soil conservation measures and technologies on lands subject to erosion

¹³¹ More than 40 bilateral agreements in the field of education will be signed following the visit of a delegation from Zimbabwe to Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bole-40-dvustoronnih-soglashenij-v-oblasti-obrazovanija-budet-podpisano-po-itogam-vizita-v-belarus-566871-2023/>

processes was considered"¹³² . The opening of a BSU distance learning center in Zimbabwe will also be a serious step towards lasting cooperation.

Also in May 2023, Brest State Technical University (BrSTU) signed cooperation agreements with five Zimbabwean universities, which will develop cooperation with the Harare Institute of Technology, Chinhoyi University of Technology, Lupane State University, Midland State University and the University of Zimbabwe. The Brest university will implement joint educational programs, engage in joint scientific research to be carried out in the field of Industry 4.0, digital industry and agriculture, IT-technology, on issues related to the creation of various engineering systems. In a word, "cooperation can be established in all areas in which Brest residents specialize. Three students from Zimbabwe are currently studying at BrSTU: two guys and a girl"¹³³ . It should be assumed that in the near future Brest will have many more students from this South African country.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Minsk between the Belarusian State Technological University and the Midland State University. This document provides for cooperation in sharing experience in education and facilitating the exchange of students, master's and postgraduate students, teaching staff, as well as the development of joint research projects in areas of mutual interest. Specifically, "in the fields of forestry, wood processing, industrial ecology, energy efficient technologies, and fertilizer technology"¹³⁴ . The Belarusian National Technical University signed several international documents with Zimbabwean partners this spring. First,

¹³² BSU activates cooperation with universities of Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bgu-aktiviziruetsotrudnichestvo-s-vuzami-zimbabwe-566857-2023/>

¹³³ Brest Technical University concluded cooperation agreements with five universities of Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brestskij-tehnicheskij-universitet-zakljuchil-soglashenija-o-sotrudnichestve-s-pjatju-vuzami-zimbabwe-566589-2023/>

¹³⁴ Discussion of cooperation, signing a memorandum: BSTU will be visited by the delegation of Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/obsuzhdenie-sotrudnichestva-podpisanie-memoranduma-bgtu-posetit-delegatsija-zimbabwe-566182-2023/>

a cooperation agreement with Harare Polytechnic College. Secondly, with the Midland State University. Thirdly, "a road map between the Belarusian National Technical University and the University of Zimbabwe was signed"¹³⁵, and eight joint educational programs with various universities of this country, including those in Harare, Chinhoyi, Lupane, were approved. And in October 2023, the Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno and the Polytechnic College of Harare agreed to cooperate, outlining mutual interests "in the areas of joint scientific, innovative and educational activities, as well as in the monitoring of natural resources"¹³⁶. Finally, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Education, Science and Technological Development of Zimbabwe agreed to sign a memorandum of intent and "identified a number of promising areas for cooperation: space technologies, new materials, technologies and complexes for processing of mineral raw materials and ores, agro-industrial complex, training of scientific personnel..."¹³⁷

Recall that in January 2023, Belarus and Zimbabwe signed a memorandum of understanding between the parties on mutual recognition of educational documents in Harare. "And they see quite great prospects for cooperation in various areas of inter-university interaction. This applies to the training of specialists with higher education in such areas as agro-industrial complex, mechanical engineering, medical technologies"¹³⁸. So, with the signing of the roadmap for 2023-2025 in the field of higher

¹³⁵ BNTU signed agreements on cooperation and implementation of joint educational programs with universities of Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://times.bntu.by/news/13451-v-bntu-podpisany-soglasheniya-s-universitetami-zimbabwe>

¹³⁶ Scientists of SDSU and Harare Polytechnic College agreed on cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/uchenye-grgu-i-politehnicheskogo-kolledzha-harare-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnichestve-592885-2023/>

¹³⁷ Space technologies and new materials: the NAS of Belarus discussed cooperation with Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/kosmicheskije-tehnologii-i-novye-materialy-v-nan-belarusi-obsudili-sotrudnichestvo-s-zimbabwe-566338-2023/>

¹³⁸ Zaleskii, B. Window of Opportunity and New Ideas. Realization of the features of economic multifaceted cooperation / B. Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 23.

education and university science, it seems that the educational services of Belarus in Zimbabwe will be in demand in all areas that develop the economy of this southern African country, and will become the most important element of Belarusian-Zimbabwean relations. As for the prospects of bilateral trade and economic, industrial-cooperative and scientific-educational interaction, they are seen for quite a long time. And not only in these areas, but also in other areas.

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