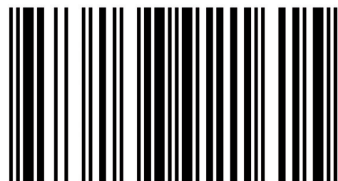


The boundaries of sustainable partnership. Part I

In the conditions of global geopolitical and economic transformations, the ability to remain a sovereign state with a stable social and political system, adequately responding to new challenges and threats and effectively adapting to external factors becomes especially important for such small countries as the Republic of Belarus. The experience of the last decades shows that such a task can be solved provided that the principle of multi-vector foreign policy, which implies systematic development of internal and external conditions for building multiple geopolitical pillars, is implemented. In practice, it means that the Belarusian side aims at strengthening mutually beneficial cooperation not only with all neighboring countries, but also with states located in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The main condition of interaction on which the Republic of Belarus is based, having established diplomatic relations with 177 states of the world, is an equal basis for the dialogue, absence of dictate and coercion. This book has been translated with Artificial Intelligence.



Professional experience in journalism - forty-five years. Now he is an associate professor of the Department of Foreign Journalism and Literature of the Institute of Journalism of the Belarusian State University. Areas of research: modern international relations, international journalism, international information exchange.



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Boris Zaleski

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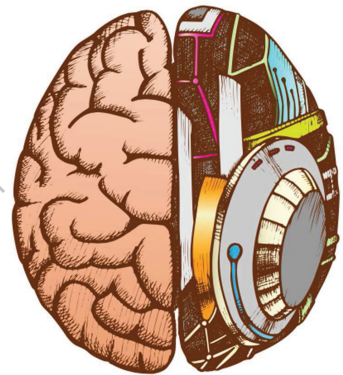
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The boundaries of sustainable partnership. Part I

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Global challenges and parliamentary diplomacy

In September 2016, the Parliament of the sixth convocation was elected in Belarus. The time that has passed since then has shown that one of the most important directions of his activity is a significant intensification of the so-called "parliamentary diplomacy", which should be based on the tasks of "diversification of sales markets and promotion of Belarusian goods and services"¹. Let us recall that the term "parliamentary diplomacy" refers to a set of active actions of the parliament, groups within its composition or individual parliamentarians to achieve the goals of foreign policy in dialogue formats, as well as various aspects of international activities of parliamentarians related both to the implementation of international obligations of the state and the promotion of its various foreign policy and foreign economic initiatives.

It is believed that dialogue formats that are designed to build the international arena of people's elected representatives can contribute to the search for effective strategies to resolve global and regional problems and contradictions. And if we remember that the current international environment is characterized by the persistence of increased instability and increased uncertainty caused by the ongoing global transformation and the negative impact of traditional and new challenges and threats, it is not difficult to understand why today "the trend towards the growth of multifunctional activity of parliaments in international relations is universal. It applies to almost all states of the world and the inter-parliamentary structures created by them"².

When assessing the current state of the development of the parliamentary diplomacy, one should also proceed from the understanding that today it is more and more returning to the national interests and starts to solve serious issues of foreign policy and economy. And this is understandable because "a return to national interests, pragmatic approaches is in many ways not just a response to external crises, but also a logical step in rethinking the methodology for implementing <...> goals in global politics". In turn, increased parliamentary activity on the international stage is an important point of growth in the development of the institution of parliamentarism itself and the establishment of a national parliament as a centre for the development of foreign policy strategy, as "the increase in the effectiveness of parliamentary

¹ International activity of deputies should contribute to the welfare of the people - Andreichenko [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/mezhdunarodnaja-aktivnost-deputatov-dolzha-sposobstvovat-povysheniju-blagosostojanija-naroda-224872-2016/>

² Likhachev, V. Parliamentary diplomacy / V. Likhachev // [Electron resource]. - - 2009. - URL: <https://interaffairs.ru/jauthor/material/122>

diplomacy at the global level can be seen in the expansion of powers, the geographical scope of activity and the range of issues dealt with³.

In other words, parliamentary diplomacy is a tool that can improve the way we discuss and create an environment conducive to international cooperation, both bilaterally and multilaterally. At the same time, it is important that parliamentarians in the current political and economic global reality are organically integrated into the system of foreign policy implementation and effective decision-making, relying on the strengthening of the analytical component of their work, since it is the in-depth analysis of the situation in foreign countries that can make effective their search for possible ways to influence civil society to address the existing issues of interaction.

In this context, the theme of improving the information support of the foreign policy activities of the national parliament for the purposeful formation of not only its international image, but also the country as a whole is also relevant. All the more so since "an important problem in the field of information is the excessive secrecy of access to information, the excessive secrecy of material presented to the press could be greatly enhanced by specifying lines of action and a list of some proposed initiatives"⁴.

Several national parliaments now stand out among the main forms of foreign policy activities. First, the institutional and legal strengthening of international cooperation through the establishment of a treaty-based legal framework, the improvement of international law and the adoption of statements, appeals and resolutions on foreign policy issues. Secondly, strengthening international security through the participation of parliamentarians in international conferences, symposiums, debates, round tables, peacekeeping missions and election observation in other countries. Thirdly, development of inter-parliamentary cooperation through international meetings of parliamentarians, personal contacts with foreign colleagues, representatives of both governmental and non-governmental organizations.

If we talk about the Belarusian parliament, inter-parliamentary cooperation occupies a special place in its system of foreign policy activities, as "this form contains the maximum potential for conducting its own active international policy, as well as for assisting official diplomacy in implementing foreign policy initiatives"⁵. The priorities

³ Kondrashova, E.V. Parliamentarism evolution in the context of the Russian foreign policy / E.V. Kondrashova // [Electron resource]. -- 2008. - URL: <http://www.lib.ua-ru.net/diss/cont/295367.html>.

⁴ Kondrashova, E.V. Parliamentarism evolution in the context of the Russian foreign policy / E.V. Kondrashova // [Electron resource]. -- 2008. - URL: <http://www.lib.ua-ru.net/diss/cont/295367.html>.

⁵ Gorelik, A.A. Foreign policy activity of the Belarusian parliament in modern conditions (in Russian) / A.A. Gorelik // [Electron resource]. -- 2016. - URL: http://www.pac.by/ncatfiles/000038_786310_k_Gorelik.pdf

of the Belarusian parliamentary diplomacy include anti-crisis issues, as well as promoting international relations of the Belarusian regions in all spheres.

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Belarus - Kazakhstan: parliamentary diplomacy

In March 2017, a parliamentary delegation from Kazakhstan headed by Chairman of the Majilis of the Parliament N. Nigmatulin visited Belarus. This visit marked the mutual and most interested aspiration of Minsk and Astana to expand the instruments of Belarusian-Kazakh interaction at the expense of such an effective form of building the bilateral dialogue as parliamentary diplomacy. Therefore, within the framework of numerous meetings of Kazakh parliamentarians on the Belarusian soil were discussed not only inter-parliamentary cooperation, but also cooperation in trade and economic sphere, improvement of contractual legal base, functioning of joint assembly productions in the territory of Kazakhstan.

The involvement of parliamentary diplomacy in addressing a number of partnership issues between Belarus and Kazakhstan is very timely, if only because the parties today "need to make efforts to overcome the downturn in trade and economic cooperation, both bilaterally and within the Eurasian Economic Union"⁶. Indeed, back in 2014, the Belarusian-Kazakh trade turnover was a record, reaching almost one billion dollars. But already in 2016, the volume of mutual trade has decreased by more than two times, amounting to 419.1 million dollars. And although the trade balance in this case was positive for Belarus due to the supply of Belarusian tractors and tractors, milk and dairy products, machines and mechanisms for harvesting and threshing crops, trucks and furniture, the priority task for the parliamentarians of the two countries is now formulated as follows: "to ensure effective legislative support for all decisions and agreements of the heads of state. <...> Another important task is to work on increasing trade turnover" .

It should be noted that today the main document in the practical development of the bilateral Belarusian-Kazakh relations is the intergovernmental action plan for 2017-2018, which covers all areas of interaction, including trade and economic, scientific and technical, cultural and humanitarian, regional issues. According to this document, the parties set a task - in the very near future to restore the level of trade turnover in 2014 and even surpass it. And certain steps are being taken in this direction.

⁶ Meeting with the President of the Majilis of the Parliament of Kazakhstan Nurlan Nigmatulin [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-predsedatelem-mazhilisa-parlamenta-kazaxstana-nurlanom-nigmatuliny-m-15817/

Kazakhstan has already organized the assembly of quarry and mine equipment of the Belarusian Automobile Plant, as well as Belarusian tractors, grain and forage harvesters, freight and passenger elevators, firefighting equipment. A total of 8 joint assembly plants of Belarusian machinery and equipment are currently operating in this country. The parties are working on launching 6 more assembly plants⁷. The Belarusian side plans to participate in them, in particular, JSC "Pinsk plant of small mechanization means" and LLC "Dorelectromash. In addition, cooperation in the industrial sphere will soon be expanded through the creation of the Belarusian-Kazakh Industrial and Technological Park in Kokshetau. And in early 2017, the Astana Motors plant in Almaty started producing trucks under the brand name Minsk Automobile Plant. It is important that "the project for the production of MAZs in Kazakhstan involves more than just large-knot assembly of trucks. Already now the share of local components is 30%. By the end of this year, this figure for localization of production will increase to 50%⁸.

All these facts indicate that the parties have created a certain foundation for the development and adoption of the Program of socio-economic cooperation between Belarus and Kazakhstan until 2026, the signing of which is scheduled for August 2017. This document, the appearance of which will be promoted by the parliamentarians of the two countries, will be able and must find its continuation and development as well as the already started projects to create an industrial and technological park of agricultural and municipal equipment, joint assembly of municipal dump trucks on the basis of the Minsk Automobile Plant, combines "Lidagprommash," as well as those under development. In particular, the programme could open "good prospects for drone cooperation, space industry collaboration".⁹ as well as participation of the Belarusian side in the implementation of a large-scale initiative of Kazakhstan's leader N. Nazarbayev on the third modernization of the country. Recall that in late January 2017, the head of Kazakhstan outlined five main priorities for reforming the Kazakh economy, the implementation of which will ensure its growth above the global average and sustainable progress in the number of 30 advanced countries. "First priority is accelerated technological modernization." The¹⁰ program "Digital Kazakhstan" will be created, where the achievements of Belarusian specialists with the widespread

⁷ The parliamentary delegation of Kazakhstan has arrived in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/parlamentskaja-delegatsija-kazahstana-pribyla-v-belarus-237708-2017/>

⁸ Belarusian products are in demand among consumers in Kazakhstan - Nigmatulin [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskaja-produktsija-polzuetjsja-sposom-u-potrebitelej-v-kazahstane-nigmatulin-237925-2017/>

⁹ Meeting with parliamentary delegation of Kazakhstan [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7109>

¹⁰ Muminov, A. Nursultan Nazarbayev named five priorities of modernization of Kazakhstan / A. Muminov // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.abctv.kz/ru/news/nursultan-nazarbaev-nazval-pyat-prioritetov-modernizacii-ka>

introduction of such elements of the fourth industrial revolution as automation, robotization, artificial intelligence can be used.

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Belarus - Pakistan: from parliamentary diplomacy to specific projects

Pakistan is among those Asian states with which relations with the Republic of Belarus have been developing particularly intensively over the past few years. Two visits of the Belarusian leader to Pakistan in 2015 and 2016, exchange of visits of Prime Ministers N. Sharif and A. Kobyakov in August and November 2015 showed that the time of fundamental changes has come in the bilateral Belarusian-Pakistani relations. The adopted road map of cooperation between Belarus and Pakistan for the short- and medium-term perspective "sets a task to increase the volume of mutual trade turnover to \$1 billion by 2020¹¹.

In 2017, the parties came to the understanding that "regular interaction among parliamentarians is necessary to deepen cooperation. It is parliaments that serve as important links in building bridges between people, deepening mutual understanding and developing mutually beneficial cooperation¹². That is why in April 2017 the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of Belarus and the National Assembly of the Parliament of Pakistan signed a joint statement and memorandum of understanding, which states that "the development of full-scale interaction is impossible without the establishment and enhancement of effective inter-parliamentary dialogue¹³.

It should be noted that the potential for expanding the current Belarusian-Pakistani cooperation is based on the understanding that the economy of this Asian country is growing and offers great investment opportunities in agriculture, agro-industry, pharmaceuticals, light industry, machine-building, oil and gas industry. And in a number of these areas, concrete steps have recently been taken in terms of effective cooperation with the Belarusian side. Thus, literally at the end of March 2017, the Pakistani side announced its intention to implement an investment project to open an assembly plant in the province of Punjab for Belarus tractors, which are already well known here.

We would like to remind you that Minsk Tractor Works started supplying its machinery to Pakistan in 1955. And during this time he exported more than 130 thousand cars

¹¹ Grishkevich, A. Belarus and Pakistan are able to increase mutual trade turnover up to \$1 billion by 2020 - Vovk / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarusi-i-pakistanu-po-silam-narastit-vzaimnyj-tovarooborot-do-1-mlrd-k-2020-godu-vovk-239082-2017/>

¹² Relations between Pakistan and Belarus have been developing at an unprecedented pace in recent years - Sharif [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/otnoshenija-pakistanu-i-belarusi-v-poslednie-gody-razvivajutsja-besprezidentnymi-tempami-sharif-242294-2017/>

¹³ Belarus and Pakistan stated the importance of cooperation in the agricultural sector [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-pakistan-zajavili-o-vazhnosti-sotrudnichestva-v-sfere-ak-241978-2017/>

there. And in 2015 in this country on the basis of Orient Tractor plant there was opened an assembly facility for the production of Belarusian machines - about four thousand tractors annually. But "today Pakistan's tractor park is estimated at 700,000 vehicles. Annual market demand is 85-90 thousand tractors"¹⁴. That is why there are reasons to believe that the new project of assembling the Belarusian agricultural machinery will bring real benefits to its participants. Moreover, the Belarusian side has already offered its Pakistani partners not only to assemble tractors, but also to supply local farmers with machinery and agricultural technologies. In the future, this joint venture in the state of Punjab will assemble not only agricultural but also communal equipment.

Recently, the development of bilateral cooperation in the agricultural sector has received strong impetus at the first joint Belarusian-Pakistani agricultural forum held in April 2017 in Pakistan, which was attended by a representative delegation headed by Chairman of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of Belarus V. Andreichenko. As part of this landmark event, the Belarusian side voiced the main priorities of bilateral cooperation in the agricultural sector, including "building up mutual turnover, establishing joint processing industries, exchanging advanced achievements in agricultural science, organizing joint training of personnel"¹⁵.

Thus, the **increase in mutual trade turnover** will be facilitated by the intensification of export activities of such Belarusian manufacturers as Polotsk Dairy Plant, Vitsebsk Broiler Poultry Plant and Orsha Meat Canning Plant on the Pakistani market, CJSC Meat and Milk Company, Biokom LLC, OJSC Agrokombinat Dzerzhinsky, OJSC Leedselmash, OJSC Gomselmash demonstrated their production and technological potential at the first joint agricultural forum. In terms of the emergence of **new joint ventures**, we are talking about "the creation of enterprises for processing poultry meat, construction of greenhouses, grain drying complexes"¹⁶. As the parties already have good practices in the design of construction and equipment of cattle breeding facilities, fruit and vegetable storage facilities, greenhouse plants. As for the **exchange of advanced achievements in the field of agrarian science**, the Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation between the Belarusian State Agrarian Technical University and the Agrarian University of Faisalabad, signed in April 2017, should open additional opportunities.

¹⁴ Pakistan is ready to invest in establishing new assembly plant for BELARUS tractors [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/pakistan-gotov-investirovat-v-sozdanie-novogo-sborochnogo-proizvodstva-tractorov-belarus-240149-2017/>

¹⁵ Andreichenko on priorities for cooperation with Pakistan: increasing trade turnover and establishing a JV [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/andreichenko-o-prioritetah-sotrudnichestva-s-pakistanom-naraschivanie-tovarooborota-i-sozdanie-sp-242175-2017/>

¹⁶ Belarus and Pakistan intend to establish joint ventures [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-pakistan-namereny-sozdat-ovsovmestnye-predpriyatija-242021-2017/>

Belarus-Malaysia: foundation of relations - inter-parliamentary cooperation

Malaysia is a country in South-East Asia that is considered by the Republic of Belarus to be an important and promising partner in the region and the potential for cooperation with it has yet to be developed. In 2015, the country took 25th place in terms of Belarusian exports among all trade partners of Belarus. The volume of mutual supplies was then almost \$160 million with a surplus for the Belarusian side in the amount of \$65.1 million. In 2016, this trend has practically remained in place: exports from Belarus to Malaysia exceeded \$85 million for ten months with a surplus of \$40 million. However, the lion's share in Belarusian supplies was occupied by potash fertilizers, which is quite understandable, as Malaysia is one of the largest consumers of potassium chloride in Southeast Asia. In the same 2015, 406.9 thousand tons of these fertilizers for 109.5 million dollars were delivered here, and in 2016 - 546.2 thousand tons for 104.6 million dollars. Only these facts testify to the fact that in terms of trade and economic cooperation the parties have somewhere to go - to diversify mutual supplies. But in order to do so, it is necessary to determine the most effective mechanisms for bilateral cooperation.

Minsk has its own opinion on this issue, which, however, is also shared in Kuala Lumpur: "Interparliamentary cooperation should become one of the cornerstones in the foundation of Belarusian-Malaysian relations¹⁷. And it seems that the parties are already taking concrete steps towards achieving the goal. Back in February 2013, the National Assembly of Belarus established a working group on cooperation with the Malaysian parliament. As a reciprocal step, in April 2014 the Malaysian Parliament formed the Malaysian-Belarusian Parliamentary Friendship Group, whose representatives, headed by the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives R. Kiandi, arrived in Minsk in August of the same year, where they formulated one of the most important tasks of the Belarusian-Malaysian partnership relations: "The two countries need to create and develop a legal framework for cooperation¹⁸.

¹⁷ Meeting with Pandikar Amin Mulia, Speaker of the Malaysian House of Representatives [Electronic Resource]. - - 2016. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-so-spikerom-palaty-predstavitelej-parlamenta-malajzii-pandikarom-aminom-mulia-15126/

¹⁸ Belarus and Malaysia have great opportunities for developing bilateral cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - 2014. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-malajzija-imejut-bolshie-vozmozhnosti-dlja-razvittija-dvustoronnego-sotrudnichestva-51954-2014>

And immediately work began on a whole range of draft bilateral agreements: on economic, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation; on the promotion and mutual protection of investments; on cooperation in combating crime; on the mutual abolition of visas; on cooperation in the legal sphere; on military-technical cooperation; on cooperation between the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia; on cooperation between the Minsk branch of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and international organizations.

Finally, in 2016 the parties signed the Memorandum on Interparliamentary Cooperation, noting that "Belarus and Malaysia have the necessary basis to deepen political dialogue, develop trade and economic relations, cooperation in the field of culture, science, education, health care".¹⁹that there is a huge unrealized potential for interaction and there are many points of contact.

The visit of the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Malaysian Parliament P.A. Mulia to Minsk in December 2016 demonstrated the breadth of the thematic range, which at the request of the parliamentarians of the two countries will be involved in the Belarusian-Malaysian cooperation in the near future: industry, tourism, education, high technology, military industrial complex, the creation of joint ventures, building inter-regional and scientific and technical ties. In particular, with regard to scientific and technical cooperation, "projects in biotechnology, microbiology, laser optics, new materials could be implemented as starting points"²⁰. Several agreements are already under consideration between the higher education institutions of the two countries on issues related to the training of specialists, both at the university level and scientific personnel of higher qualification, as "increased interaction in training would help to develop political, trade and economic relations"²¹.

Apparently, an interesting opportunity may open up in the Malaysian market for a number of Belarusian exporters, who so far have supplied there, in addition to potash fertilizers, small quantities of tires, measuring instruments, equipment and food products. In 2016, Gomel Khimzavod, OJSC, and Belsolod, OJSC, tried to deliver mixed mineral fertilizers to this country. Due to the intensive development of agriculture in Malaysia, there are prospects for resuming Belarusian agricultural

¹⁹ Andreichenko: Belarus and Malaysia have a basis for deepening the political dialogue [Electronic resource]. - – 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/andrejchenko-u-belarusi-i-malajzii-est-osnova-dlja-uglublenija-politicheskogo-dialoga-224305-2016/>

²⁰ Andrey Kobayakov met with the speaker of the House of Representatives of the Parliament of Malaysia [Electronic resource]. - – 2016. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/6900>

²¹ Belarus offers Malaysia to develop more intensive cooperation in the field of personnel training [Electronic resource]. - – 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-predlagaet-malajzii-bolee-intensivno-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-podgotovki-kadrov-224404-2016/>

machinery exports. We would like to remind you that the first deliveries of Minsk Tractor Works machinery were made here back in 1968, but then they started to be made through Singapore. Today "the capacity of Malaysian agricultural machinery market is estimated at \$70-80 million per year. The park of tractor and other agricultural machinery consists of about 43 thousand units. The main users of such equipment are farm producers engaged in plantation farming"²². So, Belarusian tractors may be quite in demand here in large quantities.

The Malaysian side also pointed out its interest in such Belarusian enterprises as the Belarusian Automobile Plant in Zhodino and "558 Aircraft Repair Plant" in Baranavichy. Belarusian dump trucks may be in demand in this Asian country because "Malaysia has large reserves of minerals. These are iron ore, coal, and non-ferrous metals. The country occupies one of the leading positions on tin. <...> Now begins the phase of recovery of this sector". As for the enterprise in Baranovichy, it has already fulfilled one-time contracts with Malaysian customers. But today Malaysia is considering opportunities to expand cooperation with Belarus in the field of aviation equipment, so we are talking about expanding cooperation of the Belarusian side "with the Ministry of Defense of Malaysia on repair and modernization of MiG-29 type aircraft"²³.

Apparently, the Belarusian-Malaysian cooperation in the field of military equipment may expand significantly in the near future. At least in March 2017, the Belarusian side made important steps in this direction by demonstrating its latest defense technologies at the 14th International Exhibition of Aerospace and Naval Equipment LIMA-2017, held in Malaysia on the island of Langkawi. It should be noted that this forum is one of the largest military equipment shows in the Asia-Pacific region, which has been held every two years for 26 years under the auspices of the Ministry of Defence of Malaysia. This time it was attended by about 350 companies from 36 countries and about 400 thousand visitors. The participation of Belarus in this event can be understood as "previous LIMA exhibitions have proved to be an excellent platform for displaying and promoting the latest aerospace and naval equipment and technologies to the market of Malaysia and the entire Asia Pacific region"²⁴.

²² Malaysia is considering the possibility of purchasing MTZ equipment to work in rice fields [Electronic resource]. -- 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/malajzija-rassmatrivaet-vozmozhnost-zakupki-tehniki-mtz-dlja-raboty-na-risovyh-poljah-224664-2016/>

²³ Malaysia is interested in expanding cooperation with Belarus on repair of military aircraft [Electronic Resource]. -- 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/malajzija-zainteresovana-rasshirit-sotrudnichestvo-s-belarusiju-po-remontu-voennoj-aviatehniki-224895-2016/>

²⁴ Zhibul, A. The newest defense technologies of Belarus will be presented at LIMA exhibition in Malaysia / A. Zhibul // [Electron resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/novejshie-oboronnye-tehnologii-belarusi-budut-predstavleny-na-vystavke-lima-v-malajzii-235856-2017/>

That is why at the joint stand of the State Committee for Military and Industrial Policy the latest defense technologies and opportunities of the defense sector of the Belarusian economy in the development and production of robotic equipment, aviation components, modern radar equipment, stations and complexes of radio suppression, optical and optoelectronic products, information display devices capable of operating in harsh conditions, as well as deep upgrade of anti-aircraft missile systems of air defense were presented. The "558 Aircraft Repair Plant" also demonstrated its independent exposition at this exhibition. It presented a wide range of unmanned aerial vehicles - tactical UAVs of aircraft type - "Ercut-1(2)", "Condor-1(2)", "Moskit", vertical take-off and landing of ATV type - "Hornet" UAV, ARTZ "Satellit" and more than 20 positions of aviation components manufactured by the company in Baranovichi.

Certain prospects are also seen in the interaction between the regions of Belarus and Malaysia. On the Belarusian side, this applies primarily to Minsk voblast, where Belaruskali, the main exporter to this country, is located. It is interesting that "the share of Belarusian potash fertilizers among all similar products on the Malaysian market reaches 25%"²⁵. However, the metropolitan area hopes that exports to the Malaysian market will not be limited only to potash fertilizers. Their range can be expanded by agricultural and commercial vehicles as well as food products. On the Malaysian side, the State of Sabah will be involved in this interregional cooperation. If the experience of interaction with it turns out to be positive, the development of close ties with other Malaysian regions is not ruled out in Minsk Oblast.

It should be noted that over the past few years the intensification of efforts to expand Belarusian-Malaysian interaction, which is based on inter-parliamentary cooperation, has already begun to yield real results. In particular, "the growth rate of Belarusian exports to Malaysia in January 2017 compared to the same period last year was 172.4%, the volume of exports - \$ 13.8 million"²⁶. Nowadays, the development of bilateral relations between Belarus and Malaysia is on the agenda of creating such an important and effective instrument to expand mutually beneficial partnership as the intergovernmental Belarusian-Malaysian commission on trade and economic cooperation. It should be assumed that its appearance in 2017 could be a factor in further intensification of relations between the two countries, which in March this year turned 25 years old. According to Minsk and Kuala Lumpur, in a quarter of a century

²⁵ Minsk Oblast plans to develop cooperation with the Malaysian state of Sabah [Electronic Resource]. -- 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/minskaja-oblast-planiruet-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-s-malajzijskim-shtatom-sabah-224590-2016/>

²⁶ In early 2017, Belarus sharply increased its exports to Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore [Electronic Resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-v-nachale-2017-goda-rezko-narastila-eksport-v-malajziju-singapur-i-filipiny-235803-2017/>

both sides have witnessed an increase in mutual trade turnover, the development of political and cultural ties. Further development of this constructive dialogue will only "positively influence the realization of the existing rich potential of Belarusian-Malaysian cooperation"²⁷.

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²⁷ The leadership of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Belarus and Malaysia note the great potential of bilateral relations [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/rukovodstvo-mid-belarusi-i-malajzii-otmechajut-bolshoj-potentsial-dvustoronnih-otnoshenij-237705-2017/>

Export culture and mass consciousness

In the recently adopted national program of support and development of export of the Republic of Belarus for 2016-2020 among eight main tasks, along with diversification of trade and economic relations with different countries and regions, optimization of legislation in the sphere of support of export, stimulation of exporters of goods and services to expand the commodity nomenclature and types of rendered services, improvement of approaches to work with small and medium enterprises on export subjects, formation of conditions for stimulation of high technologies.

The appearance of such a task among the most strategically important in a government document of the highest level, we must assume, is not an accident. As we know, export is the basis of the open Belarusian economy, as it provides foreign currency in the country, profits to enterprises and taxes to the Belarusian budget. In this connection, the Address to the Belarusian People and the National Assembly in April 2016 noted that "the most important priority, the priority among the priorities, was and remains export, its growth and necessarily diversification"²⁸. But the results of the past five years (2011-2015) have revealed a number of factors constraining the growth and optimization of the Belarusian export structure. These include slow development of new markets, low competitiveness of domestic products, lagging behind advanced countries in terms of labour productivity, insufficient use of competitive advantages, orientation of Belarusian industrial production towards external resources, lack of a wide range of export innovative goods, unpreparedness of industrial and territorial management structures to promptly respond to changes in market conditions and actively promote products in new markets. All this is happening against the backdrop of an increase in "global sales of goods and services using information and communication technologies, which leads to a partial displacement of Belarusian export goods sold by traditional means"²⁹.

That is why the program documents of social and economic development of the Republic of Belarus for 2016-2020 state that in the coming five years foreign economic activity, which implies implementation of a multi-vector foreign policy and achievement of sustainable growth of the export potential of the Belarusian economy,

²⁸ Annual Address to the Belarusian People and the National Assembly // The official Internet portal of the President of the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/aleksandr-lukashenko-21-aprelja-obratitsja-s-ezhegodnym-poslaniem-k-belorusskomu-narodu-i-natsionalnomu-13517/

²⁹ National Export Support and Development Programme of the Republic of Belarus for 2016-2020. - Minsk, 2016. - - C. 7.

"will be aimed at ensuring the balance of foreign trade on the basis of advanced rates of export growth, use of competitive advantages of the country, effective participation in the international division of labor and intellectual property of the Republic of Belarus.³⁰

In order to eventually increase the volume of Belarusian exports of goods and services by 1.21-1.25 times, as well as to bring the scale of exports of industrial products manufactured in Belarus up to 65%.

Solving the problems of such complexity is possible only if all domestic producers of goods and services are involved in foreign economic and export activities, regardless of the scale of production and ownership. But here is what the figures say: "In our country there are more than twenty-two thousand economic entities, but only eight thousand eight hundred economic entities are involved in export activities"³¹. In other words, two thirds of Belarusian enterprises, companies and firms remain outside the sphere of international business cooperation. However, the country's export capacity also depends on "how successfully the transition to an innovation-type economy is carried out, a favorable institutional environment, investment and business climate is formed, the import intensity of products is reduced, and human capital is growing"³². Moreover, all these challenges must be addressed in the context of increasing globalization, international integration and the internationalization of production and consumption. The experience of other countries shows that only carriers of high export culture can cope with them, which cannot be introduced into the mass consciousness without the active participation of media structures.

It is planned to solve this problem in several directions. Thus, under Priority 1 "Optimization of the national system of export support and development" in order to strengthen the position of Belarus in promising world markets, it is planned to form a comprehensive national system of export support using not only financial, organizational, marketing, trade and political, diplomatic, but also information tools. In accordance with this priority, not only such measures as the systematization of the regulatory and legal framework, the introduction of new approaches to training and deployment of personnel in the export direction, changes in the format of organizational support for export of goods and services, modernization of financial

³⁰ Basic provisions of the program of socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus for 2016 - 2020 // Belarusian Telegraph Agency [Electron resource]. - URL: <http://shod.belta.by/programma>

³¹ Transcript of the approach to the press of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus V. Makei within the framework of participation in the Assembly of business circles of the Republic of Belarus // Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/e19c618d70541f42.html>

³² Address by Vladimir Makei, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, at the XVII Assembly of the business community of the Republic of Belarus "Challenge to the crisis" (March 2, 2016, Minsk) // Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/e19c618d70541f42.html>

mechanisms for export support, the development of non-financial instruments for export support, the use of the potential of exhibition, fair and congress activities, but also a significant strengthening of information and communication technologies will be implemented.

Within the framework of Priority 6 "Development of innovative export by increasing the export of knowledge-intensive products and technologies", the implementation of the measures of which will contribute to the intensification of the commodity structure of export, increase in the volume of export of deep processing products, modern materials and finished products with improved properties, the development of export of technically and technologically complex products, in order to consolidate the innovative specialization of Belarusian export, the development of national information and communication technologies is planned.

An important element in promoting export culture in the mass consciousness should be the promotion of our country's export opportunities abroad, in the global computer network, in the system of satellite TV and radio broadcasting, which is outlined in the Roadmap for the implementation of the National Program of Support and Development of Export of the Republic of Belarus for 2016-2020. The national, sectoral, regional mass media and their Internet resources operating in Belarus can also contribute to this task.

Union State programs: up to date

The priority directions and priorities for further development of the Union State of Belarus and Russia in the medium term (2014-2017) implied the creation of prerequisites for deepening integration cooperation and interaction between the two countries in order to increase the gross domestic product, sustainable development of industrial and agricultural production, increasing commodity flows and investments, ensuring a stable balance of payments of the Union construction participants. An important tool for achieving the goals of deeper integration is the implementation of union programs based on the convergence of interests of Belarus and Russia. These include, above all, import substitution programs that "stimulate a more accelerated development of domestic production in those sectors where it is necessary to replace the missing products and meet the demand for import substitution"³³. However, back in November 2016, the parties came to the conclusion that the mechanism of forming and adopting the Union State programs should be seriously improved. "Programs are being agreed for a very long time, very painfully, delays are not always justified, there are a lot of participants in the agreement process. <...> Something radical needs to be taken here." One of the directions of solving this problem is seen in the expansion of the format of interaction between the parties, the development of ties and the search for new points of contact with the involvement of deputies of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union State. And, apparently, the implementation of this direction began this year.

Thus, in February 2017, at a meeting in Kaliningrad, the Commission for Social Policy, Science, Culture and Humanitarian Affairs of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and Russia came up with the initiative "to define the priorities for the development of the Union State for 2018 - 2021"³⁴ to show the new facets of cooperation between the Union State members. Among them is the new program "Innovative development of linen complexes of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus," the concept of which was considered by the Parliamentary Assembly Commission on Budget and Finance at a retreat in February 2017 in the Belarusian Orsha.

³³ Rapota, G. Belarus and Russia are strategic partners and close allies. Their interaction is multidimensional and progressive / G. Rapota // Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration : inform.-integratsiv. project / ess., interviewing : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk : Business network, 2016. - C. 12.

³⁴ Brewery, E. Union parliamentarians suggest to define the priority tasks of SG development for 2018 - 2021 / E. Brewery // [Electronic resource]. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/sojuznye-parlamentarii-predlagajut-opredelit-pervoocherednye-zadachi-razvitiya-sg-na-2018-2021-gody-233775-2017/>

It is interesting that the parties came to the conclusion that a scientific program is needed for the development of flax farming in the Union State member states as early as 2013. The urgency of development of this direction of union integration is dictated by the fact that Russia annually imports more than 60 thousand tons of cotton, which goes into the production of dressing and other medical products and which can be replaced by linen textiles. But this requires improving the quality of raw materials supplied to the Orsha flax mill in Belarus. That is why the objective of the new programme is to "develop new varieties of fibre that provide high quality and diversified end products"³⁵. That is why the program envisages the development of new zonal cultivation technologies for each variety and processing technologies for flax, including deep flax. The implementation of this programme can begin as early as 2018 with a completion date of 2022.

Another important Belarusian-Russian program, currently under approval, - "Microtech-SG," will be dedicated to the development of technology for the manufacture of electronic component base. It contains the necessary potential to become another confirmation of the fact that "it is in the implementation of the Union State programmes that applied science is born and fundamental science is used"³⁶. The Union State Programme "Development of new innovative approaches to the health problems of children cured of cancer", which is scheduled to begin in 2018, is also in this line. Taking into account the results of treatment it "will be aimed at correction of the nearest and distant consequences of the therapy, introduction of gentle and organ-saving methods, atypical resections"³⁷.

All these examples point to the fact that the Union State is now charting a course to improve the results of joint activities, with special attention to the practical implementation of programs and calculations of their effectiveness.

³⁵ Tikhonova, A. Implementation of the Union State linen program may begin in 2018 / A. Tikhonova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/realizatsija-lnjanaj-programmy-sojuznogo-gosudarstva-mozhet-nachatsja-v-2018-godu-235409-2017/>

³⁶ Bukato, N. Union Programs will allow to increase export potential of Belarusian and Russian defense industrial complex, - General Director of JSC "Integral" / N. Bukato // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.soyuz.by/news/joint-programs/32898.html>

³⁷ The new program in the field of medicine is planned to be implemented in the Union State (Electronic Resource). - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/novuju-programmu-v-oblasti-meditiny-planirujut-realizovat-v-sojuznom-gosudarstve-239081-2017/>

Twin Cities and Union Building

The beginning of 2017 showed an important trend in the development of the Union State of Belarus and Russia. Despite the existing problems of bilateral nature in the fuel and energy sector, "in January the growth rate of trade turnover was almost 144%. Moreover, the growth is observed both on the part of Belarus for deliveries to Russia and for deliveries of Russian goods to Belarus"³⁸. The most important component of union integration is the partnership at the regional level of the two countries, the expansion of which allows to solve such important tasks as import substitution, promotion of export-oriented production, bridging the technological gap with Western countries. The scale of the current Belarusian-Russian interregional cooperation is evidenced by about 80 agreements on trade-economic, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation at the level of the government of Belarus and administrations of Russian regions, as well as about 300 agreements between Belarusian regions and subjects of the Russian Federation and municipal entities. In addition, "heads of ministries, concerns, regional executive committees and Minsk City Executive Committee coordinate cooperation with 57 regions of Russia"³⁹. In fact, it is precisely these ramified interregional ties that allow the Union State participants not only to develop trade relations, but also to create strong technological chains in mechanical engineering, petrochemistry, pharmaceuticals and a number of other industries.

The most important element of interaction between the regions of Belarus and Russia is the twin cities movement of the two countries, which has almost 25 years of history. After all, the first agreement on twinned relations was signed back on June 18, 1992. That's when Borisov and Podolsk were related. Today the movement unites "49 cities and district centers of Belarus with 67 cities of Russia. A considerable number of Belarusian and Russian cities have contractual relations on cooperation"⁴⁰. At the ninth meeting of twin cities, which was held in late March 2017 in Mogilev, Belarus, and was attended by representatives of 35 Russian and 24 Belarusian cities, the leitmotif was the statement that "largely due to the brotherhood movement, Belarusian-Russian trade turnover has increased significantly in recent years. < ... > Further unity between the peoples of the two countries must be supported by interregional and twin ties" .

³⁸ Meeting with Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev [Electronic resource]. - - 20127. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7139>

³⁹ Grishkevich, A. Regions of Belarus and Russia have accumulated considerable experience of industrial cooperation - Solovyov / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/regiony-belarusi-i-rossii-nakopili-znachitelnyj-opyt-promyshlennoj-kooperatsii-solovjev-240368-2017/>

⁴⁰ Grishkevich, A. Belarus cooperates in trade-economic sphere with 80 regions of Russia / A. Grishkevich // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-sotrudnichaet-v-torgovo-ekonomicheskoy-sfere-s-80-regionami-rossii-240326-2017>

The meeting held in Mogilev demonstrated the movement observed today in the twinning relations of Belarusian and Russian cities towards strengthening, first of all, the economic component. And a very eloquent example in this regard is Mogilev itself, which trades with 92 countries and exports local products to more than 50 countries. But its main partner remains Russia, which accounts for three quarters of foreign trade and 85 per cent of exports. The leading role is played by industries where chemical, light and processing industries, as well as mechanical engineering and metalworking are leading. To a large extent, such results of interaction are explained by the fact that this Belarusian regional center has a very wide range of contacts with Russian regions. "Mogilev has three sister cities, 13 partner cities with which signed cooperation agreements. < ... > For example, today Mogilev courtyards please the citizens of Penza, Tula, Moscow and Yekaterinburg, and Moscow and Tula courtyards please the residents and guests of Mogilev". And in the free economic zone "Mogilev" only implementation of the project with the participation of the Russian company "Omsk Carbon Group" to create an enterprise for the production of black carbon is estimated at \$ 175 million. In Russia, the experience of Volgograd, which has 45 twin cities and partner cities, where they believe that "public diplomacy is an effective way to preserve and steadily develop interstate relations" is of great interest⁴¹. In 2000 Volgograd concluded a cooperation agreement with Minsk, and since 2014 has been positioning itself as a center of public diplomacy, which is engaged in systematization of "experience of international activity of Russian cities".⁴² and implementation of projects at the interregional level.

⁴¹ Grishkevich, A. Public diplomacy plays a significant role in development of interstate relations - the mayor of Volgograd / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://m.belta.by/society/view/obschestvennaja-diplomatija-igraet-znachimuju-rol-v-razvitii-mezhgosudarstvennyh-otnoshenij-mer-240378-2017/>

⁴² Kosolapov, A. City policy is aimed at the maximum involvement of the civil society institutions in the international relations / A. Kosolapov // Eurasian Economic Union: urban interaction: inform.-integr. project / edited by interviewer: B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk : Business network, 2015. -- C. 35.

Republic of Belarus - Irkutsk region: highlight the road map

In December 2016, the governments of the Republic of Belarus and the Irkutsk region of the Russian Federation signed an Agreement on trade and economic, scientific and technical, cultural and humanitarian cooperation, as well as held the first meeting of a working group formed from representatives of the parties to prepare a "road map" - Plan of measures for 2017-2019 - to implement the signed agreement in order to rapidly increase trade and economic interaction.

The fact is that the year 2016 marked a serious problem in the development of partnership between Belarus and Irkutsk region - a decrease in trade turnover between the parties by almost half. And this is despite the fact that in 2015 the indicator of mutual trade was the highest in the last five years - 115 million dollars. This gave rise to the head of the Belarusian state A. Lukashenko and the governor of the Russian region S. Vasilyevich. During the December meeting in Minsk Levchenko, it is very easy to outline the main task for the near future: "Belarus and the Irkutsk region of Russia must find reserves to increase mutual trade"⁴³.

It is expedient to remind that in the pre-crisis period trade and economic cooperation between the parties was carried out in a wide range of areas, including the creation of a system of business cooperation using modern information technologies and electronic systems, expansion of the commodity nomenclature of mutual deliveries, organization of service and repair centers of Belarusian-made equipment in the Irkutsk region, organization and holding of joint fair and exhibition events, as well as⁴⁴ Even today, the parties in search of new reserves of trade and economic cooperation, to all appearances, will largely rely on the existing achievements.

Firstly, the Belarusian side proposes to make more active use of its export potential in the Priangarie region, where there are significant prospects for supplying quarry, cargo and other special equipment, as well as loaders for coal and other minerals deposits in the Russian region. After all, Belarus knows well that the Irkutsk region is one of the leaders in Russia in mining, so the mining equipment of the Belarusian Automobile Plant for the mining enterprises of the region would be very useful. In addition, "Minsk Automobile Plant is already ready to meet the needs of the region in passenger vehicles

⁴³ Negotiations with the Governor of Irkutsk region Sergey Levchenko [Electron resource]. - - 2016. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/peregovory-s-gubernatorom-irkutskoj-oblasti-sergeem-levchenko-15007/

⁴⁴ Kim, R. The strategic perspective should be based on new knowledge, innovations, new technologies introduced into mass production / R. Kim // Common Economic Space: integration of regions: inform.-integ. project / edited by interviewer: B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk : Business network, 2013. - - C. 118.

using gas-engine fuel"⁴⁵. At the same time, the Belarusian side offers such attractive financing schemes for its export supplies as leasing, budget subsidies, soft loans, which may also affect the latest Belarusian innovations in the form of innovative urban electric transport - electric buses and trolleybuses with autonomous running.

Secondly, an important section of the road map of cooperation between Belarus and Irkutsk Oblast that is being developed should be industrial cooperation not only with defense industry enterprises. In this regard, the attention of Belarusian manufacturers is attracted by the territory of Usolie-Sibirskoye, a territory of advanced social and economic development, created in the Russian region, where a special tax regime is in place and where assembly production of Belarusian tractors could well appear. All the more so since "from 2017 in Irkutsk region it is planned to put into agricultural turnover large areas of unused arable land. For this project, the Russian region is resuming leasing and investment projects. This should help to increase sales of tractor equipment"⁴⁶.

Among other reserves for enhancing cooperation, the parties also mentioned agriculture, construction, logging and water resources. In total, this list includes more than a dozen promising areas for future joint activities, which are likely to be further expanded. In particular, it also refers to the interaction of scientific institutions, primarily related to agriculture, as well as in the tourism sector. All these facts show the seriousness of the parties' intentions to take the partnership to a qualitatively new level. They have everything they need to do it.

⁴⁵ Andrey Kobyakov met with the governor of Irkutsk region [Electron resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/6866>

⁴⁶ Assembly production of BELARUS tractors may appear in Irkutsk region [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/sborochnoe-proizvodstvo-traktorov-belarus-mozhet-pojavitsja-v-irkutskoj-oblasti-222392-2016/>

Republic of Belarus - Stavropol Territory: prospects for an agreement

An agreement on trade, economic, scientific, technical and social and cultural cooperation was signed in mid-March 2017 by the governments of the Stavropol Territory of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus. This document significantly expanded the existing contractual and legal framework for interaction of the Russian region with the Belarusian side, once again eloquently emphasizing the conclusion that "integration with the regions of Belarus is a conceptual direction of development of foreign relations of the Stavropol Territory"⁴⁷. Back in 2000 and 2002, the government of this region of Russia signed agreements on cooperation with the Brest and Gomel regional executive committees, which provide for cooperation in trade, economic, scientific, technological and cultural areas. And in 2008 the Agreement on Cooperation between the Stavropol Territory Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry was signed. Even today, products of a number of leading Belarusian industrial enterprises are widely represented in the region. Among them are Minsk Tractor Plant and Minsk Automobile Plant. Belarusian food is also popular here, which was the impetus behind the opening of a network of shops selling meat and dairy products from Belarus in Stavropol. In turn, Stavropol enterprises have mastered the supplies to the Belarusian market: agricultural raw materials and products of its primary processing - wheat, flour, sunflower and sunflower oil, sheep's wool; engineering products - electricity meters and semi-trailers; chemical industry products - polymer materials, plastics, aerosols.

All these facts show that the Stavropol Territory is one of the most promising economic partners of Belarus in Russia. Back in 2013, the trade turnover of the region and the republic increased by one and a half times compared to 2012 and amounted to 6.7 billion Russian rubles. Really, then there was a certain decline. And only in 2016 the volume of mutual trade was 140 million dollars. This meant that after two years of decline, its growth rate exceeded 9 per cent. At the same time, this fact testifies to the fact that today the Stavropol Territory and the Republic of Belarus have a real potential to significantly increase trade turnover and expand bilateral interaction. That is why the visit of the Governor of Stavropol V. Vladimirov to Belarus in March 2017 was regarded in Minsk as a serious intention of the Russian side "to significantly increase mutual trade and launch new promising projects in sectors where we are interesting

⁴⁷ Vladimirov, V. Market expansion is always a good thing for entrepreneurs / V. Vladimirov // Eurasian Economic Union: regional aspect : inform.-integr. project / edited by interviewer. : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk : Business-Network, 2014. - - C. 56.

and useful to each other⁴⁸. The parties also include such promising directions: 1) development of cooperation ties in industry; 2) effective cooperation in the agro-industrial sector; 3) implementation of promising projects in the construction sector; 4) intensification of cooperation in light industry; 5) updating of the innovation component of the partnership.

As for **industrial cooperation**, back in 2013 there was noted the fact that "more than ten enterprises with the participation of Belarusian investments are registered in the Stavropol Territory⁴⁹. Today, in order to expand cooperation relations, the Belarusian side proposes to "implement joint projects of MAZ and Holding Company "Autocomponents" with the enterprises of Stavropol Territory⁵⁰. Moreover, the Stavropol Territory now "wants to return to the issue of organizing assembly production of Belarusian equipment and its service⁵¹. We are also talking about expanding supplies of various equipment from Belarus to the Russian region - passenger, municipal, cargo, road-building - for the implementation of major infrastructure projects there. In this case, "delivery of equipment is possible on leasing terms"⁵².

In the **agro-industrial sphere there are** two areas of the greatest interest: deliveries to Stavropol Territory of Belarusian modern technological equipment for the reconstruction of dairy farms with the involvement of Belarusian specialists in the implementation of projects for the reconstruction and construction of livestock breeding complexes; deliveries of specialized equipment of Minsk Tractor Plant, taking into account the plans of Stavropol Territory for the development of viticulture. In the **field of innovation**, Belarusian and Stavropol scientists can really cooperate in robotics and resource saving, geoinformatics and geophysics, microbiology and biotechnology.

⁴⁸ Negotiations with the Governor of the Stavropol Territory of Russia Vladimir Vladimirov [Electron resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/peregovory-s-gubernatorom-stavropolskogo-kraja-rossii-vladimirov-vladimirovym-15800/

⁴⁹ Vysheslavov, V.V. In prospect - joint development of the innovative technologies (in Russian) / V.Vysheslavov // Single economic space: integration of regions: inform.-integr. project / edited by interviewer: B.Zaleskiy, M.Valkovskiy, A.Mostovoy. - Minsk : Business network, 2013. - -- C. 79.

⁵⁰ Meeting with the governor of the Stavropol Territory of Russia [Electron resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7111>

⁵¹ Negotiations with the Governor of the Stavropol Territory of Russia Vladimir Vladimirov [Electron resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/peregovory-s-gubernatorom-stavropolskogo-kraja-rossii-vladimirov-vladimirovym-15800/

⁵² Belarus expects to increase the supply of equipment to the Stavropol Territory and to create new joint ventures - Kobayakov [Electron resource]. - -- 2017. - <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-rasschityvaet-na-uvlichenie-postavok-tehniki-v-stavropolskij-kraj-i-sozhdanie-novyh-sp-kobjakov-237868-2017/>

Vitebsk region - regions of Russia: interregional cooperation course

The most important component of Belarusian-Russian interregional cooperation is the twinning movement, as the ties between the twin cities make it possible to expand interaction between Belarus and Russia. Moreover, "it is thanks to the sister movement that joint projects are being implemented in a wide variety of areas"⁵³. The Republic of Belarus is particularly active in developing this cooperation at the city and district level. The Vitebsk Oblast, whose main export partners include the Moscow Oblast, Moscow, Smolensk Oblast, St. Petersburg, the Republic of Tatarstan, as well as the Pskov, Bryansk, Leningrad, Novgorod, Nizhny Novgorod and Sverdlovsk Oblasts. At the beginning of 2016 Vitebsk Oblast "concluded 81 regional agreements on trade and economic, scientific and technical and humanitarian cooperation with the administrations of regions of the Russian Federation, including 22 regional executive committees and 59 district executive committees"⁵⁴. In 2017, this trend continued: "Over the last 3-4 months, more than 20 agreements have been concluded between the self-governing bodies of the Vitebsk Region and the Russian regions, primarily the Pskov, Smolensk and Tver Regions. Most of the time, connections between districts and cities are being established"⁵⁵.

Thus, in the middle of March 2017 two agreements on cooperation were signed at once: Gorodok District of Vitebsk Region and Usvyatsky District of Pskov Region - between the executive authorities and between deputy corpses. With the help of these documents, based on spiritual kinship and community of historical fates of the population of the regions, geographical proximity and the desire of people to strengthen economic, historical, cultural and humanitarian ties, the parties intend to actualize direct contacts of power structures, deputy associations, enterprises of all forms of ownership, public organizations. It should be noted that before that Gorodok District

⁵³ Grishkevich, A. Bratima movement is an important component of interregional cooperation - greeting of Putin / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/pobratimskoe-dvizhenie-javljaetsja-vazhnoj-sostavljajuschej-mezhregionalnogo-sotrudnichestva-240305-2017/>

⁵⁴ Sherstnev, N. The main issue remains the issue of mutual increase in the supply of products with a high degree of processing / N. Sherstnev // Interaction of regions: Union State - a locomotive of the Eurasian integration : Informational / Integrative project / essay, interviewing : B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk : Business network, 2016. - - C. 114.

⁵⁵ Tikhonova, A. Vitebsk region and the Russian regions activate cooperation at the city and district level (in Russian) / A. Tikhonova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/vitebskaja-oblast-i-rossijskie-regiony-aktivizirujut-sotrudnichestvo-na-urovne-gorodov-i-rajonov-242742-2017/>

had "signed a cooperation agreement with the Nevelsky District of the Pskov Oblast and a protocol of intent with the town of Babayevo in the Vologda Oblast"⁵⁶.

At the end of March 2017, the twinning agreement was signed by Sharkivshchyna district of Vitsebsk region and Pskov district. This document, according to the parties, should "give new impetus to the relationship between the two areas".⁵⁷ to promote mutually beneficial economic cooperation and attract new investments into the regional economy, which, in turn, will contribute to the development of both territories, the growth of living standards in the Sharkivshchyna and Pskov districts.

On the eve of the Day of Unity of the Peoples of Belarus and Russia in 2017, the Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourliness and Cooperation was also signed by Lioznensky District of Vitebsk Region and Demidovsky District of Smolensk Region. Documents similar to the above mentioned agreement "already consolidate good neighborly relations of the Lioznensky district with the Rudnyanesky, Yelninsky, Velizsky and Pitelinsky districts".⁵⁸ by contributing to the development of interaction between the parties not only in the cultural but also in the economic sphere.

In April 2017, a protocol on joint actions to implement the cooperation agreement between the Vitebsk Oblast Council of Deputies and the Legislative Assembly of the Tver Oblast was signed. And as a result of the visit of the delegation of Vitebsk region to Tver at the same time, "a specific agreement was reached on signing documents for the supply of bakery, confectionery, dairy products, breakfast cereals directly between the heads of enterprises".⁵⁹ and also considered proposals for the supply of seedlings of coniferous trees, flax and rapeseed from the Belarusian side to the Russian region.

All these facts eloquently illustrate the desire of the cities and districts of Vitebsk region to intensively expand ties with partners in Russia. And a number of other documents on cooperation with Russian regions are expected to be signed here in the very near future. And in order to reach the level of even denser interregional

⁵⁶ Tikhonova, A. Gorodok and Usviatskiy frontier districts will sign a cooperation agreement (in Russian) / A. Tikhonova // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/prigranichnye-gorodokskij-i-usviatskij-rajony-podpishut-soglasheniya-o-sotrudnichestve-237509-2017/>

⁵⁷ Kulyagin, S. The twinning agreement was signed by Sharkovshchinskiy and Pskovskiy districts / S. Kulyagin // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/dogovor-o-porodnenii-podpisali-sharkovshchinskij-i-pskovskij-rajony-240341-2017/>

⁵⁸ Tikhonova, A. Lioznensky and Demidovsky districts will celebrate the Day of unity of the peoples of Belarus and Russia by the treaty of friendship / A. Tikhonova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/lionzenskij-i-demidovskij-rajony-otmetjat-den-edinenija-narodov-belarusi-i-rossii-dogovorom-o-druzhbe-239817-2017/>

⁵⁹ Tikhonova, A. Vitebsk region plans to supply to Tver region seedlings of coniferous trees (in Russian) / A. Tikhonova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/vitebskij-region-planiruet-postavljat-v-tverskuju-oblast-sazhentsy-hvojnih-derejev-242765-2017/>

cooperation with the Russian side, the Vitebsk region plans to create a working group to coordinate partnerships with Russian regions.

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Regions of Belarus - Pavlodar region: partnership as a point of economic growth

In 2016, trade turnover between Belarus and Kazakhstan decreased by more than a quarter to about \$420 million. That is why an ambitious task is set today in Minsk and Astana - to return to the record level of Belarusian-Kazakh mutual trade in 2014, when its volume was expressed in the amount of \$966.8 million. One of the effective tools for solving this problem is the intensification of interaction between the regions of the two countries, which is an important condition for their dynamic socio-economic development and a factor ensuring the promotion of trade and economic relations within the framework of the free movement of goods, services, capital, technology, labor and the establishment of joint ventures, declared in the Eurasian Economic Union. To conclude that "the regions of Belarus and Kazakhstan have many promising areas for mutually beneficial economic cooperation".⁶⁰The participants of the April 2017 inter-regional meeting of representatives of Kazakhstan's Pavlodar and Belarus' Gomel regions came as well.

It should be noted that Pavlodar region is among those Kazakh regions where business interests "develop within the framework of one of the main directions in the economic policy of Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus - the Common Economic Space. For our region this cooperation is a priority direction in foreign economic activity"⁶¹. The seriousness of her intentions to fill the partnership with Belarusian regions with a concrete economic content is evidenced by at least this fact. The agreement on cooperation with the Gomel regional executive committee was signed by the akimat of Pavlodar region in November 2016. And if for the whole 2016 the volume of mutual trade between Gomel citizens and Pavlodar residents was noted at the level of two and a half million dollars, then only "in January-February 2017 the trade turnover between the regions amounted to \$1.4 million (growth rate - 393.8%), including exports - \$0.9 million (256.1%). Main export positions: condensed milk and cream, equipment for railway tracks, metalware, dining utensils and porcelain kitchenware. Imported from Pavlodar Region Ferrosilicon"⁶² for the needs of the Belarusian Metallurgical Plant.

⁶⁰ Sidorchik, V. The regions of Belarus and Kazakhstan have many perspective directions for cooperation - Vladimir Dvornik / V. Sidorchik // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/u-regionov-belarusi-i-kazahstana-est-mnogo-perspektivnyh-napravlenij-dlja-sotrudnichestva-vladimir-243748-2017/>

⁶¹ Bozumbayev, K. Interaction of regions plays an important role in development and strengthening of integration / K. Bozumbayev // Eurasian Economic Union: regional aspect : inform.-integr. project / edited by interviewer. : B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk : Business-Network, 2014. - - C. 177-178.

⁶² Sidorchik, V. Delegation of Pavlodar region of Kazakhstan will visit Gomel region on April 19-20 / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/delegatsija-pavlodarskoj-oblasti-kazahstana-posetit-gomelskij-region-19-20-aprelja-243412-2017/>

The interregional meeting in Gomel showed that the parties intended to significantly advance the framework for interregional engagement. For example, Pavlodar residents were very interested in the Belarusian experience of improvement of settlements, including small towns. In this regard, there was even a proposal from the Kazakh side to invite to Pavlodar Gomel architects and housing and communal services workers to work there for a while, passing on their experience. Another promising area of cooperation is the purchase of agricultural machinery "Gomselmash": "We are talking about a combine harvester KZS-5, designed to work in the fields of a small area, primarily in farms⁶³. These promising areas of cooperation between the Belarusian and Kazakh regions can be complemented by the planned purchases of young cattle in the Gomel region for the development of dairy cattle breeding in Kazakhstan and the expansion of supply of Belarusian furniture there. In the same line - the interaction of free economic zones located in the territory of the regions, the agreement on which was signed in Gomel in the framework of an interregional meeting and which can be very productive. The matter is that FEZ of Pavlodar region invites interested partners to participate in projects on joint use of mineral resources on its territory. In particular, now in this Kazakhstan region "an aluminium cluster is being created involving large companies from Germany, Poland and Turkey" ⁶⁴ in which Belarusian representatives of this market segment could also take part.

It is important to note that the interests of Pavlodar Oblast in developing partnership relations in Belarus are not limited to the Gomel Oblast alone. Thus, in Minsk region, the Kazakh side has shown great interest in cooperation in the construction of dairy complexes. While handing over a package of standard projects of agricultural objects to Pavlodar residents, the representatives of the Belarusian capital region expressed their readiness not only to consult them on this subject, but also to build milk and goods complexes on mutually beneficial terms. The city of Ekibastuz, located in Pavlodar region, and Partizansky district of Minsk, signed an agreement in April 2017, which provides for "the expansion of trade and economic cooperation, assistance in establishing contacts between businesses, exhibitions, fairs, business forums, as well as the development of interaction in education, culture, sports and tourism⁶⁵.

⁶³ Sidorchik, V.V. The head of Pavlodar region was interested in Belarusian experience of town improvement / V. Sidorchik // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/glavu-pavlodarskoj-oblasti-zainteresoval-belorusskij-opyt-blagoustrojstva-gorodov-243790-2017/>

⁶⁴ Pavlodar and Minsk regions are mutually interested in developing cooperation in agriculture [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/pavlodarskaja-i-minskaja-oblasti-projavljajut-vzaimnyj-interes-k-razvitiyu-sotrudnichestva-v-selskom-243719-2017/>

⁶⁵ Partisanski district of Minsk signed a cooperation agreement with the Kazakh city of Ekibastuz [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/partizanskij-rajon-minska-podpisal-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-s-kazahstanskim-gorodom-ekibastuzom-243437-2017/>

Vitebsk region - Łódź voivodship: geography of connections expanding

Early March 2017 marked the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Belarus and Poland, a characteristic trend of recent times being marked by a marked intensification of the dialogue not only at the level of government and parliament leaders of the two countries, but also at the level of specific regions. As a rule, their interaction is based on a pragmatic component in the form of trade and economic cooperation, implementation of joint investment projects, wide industrial cooperation. The figures show that "during 25 years of diplomatic relations 83 agreements on partnership and cooperation and 3 agreements on intention of cooperation between different cities and regions of Belarus and Poland have been signed"⁶⁶. Even today we can note very close cooperation of Grodno region with Podlaskie voivodship, Brest region with Lublin voivodship, Mogilev region with Kujawsko-Pomorsk voivodship, Gomel region with Lubus voivodship. Apparently, a qualitatively new level of cooperation is going to be reached with the Łódź Voivodeship and the Vitebsk Oblast.

They signed a partnership agreement back in 2009. However, the experience of the implementation of this document has shown that until recently, the parties, interacting with each other, still mainly focused on cultural exchange. Today, the Belarusian-Polish relations are characterized by an aspiration to develop contacts in all spheres with the aim of expanding "pragmatic and constructive cooperation in the interests of the peoples of Belarus and Poland"⁶⁷. That is why the signing of five agreements on cooperation between the districts of the Vitebsk Oblast and the municipalities of the Łódź Voivodeship in March 2017 looks absolutely timely and very encouraging. "Vitebsk district and the municipality of Gomunitsa, Senno and Goshanov, Shumilinsky and Makuv, Polotsky and Zgezh, Gorodok district and the town of Opochno will develop partnership relations in trade, economic, social and cultural spheres. In addition, the protocol of intent on cooperation was signed by the Ushach district and the municipality of Tomaszów Mazowiecki"⁶⁸.

The parties have one intention: to expand trade relations and increase mutual trade turnover. Moreover, the participants of the signed documents have a wide range of

⁶⁶ Interview with Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to Poland A. Averyanova to the BelTA news agency (March 1, 2017) // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/f247df4969db2386.html>

⁶⁷ Alexander Lukashenko has congratulated President of Poland Andrzej Duda [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/aleksandr-lukashenko-pozdravil-prezidenta-polshi-andzheja-dudu-15671/

⁶⁸ Vitebsk region and Łódź voivodship expand inter-regional cooperation [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/vitebskaja-oblast-i-lodzinskoe-voevodstvo-rasshirajut-mezhregionalnoe-sotrudnichestvo-239226-2017/>

processing technologies in footwear, textile industry, meat and dairy production, construction and woodworking. That is why representatives of Vitebsk region have already offered their Polish partners a number of projects in the sphere of milk processing, meat production, baby food, drinking water, tailoring, flax and rapeseed cultivation. In addition, relevant projects of international cooperation for this Belarusian region are such as the organization of waste processing plants, construction of hydroelectric power plants and logistics centers, including the Vitebsk airport.

For its part, the Łódź Voivodeship is interesting to the Belarusian partners because this Polish region specializes in agricultural production - dairy products, fruit. Industrial enterprises are actively developing here. And the very location of the Voivodship at the intersection of transport routes creates a promising basis for joint development of logistics infrastructure and joint access to the largest markets of the European and Eurasian Economic Union countries. But in order to successfully compete on external markets and obtain a significant financial result, the parties need to deepen cooperation and create joint products with high added value. To solve this problem, "together with Polish partners it is necessary to form a single technological chain: financing - creation of innovations - implementation into production"⁶⁹.

Good conditions for Polish business can be provided by the Free Economic Zone "Vitebsk", where at the beginning of 2017 already 36 companies with capital from 14 countries were operating in such areas as mechanical engineering, electronics, veterinary medicine, chemical, fuel, food, light industry. In addition, "in 2016, FEZ administration concluded 6 cooperation agreements with foreign organizations that have the opportunity to assist in finding potential investors, including Lublin Business Club and Łódź Regional Development Agency (Poland)"⁷⁰. Specific work to expand Belarusian-Polish interregional cooperation is likely to be continued at the 6th International Economic Forum "Innovations. Investments. Prospects", which will be held in Vitebsk in May 2017 and where, along with the exchange of business contacts "Prospective scientific and technical developments and innovative development of the region" and the international scientific-practical conference "Energy and Resource Saving-2017", the section "BMS - as a promising platform for attracting foreign investment" will work.

⁶⁹ The creation of the joint product will allow Vitebsk and Lodz enterprises to successfully compete - Matskevich [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/sozdanie-sovmestnogo-produkta-pozvolit-predpriyatijam-vitebska-i-lodzi-uspeshno-konkurirovat-matskevich-239246-2017/>

⁷⁰ In 2016 residents of FEZ "Vitebsk" expanded the geography of export supplies to 6 countries [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/rezidenty-sez-vitebsk-v-2016-godu-rasshirili-geografiju-eksportnyh-postavok-na-6-stran-233960-2017/>

Belarus - Turkey: to new forms of regional interaction

The visit of Turkish President R.T. Erdogan to Belarus in November 2016, the first in the history of bilateral relations, may become a turning point in the Belarusian-Turkish relations. First, it set a task to reach the volume of mutual trade turnover at the level of one billion dollars. Secondly, the parties decided to focus on maximizing the potential of trade and economic interaction with an emphasis on the establishment of "joint production of complex technical products in the regions of Belarus and Turkey, including for the purpose of their promotion in the markets of third countries"⁷¹ and the organization of joint industrial zones.

The facts testify to the fact that the Turkish presence in many Belarusian regions has become quite usual. Thus, 96 enterprises with Turkish capital are registered in **Minsk** alone, including 14 joint ventures and 82 foreign ones engaged in construction, hotel business, trade, food and light industry goods. In the first nine months of 2016, the trade turnover with Turkish partners in the Belarusian capital for utility companies and enterprises without departmental subordination increased by almost 60% and exceeded \$212 million, while service exports reached almost \$30 million with a surplus of \$1.1 million. From Minsk to Turkey "wood, auto parts, oil and petroleum products, wooden products, plywood, appliances and devices used in medicine, pipes, carpentry were supplied"⁷².

Brest region also began to restore economic relations with Turkish partners, exports from which increased by a third in three quarters of 2016, with a total increase in foreign trade with the country by 96 percent, which amounted to almost \$23 million. Among the largest suppliers of goods to the Turkish market such manufacturers of Brestchina, as JSC "Holding Company" Pinskdrv ", LLC" Belshpondrev ", JSC" Massivev", exporting furniture and other wood products. In addition, from the region, Turkey receives "equipment, sheets for cladding, monofilament, casting pallets"⁷³.

In the Mogilev **region** only on the territory of the free economic zone "Mogilev" three projects with attraction of Turkish investments are being implemented at once: "Carbeltex" Ltd. - production of home textiles; "SBI Rubber" Ltd. - production of

⁷¹ Official visit of President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/ofitsialnyj-vizit-prezidenta-turtsii-redzhepa-tajipa-erdogana-14820/

⁷² Matveeva, N. In Minsk 96 enterprises with participation of Turkish capital are registered / N. Matveeva // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-minske-zaregistrovano-96-predpriyatij-s-uchastiem-turetskogo-kapitala-218824-2016/>

⁷³ Brest region increased exports to Turkey by almost 30% in January-September [Electron resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/brestskaja-oblast-narastila-eksport-v-turtsiju-za-janvar-sentjabr-pochti-na-30-218733-2016/>

rubber goods; "BelEms" Ltd. - organization of personal hygiene means production. It is assumed that in the future the whole Turkish industrial zone will appear in this FEZ. At least a vacant land plot with the necessary engineering and logistics infrastructure has already been offered for investment by companies from Turkey. "The emphasis in the Turkish industrial zone is planned to be on the production of automotive components, machine tool engineering, development of the chemical industry and woodworking"⁷⁴.

Something similar may appear in the Grodno **region**, where representatives of the Turkish United Industrial Zone "Ikitelli", the largest in Istanbul, are already studying the potential of placing enterprises in the free economic zone "Grodnoinvest. Here the Turkish side is offered to locate production facilities in one of the seven clusters, which relate to wood and metal processing, mechanical engineering, chemical and oil refining industry, agro-industrial complex, light industry, logistics and tourism. And already "land plots for special zone of Turkish investments are selected in Grodno, Lida, Smorgoni".⁷⁵ so that businessmen from Turkey can take on their projects in several clusters.

Moreover, they already have experience in implementing investment projects in Grodno region: "Investment portfolio of Turkish business in Grodno region in 2016 exceeded \$10 million"⁷⁶. In particular, with the participation of Turkish capital on the basis of the plant of roofing and construction and finishing machines in Volkovysk is created production of radiators of new generation and components for them. And in Astraviec Business Cooperation Association "Turkish Capital" in November 2016 implemented a project to build a 3-star hotel with an investment volume of about 12 million dollars. There, Turkish investors plan to build an apartment building, and near the checkpoint "Kotlovka" - a multifunctional object of roadside service with a hotel, gas stations, restaurant, cafe and parking for cars and trucks: "The amount of investment will be about \$ 30 million"⁷⁷. In the sphere of interests of "Turkish Capital" is Braslav, which is in **Vitebsk region**, where an agro-tourist complex will be erected.

⁷⁴ Kulyagin, S. Establishment of the Turkish industrial zone in FEZ "Mogilev" - promising project - administration (in Russian) / S. Kulyagin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/sozdanie-turetskoj-promyshlennoj-zony-v-sez-mogilev-perspektivnyj-proekt-administratsija-218783-2016/>

⁷⁵ Stasiukevich, E.E. Representatives of Turkish industrial zone ISKOBIR study the potential of production location in FEZ "Grodnoinvest" (in Russian) / E.Stasiukevich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/newscompany/view/predstaviteli-turetskoj-promzony-iskobir-izuchajut-potentsial-razmeshchenija-proizvodstv-v-sez-220628-2016/>

⁷⁶ Turkish investments in Grodno region in 2016 exceeded \$10 million [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/turetskie-investitsii-v-grodnenskoj-oblasti-v-2016-godu-prevysili-10-mln-219510-2016/>

⁷⁷ Turkish business is interested in investing in small Belarusian cities [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/turetskij-biznes-zainteresovan-v-investirovanii-v-malye-belorusskie-goroda-219503-2016/>

Belarus - China: scientific approach is at the heart of the partnership

The formation of joint research and scientific-practical centres and the joint development of sectoral science are considered in the Republic of Belarus as key areas of trust-based all-round strategic partnership and mutually beneficial cooperation with the People's Republic of China. In this segment of Belarusian-Chinese interaction three main vectors are distinguished. The first is in the field of scientific research, where the parties are involved in major joint projects. The second is in the sphere of innovation activity, where a network of joint innovation centers and scientific laboratories is being formed and developed. The third is in the field of education, where joint training and mutual internships are conducted for specialists, teachers and students.

The facts testify to the progressive development of bilateral relations in these directions. Thus, in September 2016, the State Committee on Science and Technology of the Republic of Belarus and the Ministry of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China signed a memorandum on cooperation in co-financing Belarusian-Chinese scientific and technical projects, which will allow the Chinese side to directly finance joint projects. And already "for 2016-2017, a list of 25 joint Belarusian-Chinese scientific and technical projects has been prepared and approved"⁷⁸.

Structural subdivisions of the National Academy of Belarus, such as the Institute of Physics and Technology, the Stepanov Institute of Physics, the Institute of Chemistry of New Materials, the Institute of Microbiology, the Central Botanical Garden, which have developed a number of joint projects of mutual importance, make a significant contribution to the implementation of the main directions of scientific, technological and innovative interaction with Chinese scientists and researchers. In total, the National Academy of Belarus is implementing over \$4 million worth of projects in China. <...> Realistically achieve a minimum of 10 times that" .

⁸⁰The fact that there are "more than 120 direct cooperation agreements" between higher education institutions and centers of Belarus and China also speaks volumes. The Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics, which participates in

⁷⁸ The best joint projects of young scientists from Belarus and China will receive financial support [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/luchshie-sovmestnye-proekty-molodyh-uchenyh-belarusi-i-kitaja-poluchat-finansovuju-podderzhku-221347-2016/>

⁷⁹ NAS of Belarus is interested in gaining Chinese experience in sales of scientific developments [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: http://atom.belta.by/ru/news_belta/view/nan-belarusi-zainteresovana-v-priobretanii-kitajskogo-opyta-podazham-nauchnyx-razrabotok-5598/

⁸⁰ Belarusian and Chinese universities are developing cooperation under more than 120 agreements [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: http://www.belarus.by/ru/press-center/press-release/beloruskie-i-kitajskie-vuzy-razvivajut-sotrudnichestvo-po-bolee-chem-120-dogovoram_i_0000022732.html

such major joint projects and programmes as the development and manufacture of microwave devices and devices, software and hardware to solve the problems of electromagnetic compatibility and interference immunity of radioelectronic devices, the creation and transfer of new technologies in the field of microelectronics and hydroacoustics, has shown effective results in joint scientific and technical developments. Suffice it to say that in 2014, eight contracts for almost \$1.5 million were fulfilled in this Belarusian university on orders of Chinese corporations and organizations.

Another interesting example is the Belarusian-Chinese Centre for Scientific and Technological Research established by the Science and Technology Park of the Belarusian National Technical University "Polytechnic" and the Chinese company "Henan Gaoyuan". One of the goals of its creation was to conduct joint research and master new technologies in the field of design, construction and operation of highways. The centre has already developed a diagnostic system for asphalt and concrete pavements in Henan Province, which has been evaluated by the Chinese side as "internationally advanced". They also actively cooperate with such provinces of China as Jilin, Shandong, Heilongjiang and Guangdong. "Every year, with the assistance of the center, Belarusian organizations conclude contracts for various educational and scientific services worth about \$1.5 million⁸¹.

In Gomel State University named after F. Skorina interaction with Chinese partners focused on joint work in the field of vacuum-plasma technologies and manufacturing of special equipment. For this purpose, back in 2013, Gomel and Nanjing University of Science and Technology established joint laboratories, where they are now engaged in the development of "scientific bases of plasma chemical synthesis and study of the structure, properties of nanocomposite coatings based on polymers with antibacterial activity⁸².

As for cooperation in education, 1851 Chinese students studied at Belarusian universities in 2014/15 academic year alone. In terms of the total number of foreign nationals who came to Belarus to study, China was in second place after Turkmenistan, ahead of Russia, Nigeria and Iran in this indicator. It is curious that "citizens of China choose philological specialties in Belarus. They are also interested in international

⁸¹ Bogush, V. Belarusian-Chinese interaction in the field of education and science makes a real contribution to strengthening of friendship between the peoples (in Russian) / V. Bogush // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/opinions/view/belorusko-kitajskoe-vzaimodejstvie-v-oblasti-obrazovanija-i-nauki-vnosit-realnyj-vklad-v-ukreplenie-druzby-4501/>

⁸² Sidorchik, V. Gomel State University named after Skorina cooperates with 25 universities and organizations of China (in Russian) / V. Sidorchik // [Electron resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskij-gosuniversitet-imeni-skoriny-sotrudnichaet-s-25-vuzami-i-organizatsijami-kitaja-2080-2015/>

relations, international journalism, law and economic specialties"⁸³. In Belarus itself, the Chinese language begins to be studied from the first grade as the basic one, while in 2015, entrants take centralized testing in this subject. And another thing: more than 600 Belarusian students were trained in China in 2014/15 academic year.

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⁸³ Every year about 2 thousand citizens of China study in Belarusian universities [Electronic resource]. - – 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/ezhegodno-v-belorusskih-vuzah-obuchaetsja-okolo-2-tys-grazhdan-kitaja-173360-2015/>

Belarus - Hunan: from point of contact to the line of partnership.

In April 2017 the agreement on establishing friendly relations was signed by the Chinese province of Hunan and the Belarusian Mogilev region. This fact is another eloquent illustration of the course of comprehensive strategic partnership and mutually beneficial cooperation followed today by the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China, where "interregional cooperation should become an engine in relations between the two countries"⁸⁴. After all, Hunan Province is not only an agrarian, but also a significant industrial region, which is successfully developing and is at the forefront of China. Suffice it to say that "about 70 million people live here, the province ranks 9th in the country by GDP. Besides, Hunan is the birthplace of Mao Zedong, who created the new China"⁸⁵.

The signed agreement was a logical continuation of the already established partnership between the parties, which in the summer of 2016 adopted a Memorandum of Cooperation, which actually supported the establishment of a joint venture "Zumlion - MAZ", established by the Chinese company Zoomlion and JSC "Minsk Automobile Plant", and the production base of which became the enterprises of the Mogilev region - "Mogilevtransmash" and "Strommashina". In their areas, the parties "organize the production of special equipment for construction and public utilities, including truck cranes, concrete mixers, concrete pumps, trucks, harvesters and fire engines"⁸⁶. The new agreement between the Chinese province and the Belarusian region, based on the principles of equality and mutual benefit, will expand exchange and cooperation in economics, trade, tourism, culture, education and training of specialists.

In addition, Belarus hopes that the Chinese company "Zumlion," which registered a joint venture for the production of construction and municipal special equipment in February 2017 in the free economic zone "Mogilev," will be able to turn even more widely in the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park "Great Stone," where with its participation in April 2017 was laid the foundation stone for the plant to create equipment for the Belarusian-Chinese special vehicles. The very fact that this construction has begun says a lot. After all, the Belarusian side is creating a powerful

⁸⁴ Meeting with Du Jiahao, Secretary of the Committee of the Communist Party of China in Hunan Province [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-sekretarem-komiteta-kommunisticheskoy-partii-kitaja-provintsii-xunan-du-tszjaxao-16018/

⁸⁵ Grishkevich, A. Cooperation between Belarus and Hunan should become a model for other Chinese provinces - Du Jiahao / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/sotrudnichestvo-belarusi-i-hunanja-dolzno-stat-obraztsom-dlja-drugih-kitajskih-provintsij-du-tszjahao-242496-2017/>

⁸⁶ Emelianova, O. The agreement on establishment of friendly relations was signed by Hunan province and Mogilev region / O. Emelianova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/soglashenie-ob-ustanovlenii-druzhestvennyh-otnoshenij-podpisali-provintsija-hunan-i-mogilevszkaja-oblast-242796-2017/>

infrastructure in this park and provides serious preferences to those investors who will produce results "in the form of high technologies, export-oriented production with a guaranteed market"⁸⁷.

So, in two years, the new plant "will produce road-building, construction and municipal equipment. Initial capital investments will be about \$50 million, and in the near future this company should produce up to \$300 million worth of products per year"⁸⁸. The scheme of work will be as follows: the Chinese attachments will be created in Smolevichi district, Minsk voblast; from there they will take it to Mahiliou; "Mahilioutransmash" will be installed on the Belarusian chassis there to get ready-made special vehicles. It is expected that the number of employees at this enterprise in the industrial park will be about five hundred people.

Initially, the products of the future plant are planned to be supplied to the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union, Commonwealth of Independent States and, possibly, Europe, as this equipment is "absolutely competitive in terms of technical parameters, price and quality. The level of technology is global, and the price is much lower"⁸⁹. This is explained by the fact that Minsk Automobile Plant and Zoomlion company already have experience in creating and certifying several types of equipment - truck cranes with lifting capacity of 40 and 60 tons, utility vehicles. In addition, even before December 2017, "specialists will have to study the market and develop 8 new models, and next year they will start mass production"⁹⁰.

As for other promising areas of cooperation with Hunan Province, the same Mogilev Region plans to organize deliveries of food and, first of all, dairy products - yogurts, ice cream, milk - to Chinese partners, demand for which is now noticeably growing in China. The attraction of investors from this province to the free economic zone "Mogilev," as well as to seven districts of Pridneprovsky Krai bordering the Russian Federation and falling under the Presidential Decree "On the socio-economic development of the south-eastern region of Mogilev Oblast. This document, as we

⁸⁷ Meeting with Zhang Dejiang [Electronic Resource], Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-predsedatelem-postojannogo-komiteta-vsekitajskogo-sobranija-narodnyx-predstavitelej-chzhan-16055/

⁸⁸ Ogneva, Yu. The plant on creation of the equipment for special machinery is planned to be opened in "Great stone" in two years (in Russian) / Yu. Ogneva // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/zavod-po-sozdaniju-oborudovanija-dlja-spetstehniki-planiruetsja-otkryt-v-velikom-kamne-cherez-dva-goda-242899-2017>

⁸⁹ Ogneva, Yu. Zoomlion plant in "Velikiy Kamen" park has big export potential - Semashko / Yu. Ogneva // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/zavod-zoomlion-v-parke-velikij-kamen-obladat-bolshim-eksportnym-potentsialom-semashko-242901-2017/>

⁹⁰ Zoomlion will build a factory in the "Great Stone" to create equipment for special vehicles [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/newscompany/view/zoomlion-postroit-v-velikom-kamne-zavod-po-sozdaniju-oborudovanija-dlja-spetstehniki-242736-2017/>

know, provides significant preferences to investors who come here to implement their projects.

Among the priority areas that Chinese partners offer for investment in the Mogilev region are agricultural processing, alternative energy, and high-tech industries related to the extraction and processing of local minerals. In particular, we are talking about local peat mining enterprises, which could organize interaction with the Chinese side on peat mining and production of mineral complex fertilizers on its basis with the purpose of their realization not only in China but also in the markets of other countries. After all, "China today is interested in restoring its soils, taking into account state support, and this requires fertile quality fertilizers based on leguminous and peat. This is a real investment project, which can be cost-effective for the western regions of the Mogilev region, where there are large deposits of horse peat"⁹¹.

Another interesting project was accepted for implementation in 2015, when the company 92 "Mogilevliftmash" started to create a joint production of escalators with Chinese partners. "The creation of a new production facility is due to market demand. <...> New products are now in demand on both the domestic and foreign markets, including in connection with the active construction of large shopping and entertainment centers, construction and development of subways. In addition, the citizens of Mogilev plan to equip the elevators with Chinese control stations and sell them to the Third World countries.

An important direction in the development of interregional partnership, which is also planned in Hunan Province and Mogilev region, will be built on strengthening the relationship between the cities of the two regions. And "the possibility of signing a cooperation agreement between Changsha City and Mogilev, the administrative center of Hunan Province, is already under consideration"⁹³.

⁹¹ Kulyagin, S. Investment projects for \$200 million are prepared in Mogilev region for development of Chinese credits / S. Kulyagin // [Electronic resource]. - -- 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/investproekty-na-200-mln-podgotovleny-v-mogilevskoj-oblasti-dlja-osvoenija-kitajskih-kreditov-174377-2015/>

⁹² "Mogilevliftmash started to establish a JV with Chinese partners for the production of escalators [Electronic Resource]. - -- 2015. - URL: <http://mogilev-region.gov.by/news/mogilevliftmash-pristupil-k-sozdaniyu-sp-s-kitayskimi-partnerami-po-vypusku-eskaltorov>

⁹³ Emelianova, O. The agreement on establishment of friendly relations was signed by Hunan province and Mogilev region / O. Emelianova // [Electronic resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/soglashenie-ob-ustanovlenii-druzhestvennyh-otnoshenij-podpisali-provintsija-hunan-i-mogilevskaia-oblast-242796-2017/>

Brest region is a province of China: prospects for mutual cooperation

Brest region is one of those Belarusian regions where the development of ties with the People's Republic of China sees real prospects for increasing the volume of mutually beneficial trade and economic cooperation and therefore gradually increases the scale of interaction. Suffice it to say that in January-February 2017, Brestchino companies, thanks to the export of stone, linen and dairy products, supplied the Chinese market with goods worth \$1.5 million, which is 42 percent more than in the same period in 2016. Moreover, "Brest region plans to increase deliveries to \$10 million, thus increasing them by more than a quarter to the level of 2016"⁹⁴. At the same time, relations with Chinese partners are being intensified in several directions at once.

First of all, it is attracting investment from China into the economy. Back in late 2015, the Belarusian side began working out the issues of financing several projects in Brest voblast at the expense of Chinese investors. Among them - "construction of "Volat" battery plant in Beloozersk, a plant for production of methyl esters in FEZ, reconstruction of interdistrict cancer dispensary in Pinsk"⁹⁵. Recent examples in this regard include the commissioning in February 2017 in the area of Zarechitsa park of Brest-Severnoy station under an intergovernmental agreement between Belarus and China of an inspection complex designed to control goods transported by rail. "The total investment in financing the project was 39 million yuan, or about \$5.5"⁹⁶. This complex is equipped with the technology of quick control, with the help of which the moving cars are "enlightened". The speed of the train shall be between 8 and 30 kilometres per hour. We can also remember the registration in Baranovichi of the enterprise "CRC-CUEC ZheldorTehnika", in which Chinese investors have invested one million dollars. In 2018, the free economic zone "Brest" is to be put into operation an enterprise for the production of LEDs, which also attracted investment from China. In total, Brest has already handed over 37 investment projects to Chinese partners for joint implementation in the medium term.

The second strategic direction of cooperation between Brest region and the Chinese side is the comprehensive strengthening of interregional contacts. Hubei, Anhui and

⁹⁴ Chernovolova, A. Brest region in 2017 plans to increase export to China up to \$10 million / A. Chernovolova // [Electron resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/brestskaja-oblast-v-2017-godu-planiruet-narastit-eksport-v-kitaj-do-10-mln-244339-2017/>

⁹⁵ Vechorko, S. Export expansion is determined by the main factor of Brest region economy growth in 2016 (in Russian) / S. Vechorko // [Electron resource]. - -- 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/rasshirenie-eksporta-opredeleno-glavnym-faktorom-rosta-ekonomiki-brestskoj-oblasti-v-2016-godu-175763-2015/>

⁹⁶ Vechorko, S. Inspection and inspection complex for cargo trains scanning is introduced in Brest / S. Vechorko // [Electron resource]. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/inspektsionno-dosmotrovyj-kompleks-dlja-skanirovaniya-gruzovyh-poezdov-vveden-v-breeste-233118-2017/>

Henan provinces are among the main partners of the Belarusian region in this regard. In particular, cooperation with **Hubei** Province has more than 20 years of history. "During this time, Brest and Xiaogan, Baranovichi and Chibi have also become twin cities located in these regions⁹⁷. It is the interaction of sister cities that has the necessary potential to become the most important instrument of Belarusian-Chinese interregional cooperation. Thus, the same Xiaogang can become a springboard for Brest exporters, on the basis of which one can develop the Chinese market. For this reason, partners from the sister city have already suggested that "Brest processing companies should establish cooperation in the supply of dairy and meat products to China"⁹⁸. A new pair of partner cities from the Brest Region and Hubei Province - Pinsk and Xiang Yang, which signed a Cooperation Agreement in April 2017, may also have a very promising cooperation. This document provides for the development of mutually beneficial trade and economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation. And there are a lot of opportunities here. After all, Xiang Yang, which is located in central China, "is home to 6 million people. The city is about 2.8 thousand years old. There are many sights preserved there, connected with the ancient period of Chinese history. In Xiang Yang agriculture, mechanical engineering, electronics are well developed"⁹⁹.

As for Anhui province, a protocol of intent was signed with its representatives in December 2016 to establish partnerships in the fields of economy, industry, agriculture, education and tourism. It is expected that "on the basis of this document a cooperation agreement between the Brest region and Anhui Province will be concluded"¹⁰⁰. And at the same time, the parties discussed the first concrete projects of this interregional cooperation. In particular, JAC Motors, which produces minibuses, has expressed its interest in establishing a joint venture with Brestmash to produce small cars and vans with good export potential.

Another joint project was recently discussed during the visit of representatives of the foreign economic construction company of Anhui Province to Belarus, who were studying mining opportunities in our country. In the Brest region, they were offered to build a mining and processing plant at the Gorodnoye deposit in the Stolin district, where quartz sands are found, which can be used to produce construction materials, as

⁹⁷ Zalesky, B. International Relations and Media. Features of multi-vector international cooperation in the period of global challenges / B. Zalesky. - Palmarium Academic Publishing: Saarbrücken, Deutschland / Germany, 2016. - - C. 219.

⁹⁸ Chernovolova, A. Chinese companies are interested in cooperation with processing enterprises of Brest / A. Chernovolova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/kitajskie-kompanii-zainteresovany-v-sotrudnichestve-s-pererabatyvajuschimi-predpriyatijami-bresta-167088-2015/>

⁹⁹ Pinsk and Chinese Xiang Yang signed an agreement on cooperation [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/pinsk-i-kitajskij-sjan-jan-podpisali-soglasenie-o-sotrudnichestve-243097-2017/>

¹⁰⁰ Chernovolova, A. Chinese company is interested in joint production with "Brestsmash" / A. Chernovolova // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/kitajskaja-kompanija-zainteresovana-sozdat-sovmestnoe-proizvodstvo-s-brestmashem-222370-2016/>

well as in the glass industry. Opportunities Ankhov Foreign Economic Construction Corporation in the Brest region is already well known, because it won the tender for the construction of residential buildings here by general contract with the involvement of technical and economic assistance from China. And now four 10-storey houses are being erected in this Belarusian region according to the standard project, each of which will accommodate social apartments. Two of them are under construction in new districts of Brest - South-East № 4 and South-West № 3. Two more panel multistorey houses will appear in the Zagorsky district of Pinsk. In this case, "the construction of four multi-storey buildings is the first stage of the joint project. Its second stage envisages the construction of three more social apartment buildings: one each in Baranovichi, Pinsk and Zhabinka"¹⁰¹.

Another Chinese region with which the Brest region intends to sign a cooperation agreement is **Henan** Province. At least the Brest Regional Executive Committee hopes that "the agreements with Henan Province will be signed, possibly in 2017"¹⁰². Meanwhile, among the participants of the second forum of business contacts "Brest-2017", held in late April 2017, among the businessmen from 14 countries were four companies from Henan Province, the sphere of professional interests of which includes issues of investment and export of Belarusian goods to China. These are Zhong Bai Shiye, Navigation built antisepsis installation engineering, The Yellow River explosion-proof crane, Yuan Henry jewelry. It should be assumed that the established contacts of representatives of the business community of the parties will pave the way for full-scale interaction of the Brest region and Henan Province across the whole range of interregional partnerships in the very near future.

¹⁰¹ Chernovolova, A. Built with attraction of the Chinese capital houses in Brest region will be delivered in the beginning of 2017 (in Russian) / A. Chernovolova // [Electron resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/postroennyye-s-privlecheniem-kitajskogo-kapitala-doma-v-brestskoj-oblasti-sdadut-v-nachale-2017-goda-220261-2016/>

¹⁰² Chernovolova, A. Brest region plans to sign a cooperation agreement with Anhui and Henan provinces // [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/brestskaja-oblast-planiruet-podpisat-dogovory-o-sotrudnichestve-s-provintsijami-anhoj-i-henan-212791-2016/>

Belarus - Syria: from stabilization to cooperation

The Syrian Arab Republic is one of Belarus' priority partners in the Middle East. Diplomatic relations with her were established back in 1993. Since then, political interaction with this country has been characterized by a high level and regularity of interstate contacts, coincidence of approaches of Minsk and Damascus to solving most international problems, mutual support in international organizations. In the economic sphere, the cooperation between the two states has been developing on its stable trajectory and has been expressed through the supply of hundreds of Belarusian trucks to the Syrian market, thorough elaboration of the project of assembly production of Belarusian automobiles. Owing to the deterioration of the internal situation in Syria in 2011, implementation of those plans had to be slowed down. But even at the most difficult time for Damascus¹⁰³, the Belarusian side expressed "its belief in the successful recovery of Syria from the crisis and its interest in further development and strengthening of bilateral relations in all spheres.

The highest level of Belarusian-Syrian interaction was noted in 2008, when the bilateral trade volume amounted to \$85.5 million. Five years later, due to the well-known events in this country, this figure has decreased almost tenfold - to \$8.9 million. But the year 2014 has already shown the dynamics of the beginning of overcoming the crisis on Syrian land, which has awakened hopes in Minsk for "restoration of the previously existing level of bilateral cooperation¹⁰⁴. And this was immediately reflected in the rapid growth of Belarusian exports to Syria up to \$32.2 million with a total volume of trade - \$33.8 million. Belarusian semi-finished products made of unalloyed steel, control and measuring devices, medicines, devices on liquid crystals began to find their niches in the Syrian market. Against this background of the obvious revival of trade and economic relations in 2015, Minsk and Damascus¹⁰⁵ began an active search for new areas of cooperation in order to "not only restore the previous level of trade turnover in the best years, but also to surpass it many times. At the same time, the parties decided to adhere to the principle of mutual complementarity, whereby Belarus produces products in which the Syrians are interested, while Syria has a number of goods in which the Belarusians are interested.

¹⁰³ Alexander Lukashenko has congratulated Bashar al-Assad on his election as President of the Syrian Arab Republic [Electronic Resource]. - - 2015. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/aleksandr-lukashenko-pozdravil-bashara-asada-s-izbraniem-na-post-prezidenta-sirijskoj-arabskoj-respubliki-8994/

¹⁰⁴ The President of Belarus has received his credentials [Electronic Resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/prezident-belarusi-prinjal-veritelnye-gramoty-10410/

¹⁰⁵ Materials of the press conference following the visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus Vladimir Makei to Syria (February 9, 2015, Damascus) [Electronic resource]. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/b49e0d253459caba.html

It should be recalled that when in the central regions of Syria and around Damascus in 2014-2015 there was a trend towards stabilization in the security sphere, the government of that country immediately expressed its interest in "developing trade and investment cooperation, resumption and expansion of cooperation ties with countries that in the most difficult moments of testing <...> did not stop political, economic and other support. 106 Among those States was Belarus, which in 2016 saw significant opportunities to enhance interaction with Syrian partners across the entire spectrum of bilateral relations, based on a legal and contractual framework of one and a half dozen documents. These include: agreements on trade, economic and technical cooperation; on the promotion and mutual protection of investments; on the avoidance of double taxation; on military and technical cooperation; on cooperation in the field of science and culture education; on air transport; on scientific and technical cooperation; on international road transport of passengers and cargo. There are also agreements on bank payments, in agribusiness, veterinary medicine, plant protection and quarantine, and the media.

Relations in the information sphere between Belarus and Syria are based on the provisions of the relevant agreement of 11 March 1998, the Agreement on Cooperation between the National State Television and Radio Company of the Republic of Belarus and the General Organization for Television and Radio Broadcasting of Syria of 12 November 2007 and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Belarusian Telegraph Agency and the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) of 27 November 2008. These documents note "the importance of objective information support of interstate cooperation. The role of the media in enhancing mutual understanding between nations and peoples is particularly emphasized"¹⁰⁷.

And indeed, the thematic spectrum of Belarusian-Syrian interaction is beginning to expand actively today. These include cooperation in the electricity sector, resumption of supplies of Belarusian auto equipment to the Syrian market, establishment of assembly production of Minsk Automobile Plant equipment in Syria, expansion of regional cooperation, supply of Belarusian construction equipment for public works related to the reconstruction of Syria. Finally, cooperation in science and technology, within the framework of which "seven 'pilot' contracts for joint research work have

¹⁰⁶ The project of creation in Syria of an assembly factory of Belarusian automobiles [Electronic resource] has been renewed. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/vozobnovlena-prorabotka-proekta-sozdaniya-v-sirii-sborochnogo-proizvodstva-belorusskoj-avtotehniki-155561-2015/>

¹⁰⁷ Cooperation between Belarus and Syria in the information sphere [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://mininform.gov.by/special/ru/news-ru/view/sotrudnichestvo-belarusi-i-sirii-v-informatsionnoj-sfere-275/>

been signed today by Belarusian and Syrian science institutes"¹⁰⁸. In this regard, the task of journalists is to comprehensively reflect these trends in the media sphere.

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¹⁰⁸ Cooperation in science, education, culture [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: http://syria.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/cooperation/ec5318cc4fb8b9c5.html

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