

The boundaries of sustainable partnership. Part II

In the Republic of Belarus, the current international situation is assessed as unstable, combining both centrifugal and centripetal tendencies, with economic imbalances characteristic of them, and the unwillingness of world players to act on their own national interests in favor of the common good. The tendency of balancing the system of checks and balances between rival states, the growth of regional conflicts, and the involvement of new participants in them have become obvious to all. In such conditions - a crisis of confidence in the European region, in the wider Eurasian space and on a global scale - the demand for constructive dialogue and compromise development becomes particularly relevant in international affairs. For the Belarusian side, it means that today it is especially important to demonstrate resistance to adverse external factors and ability to actively counteract and mitigate their impact. This can be achieved if a balanced multi-vector foreign policy is implemented. This book has been translated with Artificial Intelligence.



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Boris Zalesski

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partnership. Part II**

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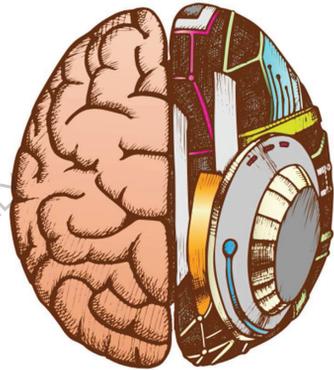
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Institute of Honorary Consuls: project orientation

In October 2017 the first Conference of Honorary Consuls of the Republic of Belarus was held in Minsk. Statistics says that currently 80 honorary consuls in 56 countries represent and protect the rights and interests of Belarusian citizens abroad. Their professional interests also include such duties as promoting friendly relations, expanding political, trade and economic, investment, cultural and scientific relations with foreign countries. This is why the consular districts of honorary consuls of Belarus usually include industrial and financial centers, while honorary consuls themselves enjoy well-deserved authority in political and business circles of their countries.

The first conference brought together in the Belarusian capital about 60 honorary consuls from 45 countries of the world, in close communication with whom at the highest level were discussed "promising areas of their work, primarily in the field of foreign trade and foreign investment attraction". In Belarus, the role of honorary consuls in promoting the national Belarusian interests in the international arena is considered unique for a number of reasons. On the one hand, their immediate task is to protect the rights and interests of Belarusian citizens abroad, provide assistance to those in distress, and represent the interests of Belarusians in foreign countries. On the other hand, their role in the development of bilateral contacts in the field of science, education, culture and sport, activation of contacts between the regional authorities, as well as in the establishment of twinning relations is seriously increasing in modern conditions. All this gave a reason to characterize the institute of honorary consuls as a serious "help for our diplomatic missions abroad, our ministries, agencies, Belarusian companies, chambers of commerce and industry, scientific and cultural institutions"².

The Belarusian government considers the existing institution of honorary consuls as an important mechanism to expand the presence of the Republic of Belarus abroad, to find new opportunities for economic growth, new partners to implement a new strategy to ensure systematic diversification of foreign trade, while emphasizing its special role in "new markets, countries of the "far arc"³. It should be reminded that an important

¹ On the results of the First Conference of Honorary Consuls of the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/c12a5a4e0e51ecd5.html

² Opening address of the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus A. Evdochenko at the First Conference of Honorary Consuls of the Republic of Belarus (October 5, 2017, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/statements/b2e6f26f574a482e.html>

³ Meeting with honorary consuls of Belarus [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7548>

feature of the Honorary Consuls' activity in the host countries is that, being representatives of the Belarusian side, they perform this mission free of charge. Perhaps, this factor has some impact on the fact that, as noted at the conference in Minsk, "the deficit of large individual projects with tangible results persists"⁴. The way out of this situation could be to activate the economic component of honorary consuls to achieve their self-sustainability. In this connection, at the conference in Minsk, the Belarusian Foreign Ministry voiced a proposal to "each Honorary Consul in the near future, approximately within a month or two, to determine for himself in cooperation with the overseeing institution abroad one personal project with a specific trade and economic effect"⁵.

It should be noted that Honorary Consul of Belarus has already had such a practice in a number of countries. Thus, on the American continent honorary consuls in the United States of America, Brazil, Mexico, Nicaragua, Uruguay are quite successfully expanding supplies of Belarusian quarry equipment, tractors, tires, linen fabrics to these countries, working out possibilities of creating joint assembly productions. In particular, Honorary Consul of Belarus in the Brazilian Sao Paulo G. Goldshleger, speaking about the interest of the Brazilian side to cooperate with PO Belorusneft in terms of providing services to the Belarusian company in seismic exploration and radial drilling, said about the preparation for the signing of the agreement, which "will help make prices for services competitive, and the Belarusian company to make a significant profit"⁶.

The Belarusian side has a lot of hopes in this regard with the revitalization of its honorary consuls in Asia, where they operate in almost all countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, as well as in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, South Korea and Japan. Thus, in Nepal, which is looking for sites for cooperation with Belarusian partners in the field of agriculture, "there is interest in creating in Belarus a joint production of organic products, which could be exported to European countries. Some of the raw materials will be supplied from Nepal and some will be produced in Belarus"⁷. The implementation of such a joint project is likely to make a concrete contribution to strengthening the Belarusian-Nepalian trade and economic cooperation of Honorary Consul of Belarus in Kathmandu A.R.S. Parajuli.

⁴ Final speech of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus V. Makei at the first conference of honorary consuls of the Republic of Belarus (October 5, 2017, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/statements/bcc1cb0e38f84b03.html>

⁵ It's the same place.

⁶ Dylenok, Yu. Brazil is interested in "Belorusneft" services import / Yu. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/brazilija-zainteresovana-v-importe-uslug-belorusnefti-269669-2017/>

⁷ Sergeeva, V. Nepal is interested in creation of joint production of organic products in Belarus / V. Sergeeva // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/nepal-zainteresovan-v-sozdani-v-belarusi-sovmestnogo-proizvodstva-organicheskikh-produktov-269734-2017>

Another interesting example in this vein is the activity of Honorary Consul of Belarus to the Philippines A.M. Ablan, who is at the same time the representative of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in this country and the host of the TV program on social justice and protection of citizens' interests on the TV channel "Global News Network", which broadcasts its programs to the countries of South-East Asia. The harmonious combination of such professional interests helped her, firstly, to make her direct contribution to the victory of the Belarusian manufacturer in the tender for the supply of tire products to the Philippine market and, secondly, to contribute to the formation of a positive image of Belarus throughout the region.

This example is a good illustration to the conclusion that the Honorary Consul is a person who opens new cooperation opportunities, who knows business in the country where he lives, knows niches where Belarusian exporters can come with their products. That's why the institute of honorary consuls of Belarus should, apparently, only increase in the near future. This is confirmed by the opening of the Honorary Consulate of Belarus in French Bordeaux in late September 2017, the main task of which "will be to promote economic cooperation through contacts between business circles of the two countries, implementation of joint projects in the field of culture and education, consular and legal assistance to citizens of Belarus"⁸ in the region of New Aquitaine.

⁸ On opening of the Honorary Consulate of Belarus in Bordeaux [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/ecccbe4e74b16259.html

Republic of Belarus - Kaliningrad region: to overcome the negative dynamics

November 2017 visit of the Governor of the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation, A. V. Pushkin. Alikhanova's visit to Minsk marked the way the interaction of this Russian region with the Republic of Belarus had reached a qualitatively new level. The Belarusian side considers Kaliningrad region as "a very promising and close trade and economic partner".⁹ Although trade turnover between the parties has been decreasing in recent years and in 2016 amounted to 190 million dollars. Recall that back in 2014 the volume of mutual trade exceeded \$300 million. In contrast to other Russian regions cooperating with Belarus, the Kaliningrad Oblast "continues to show some negative dynamics in terms of mutual trade turnover growth rates in 2017"¹⁰. Absolutely speaking, its decline was about 15% in three quarters of 2017, although Belarusian exports to this Russian region increased by 20%. That is why in the course of A. Alikhanov's meetings and negotiations with the Belarusian leadership it was discussed, first of all, the increase of bilateral trade turnover. Minsk and Kaliningrad intend to change the situation and restore the maximum volume of mutual trade by deepening industrial cooperation and strengthening cooperation in the agricultural, construction and transport sectors.

Interesting prospects in this regard are planned in the agricultural sector, where the trade turnover of the Belarusian Ministry of Agriculture and Food with Kaliningrad region for the first nine months of 2017 exceeded \$13 million with the share of Belarusian exports - \$12.1 million - due to the growth of supplies of poultry meat, sausage products and animal oil to the region from Belarus. And that's not the limit. Thus, the parties have outlined a further expansion of cooperation in dairy farming and fruit production. In particular, the region has already prepared a site for the creation of a full cycle dairy complex using Belarusian technology. As for fruit plantations, the citizens of Kaliningrad plan to buy seedlings of fruit crops from Belarusian partners in the next four years. Only in 2018, fruit nurseries in Belarus will put about half a million units of planting material under the application of Kaliningrad colleagues. At the same time, "in 2011-2015 131.7 thousand apple seedlings were supplied to Kaliningrad region. In 2016, seedlings of fruit were supplied by "Vetlov" (Molodechno district) -

⁹ Negotiations with the Governor of the Kaliningrad region of Russia Anton Alikhanov [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-gubernatorom-kaliningradskoj-oblasti-rossii-antonom-alixanovym-17441/

¹⁰ Meeting with the Governor of the Kaliningrad region of Russia [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7630>

50 thousand pieces, "Novy Sad" (New Garden). (Pinsk District) - 16 thousand, "Vladimir plus" (Pinsk District) - 2.5 thousand seedlings"¹¹.

As for the construction sector, at the meeting of the Belarusian-Russian Council for Long-Term Cooperation between Belarus and Kaliningrad Region held in November 2017, it was proposed that "a Belarusian quarter may be built in Kaliningrad".¹² for the construction of which will be allocated a plot with all communications in the city center. And taking into account the fact that in 2018 Kaliningrad will continue a large-scale program to replace the elevators in the housing stock and up to 35 million Russian rubles will be allocated for this purpose, the parties have decided to work out the issue of joint assembly of the Belarusian elevators in the Russian region. In addition, it is planned to intensify the supply of construction materials from Belarus for the implementation of investment projects in the Kaliningrad region in transport infrastructure, construction of roads and ports. For this purpose, during Alikhanov's visit to Minsk, an agreement was signed on the supply of Belarusian construction materials to Kaliningrad region for 2017-2018.

Changes are planned in the implementation of the parties' partnership in the sphere of health care, where until recently there have been "single cooperative ties between health care institutions, scientific centers, which is expressed in the exchange of students, researchers. Single projects are being implemented"¹³. Implementation of the proposal of the Kaliningrad side voiced at the meeting of the Council for Long-Term Cooperation "to work out the issue of building a Belarusian sanatorium and children's camp on its territory" may yield interesting results in the near future¹⁴. In combination with other proposals - to open direct flights from each Belarusian regional center to Kaliningrad, to effectively use the port and port structure of the Kaliningrad region - these new approaches to cooperation between the parties may well contribute to the solution of the task - to increase trade turnover of the republic and the region to \$500 million by the end of 2018.

¹¹ Belarus and the Kaliningrad region plan to develop cooperation in dairy farming [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kaliningradskaia-oblast-planirujut-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-molochnogo-275727-2017/>

¹² Mikhail Rusyi took part in the session of the Belarusian-Russian Council for Long-Term Cooperation between Belarus and Kaliningrad Region [Electronic Resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7631>

¹³ RRC Oncology plans to supply radiopharmaceuticals to Kaliningrad region [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/mpts-onkologii-planiruet-postavljat-radiofarmpreparaty-v-kaliningradskuju-oblast-275825-2017/>

¹⁴ Direct air service will connect Kaliningrad with all regional centers of Belarus - Rusy [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/prjamoe-aviasoobschenie-svjazhet-kaliningrad-so-vsemi-oblastnymi-tsentrami-belarusi-rusyi-275669-2017/>

Republic of Belarus - Kursk region: on the road to recovery

The year 2017 marked the 15th anniversary of the signing of the Agreement on trade-economic, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the administration of Kursk region of the Russian Federation. During this time, the interaction of the parties has undergone different phases of its development, reaching a peak of mutual trade turnover of a quarter billion dollars, and then significantly decreasing. In 2017, the dynamics of partnership between this Russian region and the Belarusian side was again colored with positive colors: "Trade turnover between Belarus and Kursk region in January-September 2017 amounted to \$96.3 million and increased by 40.5% compared to the same period in 2016. The basis of Belarusian exports were tires, potash fertilizers, synthetic yarns, trucks, footwear"¹⁵. By the end of the year, the parties intend to reach the mutual trade volume of 140 million dollars. The main task, which was announced during the visit of the governor of Kursk region A. Mikhailov to the Republic of Belarus in December 2017, is to restore trade turnover in the amount of \$250 million in the near future, which "should be facilitated by the intensification of cooperation primarily in industry, agriculture and construction".¹⁶ as well as strengthening cooperation between municipalities of Kursk region and Belarusian regions.

Recall that until recently Kursk region had agreements on trade and economic cooperation with Gomel and Mogilev regions. "Agreements with Vitebsk and Grodno are also being prepared."¹⁷ In December 2017, a similar document was signed with the Minsk City Executive Committee, which was preceded by positive dynamics of foreign trade turnover of the Belarusian capital with this Russian region: "In January-September it reached \$20 million. The growth rate exceeded 120% compared to the same period in 2016"¹⁸. In addition, in the same December 2017, the Agreement on the establishment and development of trade and economic, scientific, technical and

¹⁵ Meeting with the governor of Kursk region Alexander Mikhailov [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7682>

¹⁶ Negotiations with the Governor of Kursk region Alexander Mikhailov [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-gubernatorom-kurskoj-oblasti-rossii-aleksandrom-mixajlovym-17601/

¹⁷ Kursk region plans to sign cooperation agreements with Minsk, Vitebsk and Grodno [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/kurskaja-oblast-planiruet-zakljuchit-soglashenija-o-sotrudnichestve-s-minskom-vitebskom-i-grodno-278942-2017/>

¹⁸ Minsk builders are ready to implement tasks of any complexity in Kursk region - Rimashevskij [Electronic resource]. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/minskie-stroiteli-gotovy-realizovat-v-kurskoj-oblasti-zadachi-ljuboj-slozhnosti-rimashevskij-279043-2017/>

humanitarian relations was signed by Dyatlovsky district executive committee of Hrodna region and the administration of Oboynsky district of Kursk region.

The parties consider equipping the Mikhailovsky Mining and Processing Integrated Works - one of the largest iron ore mining and processing facilities in Russia - with quarry equipment of the Belarusian Automobile Plant to be one of the most promising areas of industrial partnership. "Since the beginning of 2017, 9 BelAZ dump trucks have been shipped to the Kursk region. There are agreements on deliveries for the next year as well"¹⁹. Now there are 46 units of Belarusian equipment working in Mikhailovsky GOK. In total, more than 80 percent of the total number of working quarry equipment in the mining enterprises of the region are machines from Belarus. It is assumed that by 2021 it will be possible to use dump trucks of higher payload capacity than 130 or 180 tons.

Some other projects in the sphere of mechanical engineering products supply from Belarus to Kursk region and industrial cooperation can also become very effective. In particular, the Kursk enterprise "Sovtest ATE" is working out joint projects with the Belarusian "Planar". Partners from the Russian region are also interested in strengthening cooperation with Minsk Motor Plant. A new emphasis in the interaction between Minsk and Kursk may be the supply of electric buses of JSC "Management Company of Holding "Belkommunmash.

In the construction sector, where the parties already have experience of Mozyr House-Building Plant, which erects residential houses on the Kursk land and already has a contract for the construction of another house in 2018, the cooperation can be expanded through the participation of Belarusian specialists in the construction of two power units of the Kursk nuclear power plant, as well as the construction of complexes for agriculture with turnkey equipment. Cooperation between the region and the country is also promising in terms of supplying elite seeds of grain and vegetable crops, mineral fertilizers, as well as in higher education. This is evidenced, in particular, by the cooperation agreements signed in December 2017 between the Belarusian State Academy of Communications and Southwestern State University, the Centre for International Relations of the Ministry of Education of Belarus and Kursk State University. A separate area of inter-university cooperation is the cooperation in the medical sphere, where Kursk State Medical University has been successfully developing partnerships with colleagues in Minsk, Gomel, Grodno and Vitebsk for a number of years on the basis of seven cooperation agreements.

¹⁹ Kursk region is interested in further cooperation with BelAZ [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/kurskaja-oblast-zainteresovana-v-dalnejshem-sotrudnichestve-s-belazom-279287-2017/>

Republic of Belarus - Vladimir region: priority areas of partnership identified

In December 2017, the Republic of Belarus and Vladimir Region of the Russian Federation signed an action plan to implement the agreement between the administration of the Russian region and the Belarusian government on trade, economic, scientific, technical and social and cultural cooperation for 2018-2020. In this document, the parties have identified priority areas of cooperation in construction, housing and communal services, agro-industrial complex, including the development of interregional industrial cooperation, participation of Belarusian construction and design organizations in the implementation of major infrastructure projects in this Russian region, as well as the mutual intention to "intensify cooperation in the energy sector"²⁰. We would like to remind you that the parties signed an Agreement on trade and economic, scientific and technological, social and cultural cooperation in September 2015 as part of the Second Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia, which was held in Sochi. This document contains an agreement to create "the necessary organizational, financial, economic and legal conditions for the functioning of joint ventures, development and implementation of joint projects and programs of mutual interest"²¹. The appearance of this document naturally continued the line of interaction between the parties, which is that "interregional cooperation is an effective mechanism for solving a wide range of problems in trade, economic and cultural spheres. Therefore, the potential for further development of relations in this very direction of the Union State development is very large and promising"²². In this regard, we can recall that back in 2012, the Vladimir company "Euromoda" and the Belarusian "Elema" fruitfully cooperate, since 2015 - LLC "Vista" from Vladimir and JSC "Molochny Mir" from Grodno. For more than 25 years the largest Russian manufacturer of cable products - Kolchuginsky plant "Electrocable" has been working in the Belarusian market. Vladimir Chemical Plant and Murom Streltsy Plant have long been cooperating with Belarusian enterprises. In 2017 "contracts with Belarusian partners were concluded by Vladimir enterprises "BioChemPharm", "Adhesive" and

²⁰ Belarus and Vladimir region intend to intensify cooperation in the energy sector [Electron resource]. -- 2017. - URL: http://atom.belta.by/ru/news_ru/view/belarus-i-vladimirskaja-oblast-namereny-aktivizirovat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-energetiki-9700/

²¹ Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Vladimir Region Administration (Russian Federation) on trade and economic, scientific, technical and social and cultural cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://lawbelarus.com/003753>

²² Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration: inform.-integr. project / essay, interviewing : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesosset, 2016. - - C. 117.

"Technofilter"²³. On the territory of this Russian region - in Vladimir, Murom, Alexandrov, Gus-Khrustalny, Petushki - exhibitions and fairs of Belarusian goods are regularly held. There are shops specializing in trade in Belarusian products - food products, textile products, footwear, furniture and cosmetics. This fact also says a lot. Back in 2010, the leadership of Vladimir region noted: "Now there is no capital from Belarus in companies with foreign investment"²⁴. And in 2017, 28 organizations, whose founders are Belarusian partners, were already successfully operating in the region.

Probably, and for this reason last years for interaction of area and republic stability of a commodity exchange was characteristic. Thus, in 2012 the volume of mutual trade amounted to 227 million dollars, in 2014 - about 244 million dollars. Export-import shipments then declined slightly. Nevertheless, the mutually beneficial ties between the Belarusian and Vladimir partners continued to develop. And for three quarters of 2017 "trade turnover between Belarus and Vladimir region amounted to \$157.6 million, which is 19% more than in the same period in 2016"²⁵. The third part of this volume, or \$52.1 million, was Belarusian exports: sugar, dairy products, devices on liquid crystals, lasers, parts of the rolling stock, glass fiber and ferrous metal products. Until recently, supplies from Vladimir region to the Belarusian market were dominated by copper wire, chocolate and other confectionery products, glassware, track and signal equipment, metal structures made of ferrous metals. Prospects for further development of industrial cooperation with Belarusian partners in Vladimir region see in the implementation of major joint projects with the involvement of such enterprises in the region, as JSC "Muromteplovoz," LLC "Medtex Weaving Factory," LLC "Experimental Glass Plant," CJSC "Generium," LLC "Lance Pharm," JSC "RM Nanotech," JSC "Kovrov Electromechanical Plant", CJSC "MuromEnergomash. In addition, signing a plan of joint activities for the next three years, the parties agreed on the organization of supplies of Belarusian agricultural, automotive, passenger, road-building and municipal equipment to the Russian region, as well as trolleybuses and electric buses produced by JSC "Management Company of Holding Belkommunmash.

²³ Belarus and Vladimir region are expanding cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://www.minskstroy.by/press_centrl/novosti/2017/belarus_i_vladimirskaia_oblast/

²⁴ Belarus - Russia: cooperation of regions: inform.-integratsiy. project / editors. B.L. Zalessky, E.A. Korovkin, M.E. Korovkin. - Minsk: BelTA, 2010. - - C. 113.

²⁵ Belarus and Vladimir region signed a plan of cooperation for 2018-2020 [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-vladimirskaia-oblast-podpisali-plan-sotrudnichestva-na-2018-2020-gody-279536-2017/>

Republic of Belarus - Vologda Oblast: the foundation of success - interaction between enterprises

In October 2017, at the Cherepovets Foundry and Mechanical Plant, located in the Vologda region of the Russian Federation, a new line for the assembly of tractors "Belarus" with a capacity of more than 120 horsepower was opened, and the first batch of 15 loaders on the technology of the Belarusian manufacturer. These facts have become another concrete evidence of the successfully and confidently developing cooperation of the Republic of Belarus with Vologda Oblast.

Recall that in September 2016 it was ten years since the signing of the first agreement on cooperation between the republic and the region. And for many years now the share of Belarus in the total foreign trade turnover of Vologodchina has been 10 percent. As a rule, Vologda's exports to the Belarusian market consist of ferrous and non-ferrous metals and their products, as well as chemical and machine-building products. Supplies from Belarus are based on land transport assets, their parts and accessories, tools and optical devices.

Many facts testify to the fact that the Republic of Belarus is for Vologda oblast "the main counterpart in trade and economic cooperation, which is traditionally based on interaction of large industrial enterprises of metallurgical, chemical, machine-building industries, forestry complex as well as agricultural enterprises"²⁶. So, joint-stock company "Vologda opticomemchanical factory" which is letting out difficult optico-electronic and opticomemchanical devices, carries out close interaction with the Belarus enterprise "Peleng" - the leading world manufacturer in the field of working out, manufacture and modernisation of control systems of fire of armoured vehicles. For many years JSC "Vologda Bearings Plant" has been cooperating with a number of enterprises of Belarus, including through the Trade House of Vologda Bearings Corporation established in Minsk. There is a great potential for the development of cooperation between the Republic and the region in the timber industry - not only in terms of supplies of timber, woodworking, pulp and paper products, but also in terms of cooperation between the enterprises of the parties. For example, OJSC MAZ already cooperates with its corporate partner in the Vologda Region - LLC PK Russian Truck. Dealer centers have been opened in the Russian region, which sell and service

²⁶ Technologies and Innovations in Cooperation between Regions of the Union State as an Impulse for the Development of the Eurasian Integration: Inform.-Integr. Project / ess., interviewing : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesosset, 2017. - - C. 71-72.

Belarusian equipment. But especially bright partnership ties of enterprises of the republic and the region realize their potential in the field of tractor equipment.

Back in December 2009, the Cherepovets Foundry and Mechanical Plant organized a workshop to assemble Belarusian tractors and special vehicles, and in 2010 - opened a conveyor for industrial assembly. And already in 2015 the Vologda Region took the first place in Russia in the production of tractors. And in 2016 the parties agreed to implement four new joint projects in Cherepovets, the first of which was the launch in October 2017 of the assembly of Belarusian tractors with a capacity exceeding 120 horsepower. This led to the fact that "now Cherepovets enterprise produces more than ten modifications of tractors "Belarus"²⁷. And the annual number of Belarusian cars assembled here will soon reach four thousand. In other words, today almost one third of tractors produced in Russia are manufactured in Vologodchina.

As for the production of loaders using the technology of the Belarusian enterprise "Dorelectromash," it was organized at Cherepovets Foundry and Mechanical Plant in 2017. Here they intend to "produce up to 600 such machines annually, which are used in road and construction works"²⁸. The benefits of this cooperation for the Belarusian side are that with the advent of this production Dorelectromash does not need to provide service maintenance of licensed products and components, distracting its specialists. And the released human and financial resources will be directed to further improvement of loaders and development of new technology to offer a more modern model of this equipment to the Russian partner in two or three years.

These examples show that there is still considerable potential in the interaction between Belarus and Vologda to give new meaning to the agreements signed in September 2006 and 2008 between Vologda Region and the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Grodno Regional Executive Committee on trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation in order to "achieve a level of cost-effective interregional cooperation within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union with broad production cooperation and social support for the efforts undertaken by Belarus and Grodno Regional Executive Committee".²⁹

²⁷ Brewery, E. New assembly line for tractors "Belarus" was opened in Cherepovets / E. Brewery // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-konvejer-po-sborke-tractorov-belarus-otkrylsja-v-cherepovtse-271044-2017/>

²⁸ Pivovar, E. The first batch of loaders was produced in Cherepovets by Belarusian technology / E. Pivovar // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/pervaja-partija-pogruzchikov-vypushchena-v-cherepovtse-po-belorusskoj-tehnologii-271083-2017/>

²⁹ Eurasian Economic Union: regional aspect: inform.-integ. project / ess., interviewer. : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk: Biznesosset, 2014. - - C. 93.

Republic of Belarus - Chechen Republic: key topic - industrial cooperation

The Republic of Belarus and the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation signed an agreement on trade and economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation in June 2017 at the Fourth Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia. This document has seriously strengthened the legal framework for cooperation between Minsk and Grozny in virtually all areas of interaction, which was initiated by the Agreement of the Russian region with the Minsk City Executive Committee on trade, economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation, signed in July 2002. At that time, this document was one of the first prisoners of the Chechen Republic with foreign countries after the beginning of the reconstruction period. "However, due to objective reasons available at that time, including the general socio-economic situation in the [Chechen] Republic and concerns of potential investors about possible risks in the sphere of investment activity, these agreements, unfortunately, did not receive further development"³⁰.

But years later, when the Chechen government significantly stepped up its work to implement all previously signed agreements with foreign countries, progress began in relations with the Belarusian side as well. New impulses to cooperation between Belarus and Chechnya have been given by the understanding that this Russian region has a significant economic and resource potential, which makes it possible to form a competitive economy here, favourably influencing the development of interaction with Belarusian administrative and territorial entities, business structures, public and cultural organizations. That is why "the first visit of the delegation of the Chechen Republic headed by the Deputy Prime Minister of the Chechen Republic to the Republic of Belarus took place on July 6, 2015 to discuss issues of mutually beneficial cooperation"³¹. And the Russian region has begun supplying Belarusian home appliances, textiles, cosmetics, tires, as well as road-building, municipal and agricultural equipment of Amkodor Holding.

But, of course, a new stage in the interaction between the parties was opened by the visit of the head of the Chechen Republic R. Kadyrov to Belarus in September 2017, during which the attention was focused both on the development of trade cooperation and on the key topic of bilateral cooperation - industrial cooperation, which both in Minsk and Grozny are considered the most advanced, mutually beneficial form of

³⁰ Belarus - Russia: cooperation of regions: inform-integratsiy. project / editors. BL Zalessky, EA Korovkin, ME Korovkina. - Minsk: BelTA, 2010. -- C. 58.

³¹ Interaction of regions: the Union State - the locomotive of the Eurasian integration: inform-integr. project / essay, interviewing : B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Greshnikov. - Minsk: Biznesosset, 2016. -- C. 60.

cooperation, "which allows to meet the needs of the regional market and create high-tech jobs"³².

As for trade cooperation, according to the parties, the potential for its multiple increase in the coming years lies in the supply of Belarusian passenger, cargo, quarry, agricultural, road-building and municipal equipment to Chechnya. A specific project in this regard could be the participation of Minsk Automobile Plant in the modernization of the Chechen truck and bus fleet.

The first step in the development of the Belarusian-Chechen production cooperation should seem to be the establishment of an assembly plant in this Russian region by the Bobruiskagromash company from Belarus. At least an agreement has already been signed with the Chechen Ministry of Agriculture on this issue, and there is also clarity on both the sites and the stages of the project. And it can become a kind of a prologue to large-scale interaction of the parties in the field of industrial cooperation, because "Belarus and Chechnya need to develop other joint projects, in particular, to supply equipment and spare parts of the holding "Autocomponents" to the enterprises of the automotive industry of Chechnya"³³. Among other promising areas of cooperation the parties have identified such as: the agricultural sector - the introduction of advanced technologies in the production and processing of agricultural products, the creation of dairy farms, the supply of modern milking parlors, crop production, livestock breeding, veterinary medicine, construction and housing - road construction, design and construction of housing and infrastructure, supply of road construction and public utility equipment, building materials and elevators.

In other words, Minsk and Grozny seriously undertook to fill the agreement signed in June 2017 with concrete mutually beneficial projects, taking into account the principle voiced by the Chechen leader - "it is the interest of the Chechen side to work directly, without intermediaries"³⁴. And there is every reason to believe that the implementation of the action plan for 2018-20120, which will fix all the promising areas of Belarusian-Chechen cooperation, will be another eloquent illustration of the fact that the establishment of ties between Belarus and Chechnya is a new stage in the strengthening of Belarusian-Russian relations.

³² Meeting with the head of the Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-glavoj-chechenskoj-respubliki-ramzanom-kadrovym-17164/

³³ Meeting with the head of the Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7518>

³⁴ Kadyrov, R. About the President's word, image of Chechnya and cooperation / R. Kadyrov // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/interview/view/o-slove-prezidenta-imidzhe-chechni-i-sotrudnichestve-kadrov-podelilsja-vpechatlenijami-ot-vstrechi-s-5791/>

Republic of Belarus - Republic of Khakassia: collaborative

The Republic of Khakassia is one of those regions of the Russian Federation where they see great prospects in the implementation of joint projects with the Belarusian side in the field of organization of machine-and-tractor machinery production at the existing production sites and facilities of machine-building enterprises. To be more precise, "trade and economic cooperation of Khakassia's enterprises with Belarusian pantrunners with a bias towards the implementation of joint investment projects in the production and repair of agricultural and automotive equipment and organization of production of automotive components is a promising direction for further integration"³⁵. Back in 2013, the head of Khakassia V. Zimin noted that the Belarusian side is ready to cooperate and sell the necessary goods to the Republic on very favorable terms: "The Belarusian partners are ready to reduce the selling price by 10-15% for us, while secondly, they are ready to assume the repayment of the interest rate if the equipment is purchased on credit. Third: they are ready to consider options for postponement"³⁶.

The presence of Belarusian equipment in this Russian region is very eloquently illustrated by the figures. In Khakassia, 270 machines of the Belarusian Automobile Plant are used at mines, sections and other industrial sites. In October 2017, the regional government signed a cooperation agreement with Krasnoyarsk - BelAZServis, which should result in the creation of a modern service center for quarry equipment in Khakassia. This project is seen here as an important step in the implementation of joint plans under the cooperation agreement with Belarus. With the appearance of this service center, the Belarusian Automobile Plant will receive in the Russian region "a significant amount of work on repair and maintenance of mining equipment, and the largest partner enterprises - a guarantee of quality and professional performance of service work"³⁷.

Recall that the Agreement on trade and economic, scientific and technical, humanitarian and cultural cooperation between the governments of Belarus and Khakassia was signed in June 2016 in the framework of the third Forum of Regions of

³⁵ Common Economic Space: Integration of Regions : Informational-Integ. Project / ess., interviewer: B. Zalessky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk : Business network, 2013. - - C. 64.

³⁶ Chigarskikh, I. Chigarskikh // [Electronic resource]. Why did Viktor Zimin go to Lukashenko and why did Khakassia go to China? - - 2016. - URL: <http://shans.online/zachem-viktor-zimin-poehal-k-lukashenko-i-dlya-chego-hakassii-kitajtsy/>

³⁷ Brewer, E. Service center of BelAZ will be constructed in Khakassia (in Russian) / E. Brewery // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/servisnyj-tsentr-belaza-postrojat-v-hakassii-269741-2017/>

Belarus and Russia, which was held in Minsk. The appearance of this document was primarily dictated by the fact that "Khakassia needs Belarusian quarry and agricultural equipment"³⁸. The fact is that the coal industry in the region is developing quite strongly now - by opening three new mines. Besides, there is the mining industry, the only molybdenum plant in Russia, where Belarusian dump trucks also operate. Finally, 70 per cent of agricultural machinery operating in Khakassia is also from Belarus. As a result, the signed agreement has become an effective impulse to develop direct ties between the parties' business entities. Thus, already in July 2016 declarations of strategic partnership were signed "between CJSC "BELAZ", JSC "BELAZ" - the managing company of the holding "BELAZ Holding" - JSC "Coal Company "Razrez Stepnoi", MC "Soyuzmetallresurs" and LLC "Razrez Arshanovsky"³⁹.

At the same time, representatives of the Russian region indicated their interest in purchasing and organizing service maintenance of Belarusian road construction equipment of various equipment, buses and trolleybuses. In particular, Abakan airport required a plough-brush blower for high-speed cleaning of the airfield. That is why back in July 2016 at a meeting in the Ministry of Transport of Khakassia "representatives of the Belarusian manufacturer offered utility vehicles and trolleybuses with low landing, specially designed to transport passengers with children and the disabled, buses of various equipment, including the northern version of the assembly"⁴⁰. The region also hopes for a clear implementation of the agreements reached on equipping "modern Belarusian equipment for educational institutions of the republic, which train specialists for the mining industry, agriculture, transport, so that during the study students could obtain professional skills on the equipment, which will then work at the production site"⁴¹.

Back in June 2013, at a meeting of the Belarusian leader with representatives of the Siberian regions, Khakassia voiced a proposal to the head of Khakassia "to clearly define the main directions of development of bilateral relations in the future"⁴². As we can see, the first steps in this plan have been taken. So there's gonna be a sequel.

³⁸ Khakassia is in great need of Belarusian career and agricultural equipment - the head of the region [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/hakasiya-ochen-nuzhdaetsja-v-belorusskoj-karjernoj-i-selhoztehnike-glava-regiona-196650-2016/>

³⁹ Khakassia and Belarus at the stage of real interaction [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://r-19.ru/news/ekonomika/khakasiya-i-belarus-na-stadii-realnogo-vzaimodeystviya/>

⁴⁰ Khakassia is expanding its borders of cooperation with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <https://www.postkomsg.com/news/various/209113/>

⁴¹ The head of Khakassia summed up the results of the republic's participation in the forum of regions of Russia and Belarus [Electronic resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://vg-news.ru/n/121784>

⁴² Alexander Lukashenko met with Plenipotentiary Envoy of the Russian President Viktor Tolokonsky [Electronic Resource]. - - 2013. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/aleksandr-lukashenko-vstretilsja-s-polnomochnym-predstavitelem-prezidenta-rossii-viktorom-tolokonskim-6303/

Republic of Belarus - Primorsky Krai: trade turnover

The Republic of Belarus and the Primorsky Krai of the Russian Federation signed an agreement on cooperation in trade, economic, social and cultural spheres back in 1998. Signed, despite the fact that Primorye foreign trade relations are characterized by an overwhelming focus on four countries in the Asia-Pacific region - China, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United States of America, which "account for over 80 per cent of foreign trade turnover"⁴³. The appearance of this document indicates that almost 20 years ago both in Minsk and Vladivostok were convinced that the republic and the region have a huge potential for trade and economic cooperation. After all, Belarus is interested in supplies of fish, seafood, timber, medical and technical raw materials and medical products from Primorye. The interest of the Seaside people lies in the purchase of Belarusian agricultural machinery and equipment, which are used by local enterprises of mining, coal, energy and construction industries. And Belarusian raw materials - malt, starch, yeast - are used in food and processing industries of the region. That is why even today the considerable geographical distance of the Republic and the region does not prevent them from taking new concrete steps to develop bilateral cooperation. And now in this Russian region "the center of the Minsk Automobile Plant "Bosporus" is already working effectively, which supplies enterprises of the region with tractors, semi-trailers, container trucks, timber tractors, dump trucks and other equipment under the brand name "MAZ". Besides, on the territory of the region there is a representative office of Minsk Tractor Works - ProfMash-DV Commercial and Industrial Company LLC⁴⁴. The interests of these and other Belarusian exporters in the territory of the region are also represented by LLC "Far Eastern Autocentre". (Vladivostok), LLC Amkodor-Dormash DV (Vladivostok), LLC Spetsavtotsentr-Primorye (Artem).

The dynamics of trade turnover between Belarus and Primorye in recent years has been quite controversial. Back in 2013, the volume of "mutual trade with the region was 64.1 million dollars"⁴⁵. In 2016, this figure has already decreased to 19.3 million

⁴³ Eurasian Economic Union: regional aspect: inform.-integ. project / ess., interviewer. : B. Zalesky, M. Valkovsky, A. Mostovoy. - Minsk: Biznesosset, 2014. -- C. 49.

⁴⁴ Fedyuk, R.S. Cooperation of the Republic of Belarus with the Primorsky Krai of the Russian Federation / R.S. Fedyuk, A.V. Mochalov, A.S. Timokhin // Belarus in the modern world: materials of the XII International Conference devoted to the 92nd anniversary of the Belarusian State University, October 30, 2013 / edited by A.V. Mochalov. : V.G. Shadursky [et al.]. - Minsk: BSU Publishing Center, 2013. -- C. 59.

⁴⁵ 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. 114.

dollars. And only in 2017 there was a positive trend, when, despite the territorial remoteness and complex logistics schemes of cargo delivery, the mutual turnover began to grow and, "if not this year, next year we will approach the mutual turnover of \$ 30 million"⁴⁶.

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As for the latter direction, it is very encouraging that the Ministry of Industry of Belarus has already developed a strategy to create "on the basis of LLC "Far Eastern Autocenter". (Vladivostok) assembly facilities of grain harvesters (Gomselmash PA) and energy-saturated tractors "Belarus-3522".⁴⁷ and in Mikhailovka settlement of the Ussuri krai, at the 121st kilometer of the Ussuri federal highway (Vladivostok - Khabarovsk), the production base of the future joint assembly plant has already been equipped.

In addition, further development of cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and Primorsky Krai is related to the implementation of investment projects in this Russian region, "including the use of the instruments of the Free Port of Vladivostok and the creation of areas of advanced socio-economic development"⁴⁸. Six of them are planned to be created here: "Petrochemical", "Zarubino", "Mikhailovsky", "Russian Island", "Nadezhdinsky", "Big Stone". The regime of these territories envisages provision of investment sites with necessary engineering and transport infrastructure, simplification of administrative procedures, use of tax and customs preferences, up to simplified and accelerated return of value added tax, as well as reduction of insurance premium rates

⁴⁶ Brewery, E. Belarus and Primorskiy krai will work out a possibility of creation in the region of Belarusian tractors assembly production / E. Brewery // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-primorskij-kraj-prorobotajut-vozmozhnost-sozdaniya-v-regione-sborochnogo-proizvodstva-274172-2017>

⁴⁷ Information on cooperation of Primorsky Krai with Republic of Belarus [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://adm-ussuriisk.ru/ussuri_borough/biznes-gorodskogo-okruga/information-on-belarus/9727-informacii-po-sotrudnichestvu-primorskogo-kрая-s-respublikoy-belarus.html

⁴⁸ Seaside Territory [Electron resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <https://export.by/primorye>

from 30 to 7.6 per cent by ten years. All this suggests a very large potential for cooperation between Belarus and Primorye.

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Belarus - Kazakhstan: new interaction opportunities

In November 2017, the presidents of Belarus and Kazakhstan signed an agreement on social and economic cooperation until 2026 with a programme of concrete measures for its implementation for the same period. "This policy document is intended to consolidate the prospective relations of the two countries and open new opportunities for the development of comprehensive cooperation⁴⁹. In particular, the parties have come to the conclusion that the base of bilateral partnership that has been formed since 1992 - the moment of establishing diplomatic relations - allows today Minsk and Astana to move to a new technological level of interaction with an emphasis on innovation and high technology. All the more so because during the three quarters of 2017 the trade turnover between the countries increased at once by almost 65 percent and amounted to about 500 million dollars. However, according to the heads of state, even this positive dynamics does not yet correspond to the potential of integration cooperation between Belarus and Kazakhstan. That is why the governments of both countries have a tense task - to bring the volume of mutual trade turnover to one billion dollars in the next two or three years by implementing promising projects in various fields: petrochemistry, agriculture, energy, transport, logistics and new technologies. At the same time, the main engine of bilateral economic cooperation will remain industrial cooperation, in which the Belarusian side has declared its readiness to increase the level of localization of joint products in Kazakhstan, which will create additional jobs there. By the way, "today 260 Belarusian enterprises work in Kazakhstan⁵⁰.

The ways of solving the task of increasing the volume of Belarusian-Kazakh mutual trade were thoroughly considered by the parties at the business forum held in Minsk in November 2017, the largest in the history of cooperation between Belarus and Kazakhstan, which was attended by about 400 representatives of business circles of the

⁴⁹ Official talks with Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/ofitsialnye-peregovory-s-prezidentom-kazaxstana-nursultanom-nazarbaevym-17546/

⁵⁰ Relations between Belarus and Kazakhstan have reached a high strategic level - Nazarbayev [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/otnoshenija-belarusi-i-kazahstana-vyshli-na-vysokij-strategicheskij-uroven-nazarbaev-278130-2017/>

two countries, and at the parallel exhibition "55 Belarusian enterprises presented more than 100 advanced developments"⁵¹.

There are great prospects for increasing Belarusian supplies to Kazakhstan, for example, in the woodworking industry. Suffice it to say that in the period from January to September 2017, the enterprises of the Belarusian concern Bellesbumprom increased exports of their products to the Kazakh market by 42.3% or up to \$18.3 million. It is noteworthy that "the enterprises of the concern supply to Kazakhstan almost all types of woodworking products, first of all furniture, which occupies more than 60% of the total export volume. On the second position in terms of sales volumes - chipboards"⁵². And then follow wood-fiber boards, plywood, lumber, doors, windows, wallpaper, paper, cardboard, matches. And practically each of these export positions in the Kazakhstan market shows a systematic growth of volumes.

Trucks and agricultural machinery are another solid export item from Belarus to Kazakhstan. Thus, within the framework of the already called Belarusian-Kazakh business forum, the Belarusian Automobile Plant and AstanaBelAZService LLP signed a contract for the supply of 25 dump trucks worth almost \$25 million to this Central Asian country. In addition, according to the signed memorandum between the Minsk Automobile Plant and Hyundai Trans Auto in Kazakhstan "it is planned to supply 100 truck sets of dump trucks and municipal vehicles in 2018"⁵³. Finally, in 2018 the Minsk Tractor Works will ship two thousand of its machines to the Belarusian Tractor Trading House LLP, and Gomselmiash will ship 500 machine sets to the Kazakh Agromashholding JSC. It is also important that the Gomel residents have provided their partners - Agromashholding JSC - with exclusive dealer rights to sell the entire range of their products in Kazakhstan, which will allow them to seriously expand the range of exported combines. It is a question, in particular, that "to a southern part of Kazakhstan to deliver technics for rice harvesting"⁵⁴. Gomselmash has such a machine, which is now being prepared for mass production.

Belarus and Kazakhstan also have ambitious plans for cooperation in the development of digital transport corridors to Western and Northern Europe, which is very important

⁵¹ Dylenok, Yu. About 400 participants gathered Belarusian-Kazakh business forum in Minsk / Yu. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/okolo-400-uchastnikov-sobral-belorusko-kazahstanskij-biznes-forum-v-minske-278134-2017/>

⁵² Enterprises of Bellesbumprom increased exports to Kazakhstan by 42.3% in January-September [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-bellesbumproma-v-janvare-sentjabre-uelichili-eksport-v-kazahstan-na-423-278065-2017/>

⁵³ Dylenok, Yu. Large contracts are signed at Belarusian-Kazakh business forum / Yu. Dylenok // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/krupnye-kontrakty-podpisany-na-belorusko-kazahstanskom-biznes-forume-278142-2017/>

⁵⁴ Dylenok, Yu. The exclusive dealer of "Gomselmash" in Kazakhstan became JSC "Agromashholding" / Yu. Dylenok // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/ekskluzivnym-dilerom-gomselmasha-v-kazahstane-stalo-ao-agromashholding-278165-2017/>

given the geographical location of both countries along the Silk Road economic belt. The strategic goal here is to double the volume of container transit to transport "1 million containers a year by 2020 and 2 million by 2025"⁵⁵. It is important that the average container from Central Asia reaches Western Europe in two weeks. The parties intend to cope with this task through coordinated work with Chinese and Russian colleagues.

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⁵⁵ Dylenok, Yu. Belarus and Kazakhstan are intensifying cooperation in development of the digital transport corridors (in Russian) / Yu. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kazahstan-aktivizirujut-sotrudnichestvo-v-razvitii-tsifrovyyh-transportnyh-koridorov-278213-2017/>

Belarus - Kazakhstan:

innovations, new technologies, cooperation

The Treaty on Social and Economic Cooperation between Belarus and Kazakhstan signed in November 2017, until 2026, "aims at implementing a qualitatively new stage in bilateral relations, involving the mutual penetration of capital with an emphasis on innovation and high technology"⁵⁶. Projects that allow creating joint products with high added value and providing employment will remain the locomotive of the strategic Belarusian-Kazakh partnership. At the end of 2017, eight joint assembly facilities were operating in Kazakhstan, where "assembly of quarry, mine, special utility and fire-fighting equipment, tractors, combines, engines, balers, and medical equipment" was arranged⁵⁷.

One of the obvious Belarusian leaders of presence in the market of Kazakhstan is Minsk Automobile Plant, which in 2010 opened in Astana "Trade House "MAZ-Kazakhstan" LLP and to date has formed its distribution network in this country, which includes nine dealers, as well as a network of 12 authorized stations for maintenance of Belarusian automobiles. A logical continuation of this cooperation was the opening in June 2017 in Almaty at the auto assembly plant of Hyundai Trans Auto Company, part of the Astana Motors Group, of the production of heavy dump trucks MAZ 5516X5 and MAZ 6501N9 "with a capacity of 20 tons. In doing so, a complete cycle of welding, assembly and painting is performed⁵⁸.

Even earlier, in 2007, cooperation between the Belarusian Gomselmash OJSC and the Kazakh Agromash Holding JSC started. For ten years, the Belarusian-Kazakh joint assembly plant, which is located in the city of Kostanai on the basis of JSC "Agshromash Holding," managed to collect more than three thousand combine harvesters. And this is provided that the capacity of the Kazakh market in this technique is one thousand new machines per year. In 2018, the joint venture will master the production of two more new models of agricultural machinery. In this case we are talking about the models KZS-575 and KZS-10. "These machines will expand the

⁵⁶ Review of the results of the foreign policy of the Republic of Belarus and activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2017 [Electronic resource]. -- 2018. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/publication/reports/a8a5169b6e487b3b.html>

⁵⁷ Matveeva, N. Relations between Belarus and Kazakhstan have acquired allied and strategic character - Bulegenov / N. Matveeva // [Electronic resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/otmoshenija-belarusi-i-kazahstana-priobremli-sojuznicheskij-i-strategicheskij-harakter-bulegenov-266564-2017/>

⁵⁸ Production of MAZ automotive equipment [Electronic resource] has been launched in Kazakhstan. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-kazahstane-zapuscheno-proizvodstvo-avtotehniki-maz-256106-2017/>

range of combine harvesters that are produced in Kostanay, which will allow a more flexible response to the needs of the local market⁵⁹.

The commissioning in 2016 of the first stage of the project to create the Kazakhstan-Belarus Industrial and Technological Park of Agricultural and Communal Machinery was also a good example of the development of bilateral mutually beneficial Belarusian-Kazakh cooperative cooperation. The implementation of this major investment project began in 2012 in order to organize in Kokshetau city of Akmola region under the licenses of a number of Belarusian plants "a full cycle of production line for the assembly of trailers, balers, attachments, roll and fodder implements, excavators, loaders of various sizes and modifications"⁶⁰. The first phase of the project is almost 10 thousand square meters of area. "About 230 new jobs will be created after the second phase is put into operation and the enterprise is fully loaded"⁶¹. The parties are confident that the successful implementation of this project will make it possible to create a powerful cluster of Belarusian-Kazakh machine-building in Kokshetau, and will serve as a good example to spread this positive experience of industrial cooperation to other areas of interaction as well. In particular, "it is planned to create similar parks for the production of passenger buses, quarrying and mining equipment, road-building machinery"⁶².

In total, several dozen joint scientific and technical projects are planned to be implemented in the coming years with a wide use of Belarusian technologies, innovations and scientific developments. In particular, the project "on creation of joint production of unmanned aerial complexes"⁶³ with organization of their production in Kazakhstan is planned. Joint cooperation projects in the oil sector, including geological exploration, well operation, introduction of various methods of production intensification and enhanced oil recovery, which were discussed at the meeting of the heads of government of the two countries, A. Kobyakov and B. Kobyakov, may also become new areas of successful work of Belarusian companies with Kazakh partners. Sagintaeva in August 2017 in Astana. In total today in Kazakhstan still "in an active

⁵⁹ Sidorchik, V.V. Two new models of the grain harvesters will be mastered at the Belarusian-Kazakh joint venture in 2018 / V.Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/newscompany/view/dve-novye-modeli-zernouborochnyh-kombajnov-osvojat-na-belorussko-kazahstanskom-sp-v-2018-godu-278818-2017/>

⁶⁰ How the economy of Kazakhstan is being raised in the field [Electronic resource]. - -- 2016. - URL: https://forbes.kz/process/economy/kak_v_polevyih_usloviyah_podnimayut_ekonomiku_kazahstana/

⁶¹ Akashin, V.Minsk - Kokshetau: mutually beneficial project (in Russian) / V.Akashin // [Electron resource]. -- 2016. - URL: <http://apgazeta.kz/2016/10/01/minsk-kokshetau-vzaimovgodnyj-proekt/>

⁶² Interview with Anatoly Nichkasov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to the Kazakh news agency Khabar (11 June 2014) [Electronic resource]. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/d8d30fc5ce4d68be.html>

⁶³ Belarus and Kazakhstan are planning a project to create a joint production of drones [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kazahstan-namechajut-proekt-po-sozdaniyu-sovmestnogo-proizvodstva-bespilotnikov-278212-2017/>

phase of formation there are six joint assembly productions".⁶⁴This demonstrates the very high willingness of the parties to continue to actively seek new forms of industrial cooperation.

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⁶⁴ Bilateral trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://kazakhstan.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/trade_economic/

Belarus - Ukraine: production cooperation is a benchmark

In July 2017, Kiev hosted the 25th meeting of the Belarusian-Ukrainian mixed commission on trade and economic cooperation, in the framework of which the parties reached an agreement to promote mutual trade and cooperation in production cooperation to ensure the growth of mutual trade turnover. Recall that a record year in cooperation between the two countries was held in 2012, when the volume of Belarusian-Ukrainian trade amounted to \$7.866 billion with a surplus for the Belarusian side - \$3.247 billion. After that, bilateral cooperation indicators began to decline quite significantly - to \$3.47 billion in 2015. And only "following the results of 2016 trade turnover with Ukraine increased by 10.5%, exports - by 13.2%, imports - by 3.2%. The mutual trade balance for this period is positive in the amount of 1.87 billion dollars"⁶⁵. The positive dynamics is also noted in 2017: "Thus, in January-May, the trade turnover grew by 26.7% and amounted to \$1.7 billion. At the same time, the growth of supply volumes was noted on both sides"⁶⁶.

One of the main reserves, the potential of which is now being actively updated by the parties in terms of solving the task to return in the coming years to the record level of mutual trade turnover of \$ 8 billion, is the development of industrial cooperation. It should be noted here that "in Ukraine there are successfully operating assembly plants for the production of Belarusian tractors, combine harvesters, elevator equipment, trolleybuses"⁶⁷ and modern enterprises with the participation of Ukrainian capital have been established on Belarusian soil to produce passenger cars, welding electrodes, and modernize helicopter equipment.

In September 2017, this list was added up with JLLC Beltribo - the first enterprise in Belarus to produce brake pads and linings, opened in the Old Highways of Minsk voblast. The founders of the company - Starodorozhsk mechanical plant and Bila Tserkva plant "Tribo" - set a serious task for it - to reach a turnover of five million dollars within the next two years. The prerequisites for a successful solution can be seen in the wide range of products available here. After all, this is not only the

⁶⁵ On the results of foreign trade of the Republic of Belarus and Ukraine in 2016 [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: http://ukraine.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/trade_economic/

⁶⁶ Belarus and Ukraine will discuss the promotion of mutual trade [Electronic resource] at the meeting of the Interstate Commission in Kiev. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-ukraina-na-zasedanii-mezhpravkomissii-v-kieve-obsudjat-stimulirovanie-vzaimnoj-torgovli-257135-2017/>

⁶⁷ Interview of Igor Sokol, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to Ukraine to the scientific annual journal "Ukraina dipramaticzna" (№17, 2016) [Electron resource]. - - 2016. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/c210c1737ece09bb.html>

production of parts for maintenance of dump trucks of the Belarusian Automobile Plant, but also the production of brake pads for the Minsk subway, Minsk Tractor Works, and from the first half of 2018 - for the BelGi plant of cars. Brake pads and clutch plates for Gomselmash equipment and pads for the needs of the Belarusian Railway will also be produced here. Besides, "it is planned to master the production of railway blocks in the Old Roads, which will be supplied to Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia"⁶⁸. It is expected that in six months the new plant will reach its full design capacity, and the volume of investment in it over the next two years will be about two and a half million dollars.

The heads of Gomel and Kherson regions announced their intention to establish a joint venture in mechanical engineering and processing of agricultural products in September 2017. In particular, we are talking about assembling Gomselmash combines at one of the enterprises of Kherson region. Relevance of this joint project for the Ukrainian side is dictated by the fact that "in the next few years, local farmers need to replace about 500 pieces of equipment, which has already worked out its resource"⁶⁹. On the Belarusian side, the interest in cooperation with Ukrainian colleagues is explained by the fact that the Gomel region buys abroad a significant amount of high-protein fodder for its livestock breeding, including sunflower meal. In this regard, it looks very promising to provide Kherson manufacturers with the capacity of Gomel fat plant for processing sunflower seeds with the subsequent sale of the resulting vegetable oil under its own brands.

Besides, especially promising in terms of increasing mutual trade turnover between Belarus and Ukraine is the developing cooperation of the parties in supplying the Ukrainian market with Belarusian heavy-duty equipment. It is known that more than two thousand dump trucks of the Belarusian Automobile Plant are now working in Ukraine, accounting for more than 90% of the total fleet of this equipment in this country. Among them are machines with a capacity of 220 tons, operating at the Ingulets Mining and Processing Integrated Works in the Dnepropetrovsk region. At the end of August 2017 five more mining dump trucks with a capacity of 130 tons were delivered to Ukraine. And now the specialists of the joint venture "Kryvbass-BelAZ-Service" are completing installation and commissioning works. "Soon 130-ton dump

⁶⁸ The first enterprise in Belarus to produce brake pads was opened in Old Highways [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/pervoe-v-belarusi-predpriyatje-po-proizvodstvu-tormoznyh-koledok-otkrylos-v-staryh-dorogah-267852-2017/>

⁶⁹ Sidorchik, V. Gomel and Kherson regions plan to create JV in machine-building and agricultural processing (in Russian) / V. Sidorchik // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskaja-i-hersonskaja-oblasti-planirujut-sozdat-sp-v-mashinostroenii-i-selhozpererabotke-266822-2017/>

trucks will be put into operation at PJSC "ArcelorMittal Blood Horn", where more than 80 units of machinery produced by JSC "BelAZ" are already used⁷⁰.

Another rather tempting Belarusian-Ukrainian cooperative project, actively discussed today by the parties, is the construction of a port terminal on the Dnieper, on the border of Belarus and Ukraine. The fact is that the joint use of waterways would make it possible to organize smooth passenger and cargo transportation from the ports of the Black, Mediterranean and Caspian seas and Danube states.

All these examples illustrate the high potential of the Belarusian-Ukrainian production cooperation aimed at doubling the mutual trade turnover over the next two years.

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⁷⁰ BelAZ has supplied five dump trucks [Electronic resource] to Ukraine. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belaz-postavil-v-ukrainu-pjat-karjernih-samosvalov-264698-2017/>

Belarus-Kyrgyzstan: from trade to cooperation

The Kyrgyz Republic is among those Central Asian countries with which the Republic of Belarus has seen steady positive dynamics in recent years, both in the political and economic spheres. Back in May 2013, at a meeting with members of the Editor-in-Chief Club of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Baltic States and Georgia, the President of Kyrgyzstan A. S. Pavlovsk, the President of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan. Atambayev noted: "I would like to see the economic relations between Belarus and Kyrgyzstan developing dynamically. There are a number of goods in Belarus in which Kyrgyzstan is interested. In turn, we are also ready to supply goods that are of interest to the Belarusian economy"⁷¹. In September 2015, at the meeting of the heads of government of the two countries, focusing on the need to increase mutual trade turnover, the parties agreed that "in addition to trade cooperation, efforts should be focused on the development of industrial cooperation"⁷². And in the first quarter of 2017, the Belarusian-Kyrgyz trade turnover increased by one and a half times, amounting to \$15.2 million. The Belarusian-Kyrgyz Intergovernmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation played an important role in boosting bilateral cooperation between the countries. Its sixth and seventh meetings were held in June 2016 in Bishkek and in June 2017 in Minsk.

In particular, at the seventh session of the commission the parties noted a significant intensification of contacts of Belarusian enterprises with Kyrgyz partners, which only contributes to the expansion of cooperation between Belarus and Kyrgyzstan in the supply of equipment and industrial cooperation, in energy, agriculture, health, education, science, culture, information and tourism, as well as to the development of cooperation between regions and free economic zones of the two countries. This extensive list of Belarusian-Kyrgyz cooperation also includes promising areas such as "training of specialists, improving their skills, creating distribution networks, joint ventures for the production of agricultural machinery, supply of Belarusian elevators in Kyrgyzstan"⁷³.

⁷¹ Kyrgyzstan is interested in developing trade and economic relations with Belarus [Electronic resource]. -- 2013. - URL: <http://www.belvpo.com/ru/26710.html>

⁷² Andrey Kobaykov met with the head of the Kyrgyz government [Electronic resource]. -- 2015. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/6027>

⁷³ On the meeting of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Kyrgyz Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://kyrgyzstan.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/b7a170b217ff5943.html>

As far as mutual trade is concerned, the leaders here are obviously supplies of Belarusian agricultural products to the Kyrgyz market, as evidenced by the figures: "At the end of 2016, exports of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to Kyrgyzstan increased 3.1 times, while in the first quarter of 2017 - almost 14 times. The basis of export supplies is meat and dairy products"⁷⁴. Agreeing on further increase of mutual supplies of agricultural products, expansion of their commodity nomenclature, the parties also decided to consider the possibility of joint projects in the field of livestock and crop production development.

The flagship of the Belarusian-Kyrgyz production cooperation can be called the assembly production of tractors and service center for agricultural machinery service from Belarus on the basis of "Avtomash Radiator" Ltd. opened in November 2016 in Bishkek. An important detail - "about 90% of radiators for tractors of Minsk assembly are supplied from Kyrgyzstan. The assembly of Gomselmash combines has now started in the same assembly shop"⁷⁵. In addition, the parties are now actively considering the establishment of joint ventures in the light industry, a prerequisite for which is the currently observed update of trade relations in this area. Thus, in April 2017, the Kyrgyz company "Opt-Invest" first supplied a batch of textile products to Belarus, and in September 2017 signed a contract with the Belarusian side for the supply of garments.

If we talk about the development of ties between the regions of Belarus and Kyrgyzstan, the obvious leaders here are the capitals - Minsk and Bishkek, which in 1997 signed the Agreement on Economic, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Cooperation, and in 2008 established twinned relations. In the language of numbers, this interregional interaction looks as follows: "The growth rate of trade turnover of Minsk enterprises with Kyrgyzstan in January-June 2017 compared to the same period of 2016 was 306%, exports of goods - 393.7%, services exports - 176.1%"⁷⁶. Kyrgyz partners were supplied with tractors, paving stoves, radiators, air heaters, refrigerators and medicines. New goods exported from Minsk were dairy products, wood chipboards and tools.

Cooperation between the two capitals in the field of public transport development may become very promising in the near future. After all, the plans of Bishkek include the

⁷⁴ Kyrgyzstan is interested in creation of assembly productions of Belarusian agricultural machinery [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/kyrgyzstan-zainteresovan-v-sozdanii-sborochnyh-proizvodstv-belorusskoj-selhoztehniki-251058-2017/>

⁷⁵ Omuraliev noted a positive trend in the development of relations between Kyrgyzstan and Belarus [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/omuraliev-otmetil-pozitivnuju-tendentsiju-v-razviii-otnoshenii-mezhdu-kyrgyzstanom-i-belarusiju-269017-2017/>

⁷⁶ Matveeva, N. Bishkek plans to buy equipment for development of public transport from Minsk enterprises / N. Matveeva // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/bishkek-planiruet-zakupit-uminskikh-predpriatij-tehniku-dlja-razvitiia-obschestvennogo-transporta-265609-2017/>

purchase of about 400 buses of high capacity. And now the authorities of the Kyrgyz capital are studying the supplier market. At the same time, it should be assumed that Minsk manufacturers of transport equipment have a good chance to participate in this project. Back in 2009, Minsk Belkommunmash delivered 20 trolleybuses to Bishkek, and later won the tender for export of another 30 units of electric transport.

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Belarus - Georgia: parliaments will intensify contacts

In November 2017, the first parliamentary visit to Minsk in the history of Belarusian-Georgian relations was made by a high-level delegation headed by the Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia I. Kobakhidze, which may give new impulses to the development of the whole complex of relations between the two states. After all, in Minsk they proceed from the understanding that people's diplomacy and "strengthening inter-parliamentary ties create a very good basis for building the same trade and economic relations. This is a good basis, and without it, it is impossible to create very deep, long-term relations between countries"⁷⁷. It is especially important to take this factor into account when we are talking about Georgia, where the parliament plays its decisive role in the life of the state and the influence of deputies on the Georgian society is very high.

The visit of Georgian parliamentarians to Belarus took place at a time when trade and economic cooperation between the two countries began to show positive dynamics. Thus, "at the end of 2016 the mutual trade turnover between Belarus and Georgia increased by 63% and amounted to \$73.2 million"⁷⁸. At the same time, Belarusian exports increased by 2.5 times at once. This dynamic of interaction demonstrates the real opportunities to bring the volume of mutual Belarusian-Georgian trade to \$100 million by the end of 2017, and in the medium term - to \$200 million. To solve such a large-scale task is feasible, including on condition that "relations between the legislative bodies of Belarus and Georgia should reach a new level". in⁷⁹ which the parliamentarians of the two countries will, within their competence, not only support governments in improving the legal and contractual framework and strive to develop a constructive dialogue on legislative activities, but also to promote inter-regional contacts and build their capacity in promising areas, as well as help establish direct links between business entities. Actually, for this purpose - considerable activation of partnership relations - the Speakers of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus and the Parliament of Georgia within the framework of I. Kobakhidze's visit

⁷⁷ Meeting with Chairman of the Georgian Parliament Irakli Kobakhidze [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-predsedatelem-parlamenta-gruzii-irakliem-kobaxidze-17492/

⁷⁸ Belarus and Georgia are intensifying cooperation in the implementation of competition policy [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-gruzija-aktivizirujut-sotrudnichestvo-v-oblasti-realizatsii-konkurentnoj-politiki-276796-2017/>

⁷⁹ Relations between the legislative bodies of Belarus and Georgia should reach a new level - Kobakhidze [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/otnoshenija-zakonodatelnyh-organov-belarusi-i-gruzii-dolzny-vyjti-na-novyj-uroven-kobahidze-276669-2017/>

signed a joint statement in which they outlined the main essence of cooperation between parliamentarians - "to promote deepening of bilateral cooperation in trade-economic, investment, scientific-technical, cultural spheres, in youth policy, education, tourism, information technologies, logistics, communication and informatization"⁸⁰.

It should be noted that the intensification of the Belarusian-Georgian inter-parliamentary contacts began in the last few years, when friendship groups were established in the parliaments of both countries. Today the new problem is already put before them: "For subject interaction heads of friendship groups from both parties could make road maps and plan work taking into account the aspects provided in them"⁸¹. These road maps will be based on one or more large-scale projects, around which not only the parliamentary dimension of Belarusian-Georgian cooperation could be deepened, but also the production and operational dimension, aimed at creating business centers to organize the work of companies with joint competence and interest. In fact, today it is already a question of resetting the work of parliamentary friendship groups, which "should not only carry out the activities that have been outlined by parliamentary leaders, but also work quite actively on their own"⁸². And in this respect the activity of parliamentary friendship groups to create conditions for fruitful regional, economic cooperation and development of contacts between business communities looks very promising. Moreover, Belarus and Georgia already have useful experience of interregional cooperation.

In particular, back in September 2016, within the framework of the third meeting of the Belarusian-Georgian intergovernmental commission on economic cooperation, held in Tbilisi, the Mogilev region and the Autonomous Republic of Adzharia signed a memorandum on cooperation. A number of other documents on cooperation were adopted by the Gorets district and Khashura municipality, Bobruisk with the cities of Kobuleti and Batumi, as well as the Mogilev branch of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Adjara. In September 2017, the establishment of friendly relations was already announced by Mogilev and Batumi. In the signed memorandum they agreed "to develop mutually beneficial cooperation in all spheres. The first step will be to develop a programme of joint activities for next year as well as to prepare specific projects for subsequent

⁸⁰ The speakers of the Belarusian and Georgian parliaments signed a joint statement on cooperation [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/spikery-belorusskogo-i-gruzinskogo-parlamentov-podpisali-sovmestnoe-zajavlenie-o-sotrudnichestve-276782-2017/>

⁸¹ Belarusian MPs are determined to work with the Parliament of Georgia - Andreichenko [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/belorusskie-deputaty-nastroeny-na-predmetnuju-rabotu-s-parlamentom-gruzii-andrejchenko-276707-2017/>

⁸² Belarus considers Georgia one of its strategic partners - Myasnikovich [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-schitaet-gruziju-odnim-iz-strategicheskikh-partnerov-mjasnikovich-276652-2017/>

implementation⁸³. At the same time, a memorandum of cooperation was signed between the Mogilev Regional Development Agency and the Ministry of Finance and Economy of Adjara, as well as a contract for the supply of products between "Bakaleia Mogilev" OJSC and "Adjara Wine House" company. And the Belarusian State Agricultural Academy in Gorki, Mogilev region, has agreed on cooperation with Batumi State University named after Shota Rustaveli. Obviously, involving parliamentarians in these projects can only accelerate their implementation.

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⁸³ Kulyagin, S. Mogilev and Batumi signed a memorandum on establishing friendly relations / S. Kulyagin // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/mogilev-i-batumi-podpisali-memorandum-ob-ustanovlenii-druzhestvennyh-svjazej-265669-2017/>

Belarus - Georgia:

partnership reserve - regions

In January 2018, Minsk hosted the fourth meeting of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Georgian Commission on Economic Cooperation, where the parties stated their intention to bring the volume of bilateral trade to \$200 million by 2020. One of the effective ways to solve this problem is to develop Belarusian-Georgian interregional cooperation, the potential of which "is huge and it should be fully used"⁸⁴. A concrete step towards further realization of partnership opportunities between the regions of the two countries was the Program for 2018-2019 signed in the framework of the fourth meeting of the intergovernmental commission on the implementation of the agreement between the Minsk Regional Executive Committee and the administration of the state commissioner - governor of Kakheti on trade, economic and social and cultural cooperation. This document once again underscores the fact that today there is a lot of connection between Minshchina and Kakhetiya. Suffice it to say that at the three mining enterprises of Georgia - JSC "RMG Cooper", JSC "Rustavi MK" and LLC "Sakcementi" now "operates 41 dump trucks" BELAZ "payload capacity. 45-55 tons"⁸⁵, produced in Minsk region. Of course, the example given of the development of partnership between the regions of the two mills is not the only one. In general "in the field of regional and brotherly cooperation agreements/memorandums have been signed between Minsk and Tbilisi, <...> Brest and Batumi, Polotsk and Tskaltubo, Gomel and Kutaisi, Mogilev region and the Autonomous Republic of Adjara".

Undoubtedly, the flagship of this partnership is the interaction between the two capitals, which began in 1994, and in September 2015, Minsk and Tbilisi signed an Agreement on twinning relations to "promote the establishment and expansion of bilateral relations in the economic, scientific, technological, cultural spheres, development of investment and innovation activities, cooperation in health care, education, culture and sports, exchange of information on the development of cities, taking into account the organization of local self-government"⁸⁶. And in just one year, the export of Belarusian goods and services to the Georgian capital doubled.

⁸⁴ The Regional Forum on Sustainable Development is planned to be held in Minsk in early 2018 [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/regionalnyj-forum-po-ustojchivomu-razvitiyu-planiruetsja-provesti-v-minske-v-nachale-2018-goda-264868-2017/>

⁸⁵ Within the framework of the celebration of the 80th anniversary of the Minsk region, BELAZ OJSC was visited by a delegation of the Georgian krai Kakheti [Electronic Resource]. - - 2018. - URL: http://www.belaz.by/press/news/2018/oa0_belaz_v_ramkah_prazdnovani/

⁸⁶ Minsk and Tbilisi have become twin cities [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://mamuli.by/minsk-i-tbilisi-stali-gorodami-pobratimami/>

"Medicines, agricultural and municipal equipment, food produced in Belarus were in demand among our brothers"⁸⁷. As a result, today trade and economic interaction between the capital's enterprises is already stable, constantly expanding, and "in Tbilisi Belarusian meat and dairy products are very popular, in Belarus - Georgian wines and mineral waters, fruits and vegetables"⁸⁸. This fact also says a lot. The first store of Belarusian products appeared in Tbilisi back in September 2016, while the second - in November the same year. Today there are already six grocery stores in the Georgian capital, which sell Belarusian products. The range of goods represented in them is quite wide. "Dairy products are especially popular among locals - butter, milk, sour cream, cheese, cottage cheese, yogurt. Moreover, over the last two years, sales volumes have increased significantly. Georgian dealers can develop a network of up to 25 shops"⁸⁹.

In the same year 2015, Brest and Batumi adopted a sisterhood agreement in order to establish permanent friendly relations for mutual acquaintance with the life, history and culture of the twin cities, as well as to develop cooperation in all areas, including the exchange of experience in urban management. "It is planned that in the first stage the twin cities will focus on the tourism industry, which should pull the economy"⁹⁰. Two years later, the parties concluded that the time had come to take relations to a higher level, so that "not only Brest and Batumi had connections, but closer contacts were established between the Brest region and the Autonomous Republic of Adjara"⁹¹. And they plan to open a Belarusian trade center in Batumi, where the products manufactured in Brestchina will be presented. It is appropriate to remind here that "Adjara is the most developed region not only in Georgia, but also on the coast. The Republic contributes more than \$1 billion to the country's GDP"⁹². Back in 2015, the Belarusian side offered this Georgian region to cooperate at the highest level in engineering, construction and tourism. As we can see, these plans are beginning to be gradually implemented.

And in Gomel, which signed an agreement on friendship and cooperation with Kutaisi in 2016, priority in interregional cooperation is given to trade and economic relations. After all, only in 2015 "trade turnover between Gomel and Georgia reached 1.1 million

⁸⁷ Zhdanovich, V. Twins. Minsk and Tbilisi / V. Zhdanovich // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <https://minsknews.by/pobratimyi-minsk-i-tbilisi/>

⁸⁸ On the meeting of Ambassador of Belarus to Georgia M. Myatlikov with Chairman of Tbilisi Sakrebulo G. Tkemaladze [Electronic resource]. - - 2018. - URL: <http://georgia.mfa.gov.by/ru/embassy/news/c2a863c0c016dd7f.html>

⁸⁹ Belarusian food products are in great demand in Georgia [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-produkty-pitanija-polzujutsja-bolshim-sprosom-v-gruzii-276694-2017/>

⁹⁰ Nedashkovskaya, M. Brest and Batumi became twins / M. Nedashkovskaya // [Electron resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://mamuli.by/brest-i-batumi-stali-pobratimami/>

⁹¹ The Belarusian Trade Center is planned to open in Batumi [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/beloruskij-torgovij-tsentr-planiruetsja-otkryt-v-batumi-259344-2017/>

⁹² Official visit to Georgia [Electronic resource]. - - 2015. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/ofitsialnyj-visit-v-gruziju-11241/

dollars. Exports of goods amounted to \$0.8 million, imports - \$0.3 million⁹³. The open joint-stock companies Gomel Chemical Plant, Gomeldrev, Gomel Electrotechnical Plant, GZIP, Gomelsteklo, as well as PUE Gomeloboi, IpUE Alkopak, ALC Vimala, LLC Antech, CJSC Belplastkhim became exporters of their products to the Georgian market.

As for the cooperation between the cities of Polotsk and Tskaltubo, they established a partnership in June 2015, and in February 2017 signed an agreement on cooperation in order to actively develop partnerships in industry, entrepreneurship, small and medium business, trade, agriculture, science, education, health, environment and tourism. The motive for the appearance of this document was the fact that by that time a number of Polotsk enterprises already had experience of business relations with Georgian partners. In particular, "dairy farmers delivered milk to Georgia, flour was shipped rye flour, architects and builders erected houses according to their designs"⁹⁴.

All these facts testify very eloquently to the fact that relations between Belarus and Georgia have become stable over the past few years. Statistics also testify to that. While in 2016 bilateral trade increased by 63 percent to \$73.2 million, in January - November 2017 "it increased by almost a quarter"⁹⁵. At the same time, it should be recognized that active ties between the regions of the two countries have played a significant role in achieving this positive dynamics of cooperation.

⁹³ Baidan, E. Agreement on friendship and cooperation between Gomel and Kutaisi is signed / E. Baidan // [Electronic resource]. - -- 2016. - URL: <http://newsgomel.by/news/mezhdu-gomelem-i-kutaisi-podpisano-soglashenie-o-druzhbe-i-sotrudnichestve>

⁹⁴ Shuia, O. Heart is open for friendship / O. Shuia // [Electronic resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://belsmi.by/archive/article/73054>

⁹⁵ About the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Georgian Commission on Economic Cooperation [Electronic resource]. - -- 2018. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/be31d6495f7d43e1.html

Belarus - Poland: relationship revitalization is based on openness

After a two-year break the Belarusian-Polish working group on trade and investment, which is an important part of the Joint Belarusian-Polish Commission on Economic Cooperation, resumed its activities. In October 2017, Minsk hosted the fifth meeting of the group, which demonstrated the parties' clear understanding of the fact that "the revival, which is now observed in Belarusian-Polish relations, should be based on an increasing openness and mutual readiness to seek solutions to existing issues that arise daily in trade, economic and investment relations between our states"⁹⁶.

Such figures testify to the noticeable revival of interaction between Belarus and Poland. In the first eight months of 2017, trade turnover between the parties reached almost 1.6 billion dollars. In addition, Belarusian exports have increased by 19 percent to almost \$700 million. At the same time, there is every reason to believe that the potential of Belarusian-Polish cooperation has not yet been fully realized. That is why, when discussing the possibilities of further partnership development, the participants of the fifth meeting of the working group on trade and investment "defined for themselves the growth of mutual trade in the near future up to \$4 billion"⁹⁷. This problem can only be solved with an effective approach to a wide range of bilateral cooperation issues, from investment cooperation, transport and logistics to standardization and insurance.

The issue of investment in this context is particularly important, as Poland is one of the largest investors in the Belarusian economy. In 2017 alone, the growth rate of Polish investments was 140 per cent. To be more precise, "the volume of foreign direct investment from this country in 2016 exceeded \$200 million, and in the first half of this year more than \$150 million was attracted from Poland to the Belarusian economy"⁹⁸.

In this regard, the prospects for cooperation between the two countries in transport and logistics look very tempting. Firstly, a number of Polish transport and logistics companies have already shown a concrete interest in investing in this area. Secondly,

⁹⁶ Belarus and Poland see each other as reliable partners [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-polsha-vidjat-drug-v-druge-nadezhnyh-partnerov-shestakov-272971-2017/>

⁹⁷ Belarus and Poland expect to increase trade turnover to \$4 billion [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-polsha-rasschityvajut-uvelichit-tovarooborot-do-4-mlrd-273021-2017/>

⁹⁸ Belarusian exports to Poland increased by 19% between January and August [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskij-eksport-v-polshu-za-janvar-avgust-uvelichilsja-na-19-272978-2017/>

this interest is largely fuelled by the fact that "as part of the implementation of the state program of the logistics system in Belarus, 50 sites have been identified for the construction of logistics centers, including 18 for facilities with the possibility of final processing of products"⁹⁹. It is clear that the implementation of this program will make Belarus an even more attractive place in the Eurasian economic space and an important strategic hub in the implementation of the Chinese strategic initiative on the economic belt of the New Silk Road.

A good illustration of the relevance of this area of cooperation between Belarus and Poland can be the agreement with a Polish investor on the construction of a loading terminal at the Belarusian railway station Bruzgi, reached at the Belarusian-European Investment Forum, held in Luxembourg in October 2017. The investment in the project, which may be completed as early as 2019, will amount to about 15 million euros. Obviously, the appearance of this terminal will only contribute to an increase in transit cargo flow through Belarus. "We are talking about container trains from China to the Atlantic Ocean as part of the construction of the revived Silk Road"¹⁰⁰. An additional prerequisite for the successful implementation of this project is the fact that the Polish investor - OT Logistic Bel Ltd. - is planning to carry out its investment activities in the free economic zone "Grodnoinvest".

Not least, the fact that "Poland is implementing a strategy of responsible development until 2020 with a view to 2030, which creates a new stage in the management of the country's development processes, plays a role in the increased attention of Polish investors to projects in the Belarusian economy in the current circumstances. Economic legislation is being reformed, which is aimed at business needs and creating new incentives for investors"¹⁰¹. Perhaps for this reason, too, the fifth meeting of the Trade and Investment Working Group helped the parties to specifically identify the prospects for collaboration in sectors such as construction, agricultural processing, vehicles, agricultural equipment, woodworking and even environmental technology. As for the latter direction, in the same October 2017, at a meeting of the Belarusian-Polish group on water resources, the parties agreed to sign an agreement on cooperation in the field

⁹⁹ Polish investors were interested in building logistics centers in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/polskie-investory-zainteresovali-stroitelstvom-v-belarusi-logisticheskikh-tsentrov-272987-2017/>

¹⁰⁰ Dylenok, J. Polish investor will build a loading terminal at the railway station Bruzgi / J. Dylenok // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/polskij-investor-postroit-pogruzochnyj-terminal-na-zheleznodorozhnoj-stantsii-bruzgi-273814-2017/>

¹⁰¹ Belarus and Poland have identified promising areas of economic interaction [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-polsha-opredelili-perspektivnye-napravlenija-ekonomicheskogo-vzaimodejstvija-273031-2017/>

of protection and rational use of transboundary waters, as well as to solve "issues of updating threat and risk maps of floods on the Belarusian-Polish border"¹⁰².

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¹⁰² Belarus and Poland plan to cooperate in the field of transboundary water protection [Electronic resource]. - – 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-polsha-planirujut-sotrudnicat-v-oblasti-ohrany-transgranichnyh-vod-272740-2017/>

Belarus - Germany: new projects, new opportunities

Today the Federal Republic of Germany is one of the most important economic and investment partners of the Republic of Belarus, as evidenced by specific figures. Suffice it to say that in 2017 trade turnover between countries has already increased by more than a quarter. This is despite the fact that "in 2016 Germany was ranked fourth in terms of trade turnover (\$2.28 billion) and exports (\$944 million) and third in terms of imports (\$1.33 billion)¹⁰³. The fact that there are now more than 300 enterprises with German capital and 90 representative offices of various companies from Germany in Belarus adds significantly to this statistics. And, to all appearances, their number, as well as the scale of the Belarusian-German economic cooperation in general, have all the prerequisites for further growth. This is evidenced, in particular, by the results of the Belarusian-European investment forum "Belarus" held in Luxembourg in October 2017. Invest in tomorrow", within the framework of which a number of agreements and memorandums were signed with representatives of German companies.

First of all, the 21st resident of the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park "Great Stone," became the company "Lanz Manufacturers," which signed an agreement according to which by 2020 "it is planned to implement an investment project for the production and manufacture of LED lamps and lamps LED Technology in the park. The volume of investments should amount to at least \$500 thousand"¹⁰⁴. The fact that this company plans to actively participate in preparations for the commissioning of facilities for the second Eurogames, which will be held in Minsk in 2019, as well as in the coverage of Moskovskaya Street in Brest for the 1000th anniversary of the founding of the city, says a lot. And this despite the fact that the main sphere of activity of "Lance Manufactures" is the production of medical rehabilitation equipment. In this regard, the production of LED lamps in the industrial park "Great Stone" may well be the beginning of the promising path of this German investor and to more global projects in Belarus.

¹⁰³ Belarus regards Germany as one of the most important economic partners - Ambassador [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-rassmatrivaet-germaniju-kak-odnogo-iz-vazhnejshih-ekonomicheskikh-partnerov-posol-273525-2017/>

¹⁰⁴ Dylenok, Yu. A number of agreements and memorandums were signed at Belarusian-European investment forum / Yu. Dylenok // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/rjad-soglashenij-i-memorandumov-podpisan-na-belorusko-evropejskom-investforume-273539-2017/>

Secondly, in the same industrial park 105 "Great Stone" together with the German company "Diffenbacher", which is engaged in the production of composite materials with great prospects for use in mechanical engineering and construction, it is planned to build a complex to produce these actual metal substitutes, which are beginning to be used everywhere. In this case it is a question of creation of innovative production with the corresponding engineering center, which will have to create the necessary scientific and technical reserve for this high-tech enterprise. "The project to be implemented is designed for more than 200 million euros. <...> Construction may begin as early as 2018" .

Third, the founders of the management company of the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park "Great Stone" - SZAO "Industrial Park Development Company" - "plans to enter the German enterprise that owns the largest river port in Europe - Duisburg. The same company largely controls rail transport in the EU"¹⁰⁶. We're talking about the German joint stock company Duisburg Hafen. The port of Duisburg, located on the banks of the Rhine in North Rhine-Westphalia, is also available for sea ships. Attention to it has sharply increased after the launch of the Chinese mega-project of the New Silk Road Economic Zone. The point is that "the Chongqing-Duisburg railway line reduces the time of trains running between the initial point and the final point by 50% as compared to sea transportation"¹⁰⁷. That's why it's very profitable to transport goods produced in the same Chinese Chongqing by rail to Duisburg and from there to other European countries by means of logistics companies. This is why Duisburg is today a globally important river port. And in the industrial park "Great Stone", as you know, with the participation of the world operator "China Merchants Group" is created its own logistics center, which with the arrival of a partner such as Duisburg Hafen, can get a reliable "European residence permit".

Fourth, high-tech companies from Germany and other segments of the Belarusian economy are expected to arrive. In particular, the Belarusian CJSC "Atlant" "with German partners is implementing a project to create a mobile refrigeration unit, which would be powered by a solar battery"¹⁰⁸. It is clear that such devices are simply indispensable in places where there is no electrical power or there are interruptions in its supply. Therefore, the essence of the idea is that by converting the energy of the

¹⁰⁵ Dylenok, Yu. A number of agreements and memorandums were signed at Belarusian-European investment forum / Yu. Dylenok // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/rjad-soglashenij-i-memorandumov-podpisan-na-belorusko-evropejskom-investforume-273539-2017/>

¹⁰⁶ Results of the working visit to Luxembourg [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7600>

¹⁰⁷ The new Silk Road strengthens ties between Germany and China - Chief Executive Officer of the Port of Duisburg {Electron Resource}. - - 2014. - URL: <http://russian.people.com.cn/31518/8582536.html>

¹⁰⁸ Dylenok, Yu. The refrigerator on solar batteries is developed by "Atlant" together with German partners (in Russian) / Yu. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/holodilnik-na-solnechnyh-batarejah-razrabatyvaet-atlant-sovmestno-s-nemetskimi-partnerami-273807-2017/>

sun, the camera should be cooled so that it can work from morning to evening and preserve food. It is important that the participants in this innovation project have already created the first prototype.

All these examples show that Belarusian-German innovation cooperation has great potential and there are many points to deepen it.

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Belarus - Spain: priorities are set by the joint commission

In October 2017, Minsk hosted the first meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Belarusian-Spanish Commission on Economic and Industrial Cooperation. At the meeting, the sides considered the state and prospects of bilateral cooperation in trade and investment, as well as the expansion of the legal framework. An important outcome of this session was the identification of six priority sectors for the development of partnerships between the Belarusian and Spanish business communities - "modernization of industrial potential, energy efficiency, transport and logistics, infrastructure, public-private partnership projects, information technology"¹⁰⁹.

It should be reminded that Spain is seen by the Belarusian side as one of the priority global and regional partners with a serious potential for further development of bilateral relations. February 2017 marked the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Belarus and the Kingdom of Spain. Even today, Minsk hopes for an effective continuation of the open dialogue with Madrid, "which will certainly contribute to further strengthening of friendly ties between our states"¹¹⁰.

Until recently, Spain was better known in Belarus as the third largest country among foreign countries by the number of children from the regions affected by the Chernobyl accident. It is also known that "more than a thousand Belarusian students annually get the qualification of a specialist in the Spanish language, exchange internships for teachers and students, joint research"¹¹¹. It was only in 2014 that the bilateral Belarusian-Spanish interaction began to enter an active phase, which led to the opening of the Embassy of the Republic of Belarus in Madrid at the end of 2016, one of the main priorities of which was the development of trade and economic cooperation.

Already in February 2017, the State Committee on Science and Technology of Belarus and the Secretariat of State for Research, Development and Innovation of the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness of Spain declared their intention to sign an agreement in the field of science and technology, as they were convinced of each

¹⁰⁹ About the first session of the Joint Intergovernmental Belarusian-Spanish Commission on Economic and Industrial Cooperation [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/d1d92f24e5decebe.html

¹¹⁰ Congratulations to King Philip VI of Spain [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/pozdravlenie-korolju-ispanii-filippu-vi-17291/

¹¹¹ Communiqué to the 25th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations between the Republic of Belarus and the Kingdom of Spain [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/fa1fde1918a571f4.html

other's significant potential "for mutual transfer of technologies in priority areas of cooperation, such as information technology, nanotechnology, biotechnology, medicine, new materials"¹¹².

The international specialized exhibition Transfiere, held in February 2017 in Malaga, Spain, where organizations and institutions of the Belarusian Ministries of Education, Natural Resources and Environmental Protection and the National Academy of Sciences presented more than one hundred high-tech and knowledge-intensive developments and exhibits, was very eloquent about the prospects for cooperation between the parties in science, technology and innovation. Spanish investment and scientific-technical organizations have taken a keen interest in Belarusian developments in the field of new materials and additive technologies, as well as new magnetic materials and products based on them, recognizing that "some technological solutions of Belarus in the field of magnetic materials can be successfully used by Spanish producers of railway transport"¹¹³. In addition, an innovative project to develop an automated system for monitoring the radiation situation in the zone of influence of the Belarusian NPP aroused great interest among visitors and participants of this exhibition. And a number of projects and developments of the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radio Physics and the Belarusian National Technical University have been placed by the Association of Science and Technology Parks of Spain on its information resource. At the same time, the Belarusian representatives discussed with the mayor of Malaga the prospects of creating a joint technopark, as well as the possibility of cooperation of technoparks in Malaga with similar structures in Brest and Minsk.

In June 2017, the parties had already signed a memorandum providing for the establishment of a joint intergovernmental commission on economic and industrial cooperation. The third Belarusian-Spanish business forum, which took place in Madrid in June 2017 and was attended by leading Spanish companies interested in "projects in energy, infrastructure, transport, agriculture, mining and processing of minerals, tourism" demonstrated that the interest of the parties to the development of the economic component of bilateral relations is quite high¹¹⁴. Apparently, this business forum has become a kind of prologue to the first meeting of the joint commission,

¹¹² Belarus and Spain are planning to sign an agreement on scientific and technical cooperation [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-ispnija-planirujut-podpisat-soglashenie-o-nauchno-tehnicheskome-sotrudnichestve-233474-2017/>

¹¹³ Spain was interested in the developments of Belarus in the field of new materials [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/ispnija-zainteresovalas-razrabotkami-belarusi-v-oblasti-novyh-materialov-233646-2017/>

¹¹⁴ More than 60 representatives of business circles took part in the opening of the Belarusian-Spanish business forum [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/bolee-60-predstavitelej-delovyh-krugov-prinjali-uchastie-v-otkrytii-belorussko-ispanskogo-biznes-foruma-252716-2017/>

where the parties, having characterized investment cooperation as an important aspect of trade and economic interaction between the countries, came to the conclusion that the existing potential in this area is not yet fully used. That is why "in the coming months, agreements on investment projects between Spanish and Belarusian enterprises will be reached¹¹⁵.

All these facts suggest that in the near future we will witness the concrete implementation of various Belarusian-Spanish investment projects in trade, economic, scientific and technological spheres, which was initiated by the first meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Belarusian-Spanish Commission on Economic and Industrial Cooperation.

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¹¹⁵ Enterprises of Belarus and Spain intend to implement a number of investment projects [Electronic Resource]. -- 2017.
- URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriyatija-belarusi-i-ispanii-namereny-realizovat-rjad-investproektov-271932-2017/>

Belarus-United Kingdom: work together for mutual benefit

In September 2017, Minister of State for European and American Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom visited Minsk. Duncan, who became the first British minister to visit Belarus in more than 25 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the countries, and who, it is believed, has outlined a new level of cooperation that Minsk and London may reach in the near future.

In Belarus, the UK is considered an important partner in Europe, which is confirmed by specific figures. In 2016, the volume of Belarusian exports to this European country exceeded one billion dollars, putting the UK in third place among all countries in the world after Russia and Ukraine, ensuring a surplus of Belarusian-British trade balance in excess of \$920 million. Oil products and bituminous mixtures, potassium and nitrogen fertilizers, construction fittings and raw lead, devices on liquid crystals and women's outerwear, binoculars and monoculars, X-ray equipment and furniture traditionally occupy the leading place among supplies from Belarus to the British market. In general, Belarus' trade "with Great Britain is rather multi-faceted - about 190 commodity items"¹¹⁶. Even higher - second place - Britain took the second place among the countries-investors in 2016, having directed \$1.46 billion to the Belarusian economy, of which \$1.39 billion were direct investments. Perhaps, this factor contributed to the fact that by today "about 450 enterprises with British capital are registered in Belarus"¹¹⁷.

The assistance of the British side in overcoming the consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant is also highly appreciated in Belarus. Suffice it to say that "in Britain, more than 100 charities are engaged in providing assistance to the Belarusian side. Over the past six years, almost 8,000 children have been treated in the UK"¹¹⁸. Nevertheless, A. Duncan's visit demonstrated the mutual desire of the parties to take new steps to develop interaction, which is based on the confidence "in the presence of many areas in which Belarus and Great Britain can work together with mutual

¹¹⁶ Matveev, V. Belarusian woodworking products will be actively promoted in Great Britain / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorussskuju-produktsiju-derevoobrabotki-budut-aktivno-prodvigat-na-rynok-velikobritanii-268365-2017>

¹¹⁷ Great Britain [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <https://export.by/uk>

¹¹⁸ Transcript of the approach to the press by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus V. Makei following the results of his talks with Minister of State for Europe and America of the British Foreign Office (September 26, 2017, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/a49a1f18fb246015.html

benefit"¹¹⁹. In particular, the Belarusian side expressed its interest in the implementation of such joint projects, which, as they are called, are aimed at the future and in which British business representatives are particularly strong. In this case we are talking about the electric motor industry and construction of alternative energy facilities, as well as information technologies. In order to speed up the movement in this direction, the parties signed an intergovernmental Conveyance on the elimination of double taxation of income and capital taxes and prevention of tax evasion during Duncan's visit.

And in the same September 2017, the topic of interaction in some of the above areas has already been discussed at the level of the leaders of the cities of Minsk and Nottingham, who became twins half a century ago. The fact is that Nottingham, which now operates mainly Indian and Chinese electric buses, is looking for new suppliers of this environmentally friendly transport equipment. British electric buses are equipped with a powerful battery, which allows the car to carry passengers all day and at night is charged. "The downside of such a power source is its high cost, enormous weight, which reduces passenger capacity, as well as its short service life. Batteries in Belarusian electric buses have a small capacity and can be charged in five minutes at the final stop points"¹²⁰. If we consider that the British have a limit on the use of each unit of public passenger transport - no more than eight years of operation, the result is the following picture. Electric buses in Nottingham have to change the batteries at least three times during this period. The Belarusian electric bus and its power source are designed for ten years. It turns out that in eight years, not a single battery replacement. The benefits are palpable. In addition, having set a goal - to fill the interaction between the twin cities with concrete actions - the authorities of the Belarusian capital suggested organizing cooperation in housing construction. The fact is that in Minsk, "a residential complex "Nottingham" is planned to be built, and it would be symbolic participation of companies from the UK in the project"¹²¹.

Another area of cooperation that promises to yield interesting results in the near future is the promotion of Belarusian woodworking industry products to the British market. The companies of the Bellesbumprom concern already "supply lumber and plywood to Great Britain. But the volumes are still insignificant - \$188 thousand for January - July

¹¹⁹ Meeting with Minister of State for Europe and America Affairs of the British Foreign Office Alan Duncan [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-alanom-duncanom-17170/

¹²⁰ The British were interested in Belarusian electric buses [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/anglichane-zainteresovalis-belorusskimi-elektrobusami-265575-2017/>

¹²¹ Matveeva, N. Nottingham is interested in cooperation with Minsk in the field of education and electric transport / N. Matveeva // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/nottingem-zainteresovan-v-sotrudnichestve-s-minskom-v-sfere-obrazovanija-i-elektrotransporta-265571-2017/>

of this year"¹²². In order to increase them in October 2017 at the largest specialized international exhibition in Birmingham Timber Expo the national exposition of Belarus was presented for the first time, which included almost the entire range of products of the Belarusian timber industry - from raw materials to products of deep processing. The products were shown by OAO Ivatsevichidrev, UE Bellesexport and others. Result: over fifty interested British business partners.

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¹²² Belarusian woodworkers expect to increase exports to the UK [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-derevoobrabotchiki-rasschityvajut-narastit-eksport-v-velikobritaniju-265392-2017/>

Belarus - Serbia:

topical issues of media interaction

In June 2017, within the framework of the Days of Minsk in Belgrade, an agreement on cooperation between "STV" TV channels was signed. (Minsk) and "Studio B" (Belgrade). This document has become another concrete step towards the formation of a common Belarusian-Serbian media and information space, which should become an effective tool in the development of the entire complex of relations between Belarus and Serbia.

Back in October 2012, at the governmental level of the two countries, the representatives of the Belarusian and Serbian media sphere were tasked to do everything possible to "give our peoples an opportunity to learn more about each other using mass media, radio, television, and the Internet"¹²³. And in March 2013 the Memorandum of Cooperation in the field of information was signed by the Ministry of Information of Belarus and the Ministry of Culture and Information of Serbia.

In June 2015, the Belarusian Telegraph Agency and the Serbian news agency TANYUG signed a cooperation agreement to expand and enrich the information and analytical capabilities and to establish regular exchange of information on events in Belarus and Serbia. This document assumes "regular exchange of operative and reliable information materials in Russian and English about actual events of domestic and international life of their countries"¹²⁴. In addition, the parties have provided for the possibility of cooperation in studying best practices and improving the qualifications of journalists, photographers and other media professionals.

All these agreements and arrangements imply a serious intensification of efforts of the parties in the media sphere to cover the Belarusian-Serbian cooperation, which has been rapidly developing in recent years, as evidenced by numerous facts. After all, Serbia is among those European countries with which the volume of cooperation of the Republic of Belarus has a steady positive dynamics. This is largely due to the fact that back in 2009 the parties signed an intergovernmental Free Trade Agreement. Since then - for seven years - the Belarusian-Serbian trade turnover has grown almost five times. And despite a slight decline in 2016, when the volume of mutual trade amounted to \$ 113.6 million, in the first two months of 2017 it increased by 62.2 percent. At the

¹²³ Zalesskiy, B.L. Belarusian international journalism: features, tendencies, prospects / B.L. Zalesskiy. - Minsk, BSU, 2014. - - C. 73.

¹²⁴ BelTA signed an agreement with the Serbian news agency TANUG [Electronic Resource]. - - 2015. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/belta-podpisala-soglashenie-s-serbskim-informagentstvom-tanjung-4114-2015/>

same time, "the volume of Belarusian exports to Serbia increased by 42.5% and amounted to \$10.9 million. Imports from Serbia increased by 83.8% to \$12.9 million¹²⁵. In January 2017, Belarus and Serbia signed a road map to develop cooperation over the next two years, in which they outlined measures to increase mutual trade turnover, implement long-term joint projects and create new ones, as well as to strengthen cooperation between the regions of the two countries. Conclusion that "cooperation at the regional and city levels is an important tool for bilateral cooperation".¹²⁶he was also heard at the tenth session of the Intergovernmental Belarusian-Serbian Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, held in April 2017 in Belgrade. It is a fact that today not only all Belarusian regional centers, but also a number of district centers have agreements on cooperation with Serbian partners. Among them: Minsk and Belgrade, Mogilev and Kragujevac, Gomel and Novi Sad, Grodno and Kraljevo, Vitebsk and Nis, Brest and Subotica, Borisov and Pozharevac, Zaslavl and Topol, Baranovichy and Cacak, Novopolotsk and Krusevac, Zhlobin and Smederevo, Molodeno and Valevo, Polotsk and Sremska Mirovica, Nesvizh district and Zemun municipality.

A characteristic feature of these partnerships is that in recent years they have been significantly strengthened by the economic component of cooperation. The example of Minsk is very telling in this respect. According to the results of the first quarter of 2017, Serbia was among the ten largest trade and economic partners of the Belarusian capital. "In January-March this year, the growth rate of trade with this country was 307% compared to the same period last year, reaching \$33 million. Serbia is supplied with tractors, motor vehicles, electric motors, refrigerators and other products¹²⁷. But that's not all. Two major investment projects with the participation of Serbian entrepreneurs are currently being implemented in Minsk - "Minsk Mayak" and "Minsk-Mir". And only within the framework of the Minsk Lighthouse Project, the opening ceremony of the Dana Center business center and Dana Mall shopping center took place in January 2017. In addition, in early 2017, another investment project with the participation of partners from Serbia - the construction of multifunctional complex "BC Capital Center" - began on October Square of the Belarusian capital. Another promising area of cooperation between Minsk and Belgrade is cooperation in the field of urban electric public transport. In particular, Minsk company Belkommunmash expects to deliver

¹²⁵ Grishkevich, A. Belarus and Serbia will strengthen economic cooperation - Kravchenko / A. Grishkevich // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-serbija-budut-ukrepljat-ekonomicheskoe-sotrudnichestvo-kravchenko-243503-2017/>

¹²⁶ Grishkevich, A. Bratistic cooperation develops 15 pairs of Belarusian and Serbian cities (in Russian) / A. Grishkevich // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/society/view/pobratimskoe-sotrudnichestvo-razvivajut-15-par-gorodov-belarusi-i-serbii-243217-2017/>

¹²⁷ Days of Minsk [Electronic resource] started in Belgrade. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-belgrade-startovali-dni-minska-251030-2017/>

about 60 electric buses to the Serbian capital. The fact is that "public transport in Belgrade needs to be renewed. <...> Currently the entire trolleybus park of the Serbian capital (about 90 units) is produced by Belkommunmash. The deliveries were made about 5 years ago"¹²⁸.

As for other regions of Serbia, there are already several enterprises with the participation of the Belarusian side. Thus, for the assembly production of MTZ tractors in the city of Novi Sad, it is important to support it by including it in the state regional agricultural development programs in Serbia. It should be noted that in this Serbian city there is also the Institute of Field and Vegetable Industry, with which Belarusian scientists "are working on cooperation in the selection and seed production of corn, sunflower, perennial grasses"¹²⁹. And for the joint venture "MAZ-Balkan" in Kragujevac, it is important to maximize the involvement of its capabilities "in all tenders for the supply of buses and trucks with engines using gas fuel for government agencies in Serbia"¹³⁰. Apparently, the interaction between the regions of Belarus and Serbia will be developed not only by deepening the existing partnerships, but also by expanding the number of their participants. This is evidenced by the fact that during the Gomel Economic Forum in May 2017, an agreement on cooperation was signed between the Gomel region and the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, one of the most developed regions in Serbia, where it is believed that in cooperation with the Gomel region "there is great potential for building up relations in various fields"¹³¹.

¹²⁸ "Belkommunmash expects to deliver about 60 electric buses to Belgrade [Electronic Resource]. - – 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belkommunmash-rasschityvaet-postavit-v-belgrad-okolo-60-elektrobusov-250255-2017/>

¹²⁹ Grishkevich, A. Belarus and Serbia intend to develop cooperation in seed production and phytosanitary / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - – 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-serbija-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-proizvodstve-semjan-i-fitosanitarii-243604-2017/>

¹³⁰ Grishkevich, A. In Belarus favorable conditions for functioning of Serbian business and investment are created - Koltovic / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - – 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-belarusi-sozdany-blagoprijatnye-uslovija-dlja-funkcionirovanija-serbskogo-biznesa-i-vlozhenija-243601-2017/>

¹³¹ Lysenko, Y. Gomel region and the autonomous province of Vojvodina Serbia signed an agreement on cooperation / Y. Lysenko // [Electronic resource]. - – 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskaja-oblast-i-avtonomnyj-kraj-voevodina-serbii-podpisali-soglasenie-o-sotrudnichestve-248291-2017/>

Belarus - Afghanistan: from willingness to cooperate

In August 2017, the Head of the Executive Power of Afghanistan, A. A., paid an official visit to the Republic of Belarus. Abdullah, who, according to the parties, could open a new page in the cooperation between the two States. In Minsk, the attitude towards this Asian country is based on the fact that "Afghanistan needs certain economic, military and political support today due to the processes that are taking place there"¹³². Declaring its openness to the dialogue on the development of bilateral cooperation with Kabul, the Belarusian side stresses "the need to consolidate Afghan society, national reconciliation and ensure the territorial integrity of the country"¹³³. And, to all appearances, positive changes in this respect are taking place on the Afghan soil today, if at the meeting of A. Abdullah with the head of the Belarusian state a consolidated opinion of the parties was voiced that "Belarus and Afghanistan should move from wishes and talks to building concrete cooperation"¹³⁴. Moreover, in recent years, the parties have managed not only to expand the legal framework of bilateral relations, but also to strengthen partnerships in industry, agriculture and pharmaceuticals, as evidenced by the figures: "Good dynamics is demonstrated by trade turnover, which in the first half of 2017 grew by 34.3% to \$ 12.5 million"¹³⁵.

In determining the most promising areas of Belarusian-Afghan interaction today, it is important to take into account a number of factors. First, Afghanistan is rich in minerals, so joint development of these deposits can be a very effective vector for cooperation. Secondly, Afghanistan is already implementing large-scale infrastructure projects not only by the country's own standards, but also by the standards of the entire region to build power transmission lines, gas pipelines, hydroelectric power plants, in which Belarus could also take part, provided that the possible forms and mechanisms of its connection to them are specified. Thirdly, Afghanistan today needs quality food

¹³² Meeting with a representative of the Afghan President Mohammad Shaker Kargar [Electronic Resource]. - - 2015. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-predstavitelem-prezidenta-afganistana-moxammadom-shakerom-kargarom-11609/

¹³³ The President of Belarus has received his credentials [Electronic Resource]. - - 2014. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/search_ru/getExtendedResults/?query=earch_type=type_all_wordsroup=0rom_day=12rom_month=12rom_year=2014o_day=12o_month=12o_year=2014earch_type_sort=descearch_ok.x=33&search_ok.y=4&search_mode=&search_node=news&search_node_id=374&search_title_name=events.

¹³⁴ Negotiations with the Head of the Afghan Executive Power Abdullah Abdullah [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/vstrecha-s-glavoj-ispolnitelnoj-vlasti-afganistana-abdulloj-abdulloj-16855/

¹³⁵ Meeting with the head of the Afghan executive power [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7438>

and a general rise in agriculture based on modern technologies, which Belarus has and can share.

Taking into account all these arguments, the parties have come to the conclusion that the most promising areas of cooperation at this stage of the development of bilateral Belarusian-Afghan relations are such areas as machine-tool construction, petrochemical and oil refining, agriculture and military-technical cooperation, healthcare and personnel training. A joint committee on trade and economic cooperation, which was decided during the visit of the Afghan Prime Minister to Minsk, should become an effective mechanism for the implementation of the outlined prospects. And the roadmap for cooperation, which Minsk and Kabul will sign in the near future, will become a conceptual reference point for both the governments and business circles of Belarus and Afghanistan.

Undoubtedly, these reached agreements provide new impulses to the current and potential participants of the Belarusian-Afghan interaction. Thus, Minsk Tractor Works, which has already shipped more than 20 thousand machines to this country since 1956 and has a dealer network there, intends to expand the model range of supplied equipment. Tractors are now entering Afghanistan for various agricultural and transport support operations. By the end of 2017 it is planned "to ship 525 tractors, about 300 tractors have already been shipped. Last year 470 units were shipped"¹³⁶.

Amkodor Holding, which today unites 29 enterprises, produces equipment for agro-industrial, road-building, housing and utilities, timber industry, production and logistics complexes and aims to develop relations with the countries of the far arc, including Afghanistan, is working out its variants of entering the Afghan market. The first option is related to the assistance of a dealer of the Belarusian manufacturer in Tajikistan. The second is through the implementation of assembly production technology in Uzbekistan. After all, Tashkent "currently produces five models of Amkodor vehicles". The annual expansion of the model range is planned. For production, 44 units have already been delivered in the form of machine sets, of which finished machines are assembled¹³⁷.

The next benchmark, which should be reflected in the road map of cooperation between Belarus and Afghanistan under development, may be the creation of joint production in agriculture and industry, as well as the expansion of cooperation in mining, road

¹³⁶ Sergeeva, V. MTZ intends to expand a model range of tractors delivered to Afghanistan / V. Sergeeva // [Electron resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-nameren-rasshirit-modelnyj-rjad-postavljaemyh-v-afganistan-tractorov-261724-2017/>

¹³⁷ Sergeeva, V. "Amkodor" is working out the variants of Afghanistan market entry / V. Sergeeva // [Electron resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/amkodor-prorabatyvaet-varianty-vyhoda-na-rynok-afganistana-261728-2017/>

construction, organization of supplies of agricultural products, training of Afghan specialists in Belarusian higher education institutions.

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Belarus - Vietnam:

key link - regions

In June 2017, the Belarusian-Vietnamese Business Forum was held in Minsk, where six promising areas for cooperation between the two countries were identified: 1) industry; 2) infrastructure and construction; 3) development and use of natural resources; 4) food and light industry; 5) information and communication technologies and high technologies; 6) tourism. The intensification of cooperation in each of these areas should yield a concrete result in the very near future, as "the annual volume of trade turnover between the countries - a little over \$120 million in 2016 - is much lower than the potential".¹³⁸ According to the parties, the turnover between Belarus and Vietnam should reach \$500 million already in 2018¹³⁹. Recent statistics show that the planned joint programme of action to enhance partnerships is already starting to yield real results: "In the first six months of 2017, bilateral trade turnover increased by 29.8 per cent compared to the same period in 2016"¹⁴⁰.

An interesting detail: both in Minsk and Hanoi see one of the key aspects of the updating of bilateral cooperation as a significant boost to interregional cooperation. At the same time, the Belarusian side stresses: "Experience of similar work with other states shows that such ties are an effective tool for the development of both humanitarian and cultural relations, as well as cooperation in the trade and economic sphere"¹⁴¹. The Vietnamese side, while supporting and encouraging the establishment of direct contacts between the regions of the two countries and the initiation of concrete plans of cooperation, believes that "it promotes mutual understanding, cultural exchange, tourism promotion, investment attraction and strengthening of trade and economic cooperation"¹⁴².

It should be reminded that today Belarusian regions cooperate with 7 provinces and cities of Vietnam, and "agreements on cooperation of Gomel and Mogilev regions with

¹³⁸ Meeting with the President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7338>

¹³⁹ An, L. Belarus and Vietnam are preparing to raise the bar of cooperation to a new level / V. An // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/interview/view/belarus-i-vjetnam-gotovjatsja-podnjat-planku-sotrudnichestva-na-novyj-uroven-le-an-5637/>

¹⁴⁰ In the first half of the year Belarus and Vietnam increased their trade turnover by almost a third [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-vjetnam-v-i-polugodii-uvlichili-tovarooborot-pochti-na-tret-264281-2017/>

¹⁴¹ Official talks with the President of Vietnam Chan Dai Quang [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/ofitsialnye-peregovory-c-prezidentom-vjetnama-chan-daj-kuangom-16490/

¹⁴² Quang, C.D. Vietnam and Belarus will make efforts to achieve the trade turnover of \$500 million / C.D. Quang // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/interview/view/vjetnam-i-belarus-prilozhat-usilija-dlja-dostizhenija-tovarooborota-v-500-mln-5638/>

Vietnamese provinces are being worked out"¹⁴³. Interesting prospects for the development of interregional ties are planned, for example, in the interaction of the two capitals - **Minsk** and **Hanoi**. They have established partnerships a long time ago, but the potential of this cooperation has not yet been fully exploited. That is why the parties intend to fill these links with concrete projects. In particular, "Hanoi plans to implement a project to build 11 metro lines"¹⁴⁴. In this regard, a representative office of the Belarusian company "Minskmetroproekt" has already been opened in Vietnam, which is likely to design metro stations "Minskaya" in Hanoi and "Belorusskaya" in Ho Chi Minh City. In addition, the Belarusian side intends to participate in the competition for design and construction of other facilities in Vietnam. It is also a question of development of interaction between research, industrial, medical and tourist organizations of two capitals. The Vietnamese side is particularly attracted to the medical field in this list and is primarily interested in "cooperation on prevention and treatment of oncological diseases"¹⁴⁵.

The main partner of **Minsk region** in Vietnam is **Hyngyen province**, which specializes in rice, saffron, tropical fruits. They are actively developing their own infrastructure here. High demand for meat and dairy products, baby food, as well as for products of pharmaceutical, chemical and engineering industries. In August 2017, representatives of these regions stated that there was a significant potential for cooperation, primarily in industry and agriculture, and made a number of concrete steps towards its implementation. Thus, "in the province since 2017, the implementation of Belarusian-Vietnamese projects on industrial assembly of MAZ trucks and production of dairy products using Belarusian raw materials began"¹⁴⁶. In particular, it is expected that the opening of a joint venture to produce dairy products from Belarusian dried milk and the production of products under the Belarusian brand in Vietnam will allow finding new sales niches not only in the market of this country.

Exporters from **Brest region** are actively developing the South-East Asian market, sending there "meat and by-products, dairy products, engines and power plants"¹⁴⁷. In 2016, their shipments to Vietnam increased fivefold at once and sixfold between

¹⁴³ Asia and Africa [Electronic resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: http://mfa.gov.by/bilateral/asia_africa/

¹⁴⁴ Matveeva, N. Hanoi is interested to adopt Minsk experience in subway and National Library construction / N. Matveeva // [Electronic resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/hanoj-zainteresovan-perenjat-opyt-minska-po-stroitelstvu-metro-i-natsbiblioteki-259478-2017/>

¹⁴⁵ Matveeva, N. Minsk and Hanoi intend to intensify cooperation in the sphere of public health / N. Matveeva // [Electronic resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/minsk-i-hanoj-namereny-aktivizirovat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-zdravoohranenija-259485-2017/>

¹⁴⁶ Minsk Oblast and Heungyeon Province intend to develop cooperation in industry and agriculture [Electronic Resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/minskaja-oblast-i-provintsija-hyngjen-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-promyshlennosti-i-apk-260807-2017/>

¹⁴⁷ Brest intends to establish close cooperation with the Vietnamese province of Laoay [Electronic Resource]. - -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/regions/view/brestskaja-oblast-namerena-naladit-tesnoe-sotrudnichestvo-s-vjetnamskoj-provintsiej-laokaj-255635-2017/>

January and April 2017. In particular, JSC "SaleoKobrin" has shipped a pilot batch of engines and power manuals to the Vietnamese market. Brest Distillery "Belalco" and the manufacturer of toys - Kobrinskoe "Polesie" are also working out real opportunities to enter this market. Additional impetus to the development of Belarusian-Vietnamese interregional cooperation will undoubtedly be given by the agreement on cooperation signed in July 2017 between Brest Oblast and **Laokai Province**, which provides for building up partnerships in trade, economic, scientific, technological and cultural spheres.

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Belarus - Sudan: partnership foundation - roadmap

In August 2017, Belarus and Sudan adopted a road map for cooperation, which outlined the parameters for cooperation in the oil and gas industry, water and electricity, industry and trade, higher education and research, banking and finance. The signed document should ensure the implementation of recent agreements between Minsk and Khartoum on the entire range of bilateral cooperation, including joint projects, including "establishment of production facilities of Belarusian equipment in Sudan, organization of supplies of road-building, municipal, forestry equipment, grain drying complexes, geological exploration work in this country"¹⁴⁸.

The very fact of the adoption of the road map shows that Belarus views the Sudan today as one of the key partners on the African continent and "is interested in significantly enhancing bilateral cooperation in all sectors"¹⁴⁹. And statistics show that the volume of bilateral Belarusian-Sudanese trade is clearly dominated by export supplies of tractors, trucks, various types of machines, transformers, instrumentation, tires from Belarus. Suffice it to say that in the period from 2010 to 2015 the trade turnover between the two countries increased 15.4 million dollars to 41.3 million dollars, reaching a record figure of 70.8 million dollars in 2013.

And even if in 2016 this figure fell to \$38.0 million, the very fact of adoption of the "road map," Minsk and Khartoum have demonstrated their commitment to return to the highest level of mutual trade turnover in the near future. Moreover, over the past three years, the parties have taken a number of concrete steps to this end - "put into practice the annual political consultations, resumed the activities of the intergovernmental commission on cooperation after ten years of downtime, established direct interaction between the ministries of industry, agriculture, oil and energy, and education"¹⁵⁰.

¹⁴⁸ Belarus and Sudan signed a road map for cooperation [Electronic Resource]. - – 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-sudan-podpisali-dorozhnyu-kartu-razvitija-sotrudnichestva-263976-2017/>

¹⁴⁹ Alexander Lukashenko has congratulated President of Sudan Omar Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir [Electronic Resource]. - – 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/aleksandr-lukashenko-pozdravil-prezidenta-sudana-omara-xasana-axmeda-al-bashira-15252/

¹⁵⁰ Belarus and Sudan plan to sign a treaty on friendly relations and cooperation [Electronic resource]. - – 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-sudan-planirujut-podpisat-dogovor-o-druzhestvennyh-otnoshenijah-i-sotrudnichestve-228043-2017/>

An obvious prologue to the adoption of the "road map" of cooperation was the visit of the President of Belarus to Sudan in January 2017, during which an interested position of Belarus to participate in industrial and infrastructure development projects on Sudanese soil, to establish joint ventures for the production of agricultural and trucks on the basis of existing plants in Sudan was outlined. More specifically, "a pioneer of this direction could be a project for the assembly of tractors"¹⁵¹.

The fact is that Minsk Tractor Works has been cooperating with Sudanese partners since 1994. The local company MIG Agriculture is the exclusive distributor in the market of Sudan of products of Belarusian manufacturers of tractors, trucks, tires. In particular, by selling a range of tractor models, she was "one of the top three distributors in Sudan"¹⁵². In addition, there is a site that can be used for tractor assembly, located just 15 kilometers from Khartoum. In its turn, in 2016 MTW delivered to this African country 123 tractors, in the first half of 2017 - 51 more machines, planning to ship there at least 80 more machines by the end of the year. As we can see, the trend of increasing exports is evident. But the Belarusian side has set a task to significantly increase the presence of this complex technical product in Sudan, based on a number of important arguments. Firstly, "the designers of the plant have adapted the 200 hp tractor to the climatic conditions in Sudan, the new model BELARUS-2023.3 is already being tested at the plant. The new tractor can operate in 50-degree heat"¹⁵³. Secondly, the assembly plant in Sudan can be used as a platform for Belarusian tractors to reach neighboring countries and the African continent in general.

Among other promising areas of the Belarusian-Sudanese industrial cooperation, which were considered in January 2017 by the business circles of the two countries at the business forum in Khartoum, were joint projects "in mechanical engineering, mining, agro-industrial complex and pharmaceuticals"¹⁵⁴. As for mechanical engineering, in February 2017 the first consignment of Minsk Automobile Plant machines - "10 trucks for Petrola company working in the oil sector"¹⁵⁵ - arrived in Sudan from Belarus. In spring 2017, Sudan tested the grain harvester KZS-575 developed by Gomselmash

¹⁵¹ Negotiations with President Omar Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir of the Sudan [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/peregovory-s-prezidentom-sudana-omarom-xasanom-axamedom-al-bashirom-15397/

¹⁵² Matveev, V. Assembly manufacture of MTZ tractors may appear in Sudan / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/sborochnoe-proizvodstvo-tractorov-mtz-mozhet-pojavitsja-v-sudane-228348-2017/>

¹⁵³ Sergeeva, V. Assembly manufacture of the Belarusian tractors can be created in Sudan / V. Sergeeva // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/sborochnoe-proizvodstvo-belorusskih-tractorov-mozhet-byt-sozdano-v-sudane-263919-2017/>

¹⁵⁴ Belarus offered Sudan joint business projects [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predlozhila-sudanu-sovmestnye-biznes-proekty-228663-2017/>

¹⁵⁵ Matveev, V. V. The first MAZ automobile technique has arrived to Sudan / V. Matveev // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-sudan-pribyla-pervaja-avtotehnika-maz-234543-2017/>

especially for this country, where sorghum is one of the main cultivated grain crops. The Sudanese version refers to the supply of this equipment to farmers, and the prospects are very significant, as "sorghum is planted on several million hectares"¹⁵⁶. At the same time, the Belarusian side aims not just to supply this African country with its equipment, but to organize an assembly on Sudanese soil "under certain conditions to be created by the Government of Sudan. Then it is possible to organize here assembly productions of agricultural machinery and to reach the level of localization about 40%"¹⁵⁷.

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¹⁵⁶ Sidorchik, V. "Gomselmash" is carrying out the tests of a grain combine harvester in Sudan (in Russian) / V. Sidorchik // [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/gomselmash-provodit-ispytaniya-zernouborochnogo-kombajna-v-sudane-244896-2017/>

¹⁵⁷ Matveev, V. Belarusian-Sudanese agreements for \$50 million are signed in Khartoum / V. Matveev // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorusko-sudanskie-dogovorenosti-na-50-mln-podpisany-v-hartume-228714-2017/>

Belarus - Venezuela: on the way back to negotiations

In October 2017, Minsk hosted official talks between the presidents of Belarus and Venezuela, during which the parties expressed their desire to increase cooperation in all areas in the coming years. In Belarus, Venezuela is considered a strategic and very important partner in Latin America, despite the fact that this country has been going through quite a difficult period lately. As for interaction with Belarus, "due to the difficult situation in the world, the pace of implementation of joint projects has decreased¹⁵⁸.

We would like to remind you that the parties established long-term trade, economic and cooperation ties back in 2007. Since then, Belarus has built four plants in Venezuela to produce ceramic blocks, tractors, municipal and road-building machinery. Even today in this country there are "JV "MAZVEN" for the assembly of trucks MAZ", "Veniem Minsk Tractors" for the assembly of tractors "Belarus", the plant for the assembly of heavy road-building machinery "Makinarnyas Barinas"¹⁵⁹. Since 2007, Venezuela has also had an oil and gas production joint venture, Petrolera Belovenzolana, which focuses on seven oil and six gas fields, four of which are located in the west of the country on Lake Maracaibo and the rest on land in the east of Venezuela. During the work of this joint venture, the financial effect for the Belarusian side was about \$70 million. "In 2008-2016, more than 8.4 million tons of oil and 6.4 billion cubic meters of gas were produced¹⁶⁰.

As for the construction sector, in addition to the opening of the largest brick factory in Latin America, Belarusian CJSC Belsarubezhstroy has been involved in the construction of housing on Venezuelan soil since the same 2007, where three contracts for the construction of 19968 apartments are being implemented at once, and hundreds of thousands of square meters of housing have already been built. Finally, in the field of agriculture, the construction of the first agro-industrial town in Venezuela, Belarusian specialists began a few years ago and by today have already "erected 176

¹⁵⁸ Negotiations with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro [Electronic Resource]. -- 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/peregovory-c-prezidentom-bolivarianskoj-respubliki-venesuela-nikolasom-maduro-17221/

¹⁵⁹ Matveev, V. Belarus and Venezuela agree on activation of assembly productions at the expense of raw materials supply / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-venesuela-dogovarivajutsja-ob-aktivizatsii-raboty-sborochnyh-proizvodstv-za-schet-postavok-269845-2017/>

¹⁶⁰ Matveev, V. For development of JV "Petroler BeloVenezolana" additional investments are needed - General Director of Belorusneft / V. Matveev // [Electronic resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/dlja-razvitija-sp-petrolera-belovenzolana-nuzhny-dopolnitelnye-investitsii-gendirektor-belorusnefti-269858-2017/>

residential houses and a warehouse of mineral fertilizers, laid more than 20 km of roads and cleared 2.5 thousand hectares of shrubs. More than 400 units of specialized machinery from Belarus were supplied, 1.2 thousand hectares of territory sown"¹⁶¹. It is believed that all this makes up only one fifth of what the representatives of the Belarusian side have to do in agriculture in Venezuela.

As we can see, the two countries really do not need to start from scratch, renewing the agreements already reached in industry and construction as well as in agriculture and hydrocarbon production. All the more so because Venezuela has now adopted a national program of Bolivarian development of the post-oil economy, which includes 15 areas ranging from food production to the most modern technology, "including projects in industry and agriculture. Belarus can provide assistance in their implementation"¹⁶². That's why at the meeting of the two presidents in Minsk it was decided to significantly intensify the activities of the joint intergovernmental commission and to hold its meeting in the very near future to outline a concrete plan of action for the implementation of both promising and currently implemented joint projects.

In the field of industrial cooperation, it is a question of taking the existing joint ventures to their full capacity in order to sell at least half of their products on the Venezuelan domestic market and export the other half. As for the oil and gas industry, "Belarus is interested in increasing oil production in Venezuela to 2-3 million tons per year"¹⁶³. For this purpose, the cooperation of JV Petrolera BeloVenezolana with the Belarusian branch research and design institute BelNIPIneft will be significantly stepped up. The strategic goal of the institute in this Latin American country is "to increase the efficiency of oil and gas deposits development by introducing new production technologies and rational selection of geological and technical measures"¹⁶⁴. In agriculture, while Venezuela imports \$10 billion worth of food annually, there are plans to build dairy farms, poultry farms, slaughterhouse, meat processing plant, dairy processing plants with the help of Belarusian specialists. Finally, in the field of

¹⁶¹ Venezuela asks to build five more agro-towns on the Belarusian model [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/venesuela-prosit-postroit-esche-pjat-agrogorodkov-po-belorusskoj-modeli-269901-2017/>

¹⁶² Belarus plans to build new factories in Venezuela and increase production of the existing ones [Electron Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-postroit-v-venesuele-novye-zavody-i-uvelichit-objemy-proizvodstva-dejstvujuschih-270308-2017/>

¹⁶³ Belarus is interested in increasing oil production in Venezuela to 2-3 million tons per year [Electron Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-uvelichenii-dobychi-nefti-v-venesuele-do-2-3-mlnt-v-god-270309-2017/>

¹⁶⁴ Venezuela plans to expand cooperation with Belarus in the oil sector [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/venesuela-planiruet-rasshirit-sotrudnichestvo-s-belarusju-v-neftjanoj-sfere-269908-2017/>

construction, "agreements have been reached on the allocation of new neighborhoods for the construction of housing by Belarusian specialists in Venezuela"¹⁶⁵.

All these facts show that Minsk and Caracas intend to focus on the most important issues in the development of partnership, first of all, in order to fully realize their cooperation potential.

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¹⁶⁵ Matveev, V.Chernyi: there are some arrangements for the new neighborhoods allocation for housing construction in Venezuela (in Russian) / V.Matveev // [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/chernyj-est-dogovorennosti-po-otvodu-novyh-mikrorajonov-dlja-stroitelstva-zhilija-v-venesuele-269871-2017/>

Belarus - Brazil: partnership priorities

In November 2017, the first meeting of the Belarusian-Brazilian Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation was held. This fact very eloquently illustrates the current state of relations between the two countries, the essence of which is that "despite the geographical distance, Brazil was and remains for Belarus the most important trade and economic partner in Latin America".¹⁶⁶ Therefore, today the Belarusian side is very interested in a significant intensification of contacts with Brazilian partners in economic, political, scientific, technical and cultural spheres. After all, Belarus, on the one hand, is a major importer of Brazilian sugar, iron, tobacco, leather and fruits, and, on the other hand, it exports a lot of fertilizers, textiles and equipment to this Latin American country. Suffice it to say that the Belarusian-Brazilian trade turnover exceeded half a billion dollars in 2016. But, according to the parties, "the economic potential of our countries shows that we can multiply mutually beneficial cooperation in trade, science and technology, education and other areas"¹⁶⁷. That is why in July 2017 the foreign ministries of the two states signed a memorandum on the establishment of the Joint Belarusian-Brazilian Commission on Economic Cooperation, which should become one of the most important instruments of implementation of mutually beneficial projects of economic nature aimed at intensifying and further expanding trade and economic interaction, at fuller realization of the existing potential in bilateral relations that would allow to increase and diversify the mutual trade turnover of goods.

There are three main areas that look most promising in Belarusian-Brazilian cooperation today: first, the increase in mutual trade turnover of goods and services; second, the use of more complex forms of cooperation between Belarusian and Brazilian business entities; and third, the transition to the creation of joint ventures in areas of mutual interest - mechanical engineering and agriculture, oil and gas, as well as in the high-tech sector. In this regard, the first meeting of the Belarusian-Brazilian joint commission on economic cooperation can be considered quite effective.

First, the parties agreed to place the assembly production of Belarusian tractors at one of the sites in the agro-industrial district of Anapolis in Goias state. To this end, Minsk

¹⁶⁶ Congratulations to the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Michel Temer [Electronic Resource]. -- 2017. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/pozdravlenie-prezidentu-federativnoj-respubliki-brazilija-mishelutemeru-17019/

¹⁶⁷ Interview by E. Shestakov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus to the publication "Brasilia in Foco" (July 8, 2017, Brazil) [Electron resource]. -- 2017. - URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/c98f377693514952.html>

Tractor Works, the Ministry of Industry of Belarus and the Secretariat for Economic Development of Goias State have signed a relevant memorandum of intent. Secondly, "a number of commercial contracts worth over \$40 million have been concluded"¹⁶⁸. In particular, only Orsha flax mill and Baranovichi cotton combine will put fabrics to Brazil for almost one and a half million dollars. In addition, the interaction of Belarusian exporters with Brazilian partners in such areas as "supply of blended fabrics with viscose attachment to the Brazilian market; resumption of cooperation with Belarusian manufacturers in the production and supply of men's shirts; expansion of the range of linen fabrics supplied to Brazil can also become interesting and mutually beneficial. It is also planned to supply the Brazilian market with blackout fabrics, bed linen and towels¹⁶⁹. In particular, Viner Brasil Tecnologia Ltd, a Brazilian company, will supply a trial batch of its goods to Mogilevkhimvolokno. And from Brazil, it is planned to establish supplies of semi-finished tannery "vet-blue" to Belarus to ensure the loading of capacities of Belarusian tannery enterprises.

As for other promising areas of cooperation, they look very promising: firstly, the desire of one of the world's largest Brazilian aircraft building company Embraer to open its service center in Belarus; secondly, the signed agreement on technical cooperation between PO Belorusneft and Viner Brasil Tecnologia Ltd; thirdly, the adopted contract for the supply of potash fertilizers between Belarusian Potash Company and Camporico; Fourth, a "trilateral memorandum of intent between MTZ, Bobruiskagromash and Geoterra regarding the issue of entering the Brazilian market of Belarusian tractor equipment, attachments and trailers"¹⁷⁰; fifth, an agreed memorandum of cooperation between the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Belarus-Brazil Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It should be believed that all these concrete steps to strengthen the Belarusian-Brazilian cooperation will soon yield positive results. Recall that the volume of trade between Belarus and Brazil exceeded \$355 million in seven months of 2017 with a surplus for the Belarusian side of \$212.9 million. The export of Belarusian services shows good growth - by almost 20%. It is interesting that "the main types of services of the Republic of Belarus in trade and economic cooperation with Brazil include marine transport services"¹⁷¹.

¹⁶⁸ Anatoly Kalinin made a working visit to the Federative Republic of Brazil [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/7680>

¹⁶⁹ Orsha flax mill and BPHO will deliver \$1.4 million worth of fabrics to Brazil [Electron resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/orshanskij-lnokombinat-i-bpho-postavjat-v-braziliju-tkanej-na-14-mln-279290-2017/>

¹⁷⁰ Contracts worth over \$40 million were concluded during the visit of the Belarusian delegation to Brazil [Electronic Resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://www.belta.by/economics/view/kontrakty-na-summu-bolee-40-mln-zakljucheny-vo-vremja-vizita-belorusskoj-delegatsii-v-braziliju-278631-2017/>

¹⁷¹ Trade and economic relations [Electronic resource]. - - 2017. - URL: <http://brazil.mfa.gov.by/ru/exportby/>

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