

Evolution of the geography of partnership

In the first nine months of 2023, the Republic of Belarus received a record \$31 billion in export earnings. This is the maximum volume over the last ten years. Nevertheless, the Belarusian government is actively working on entering the markets where Belarus is expected to be first and foremost, where Belarusian exporters have competitive advantages. These are the countries of the "far arc" in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The goal for 2024 is to increase exports to these countries by 2.5 times or almost four billion dollars. In particular, key reference points for entering this market have been identified in Africa. These are Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Equatorial Guinea. Exports of food products, machinery, equipment, and chemical products are planned to grow. Belarus already has a positive experience in Latin America. And it aims to move from simple trade to the establishment of joint ventures, assembly plants in Nicaragua, Venezuela, Brazil, Ecuador, and Cuba. What steps are being taken by Belarus to develop these growth points today and in the near future? This is the subject of the proposed study.



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Opportunities for economic cooperation of the Republic of Belarus with the states of the "far arc"

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Belarus-China:

Expand promising areas, cooperating on the basis of new ideas

In Beijing, at the fifth meeting of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Committee on Cooperation held in July 2023, the parties discussed, among other things, the dynamics of mutual contacts in the field of education in order to strengthen direct inter-university ties and implement a number of large-scale joint educational and scientific projects. Among the promising areas of cooperation the participants of the meeting consider: training of personnel and expansion of the practice of implementation of joint educational programs on innovative specialties by the leading universities of Belarus and China; cooperation in the creation of digital platforms that provide access to educational resources; joining efforts to develop norms and standards of digitalization of education; working out the possibility of creating an Association of higher education institutions of the two countries. It should be reminded that as of today more than 560 direct cooperation agreements have already been signed between the educational institutions of Belarus and China, which is about 10 percent of the total number of existing inter-university agreements of Belarusian higher education institutions. "On the basis of educational institutions of the two countries there are also 9 joint educational and scientific structures (3 laboratories, 4 centers and 2 institutes), 40 joint educational programs are being implemented, 10 of which have been developed in the last two years, the implementation of 6 of them started in the 2022/2023 academic year. The possibility of implementation of 20 more joint educational programs and organization of joint training of personnel of higher scientific qualification is being worked out"¹. In the fall of this year, the educational

¹ Bakhanovich: education provides intellectual, cultural and linguistic rapprochement between Belarus and China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bahanovich-obrazovanie-obespechivaet-intellektualnoe-kulturnoe-i-jazykovoe-sblizhenie-belarusi-i-kitaja-576391-2023/>

departments of the two countries plan to approve a plan for the development of academic and scientific exchanges for 2023-2025, within the framework of which new concrete steps will be taken for constructive interaction between Belarusian universities and Chinese partners.

The Belarusian State Technological University (BSTU) is among the active participants of this cooperation. Back in April 2023, the Belarusian university discussed promising areas of partnership with members of the Guangdong Union for Scientific and Technical Cooperation with the Commonwealth of Independent States. In particular, BSTU signed an agreement on cooperation and establishment of a joint laboratory of applied technologies with Guangdong Vocational College of Light Industry. "The parties agreed to organize academic exchanges, summer schools, discussed the prospect of contacts in the field of polymers, functional coatings, paper production technology and other areas"². Also signed documents on the implementation of joint educational programs with Guangdong Nanhua Vocational College of Industry and Commerce, Guangdong Vocational College of Communications. And a bilateral agreement on scientific and technical cooperation was concluded with Ningbos International Science and Innovation Center to jointly develop modern polymer composite materials, elastomers and plastic masses, additive technologies.

In May 2023, BSTU signed a cooperation agreement with Kunshan Institute of Industrial Technology to establish joint Belarusian-Chinese transfer centers in the field of high technologies and 3D modeling. The agreement stipulates that "annually the Belarusian side will select at least 10 projects to be financed by the PRC in order to develop cooperation in the field of high

² Educational and scientific potential of BSTU presented in the Chinese province Guangdong [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/obrazovatelnyj-i-nauchnyj-potentsial-bgtu-prezentovan-v-kitajskoj-provintsii-guandun-563887-2023/>

technologies"³ . In addition, the parties agreed to create a joint university "Kunshan-Minsk" on the basis of the Belarusian State Technical University so that students could study part of the time in China and part in Belarus, and eventually receive two diplomas. And another interesting idea: together with Chinese companies, a biomedicine center will be created in Minsk City Technopark, where they will develop testing technologies and drugs aimed at treating human and various animal diseases. In short, an agro-industrial complex related to vaccines will be developed.

Another Belarusian university that continues close cooperation with Chinese partners in 2023 is the **Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics** (BSUIR). In July this year, BSUIR opened a Belarusian-Chinese research laboratory of external electromagnetic influences in Minsk together with the North China Research Institute of Electromagnetic Protection. One of the key tasks of the new laboratory is to develop a finished product of practical interest and in demand in the global technology market, "to conduct fundamental and applied research, to implement their results, to promote training and professional development, internships for engineering staff and researchers of BSUIR and the partner institute"⁴ , as well as to strengthen international cooperation of scientists and specialists for joint scientific research within the framework of the implementation of the Chinese initiative.

As for Chinese universities, there is a high interest in cooperation with Belarusian partners in Liaoning University, which became a partner of Brest Pushkin State University and Brest State Technical University (BrSTU) in July 2023. In particular, the agreement between BrSTU and Liaoning University "provides for academic exchanges, joint educational programs, implementation

³ Investments, creation of a joint university and biomedicine center. Kunshan delegation visited BSTU [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/investitsii-sozdanie-sovmestnogo-universiteta-i-tsentra-biomeditsiny-delegatsija-kunshanja-posetila-569539-2023/>

⁴ Belarusian-Chinese research laboratory opened in BSUIR [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belorusko-kitajskaja-nauchno-issledovatel'skaja-laboratorija-otkrylas-v-bguir-576810-2023/>

of scientific projects and social and cultural interaction. We plan to fill the agreement with real activities, and in the future to develop a roadmap"⁵ . For example, to train Chinese students in the specialty "Smart Transportation" on the basis of the faculties of mechanical engineering and information technology.

Returning to the fifth meeting of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Committee on Cooperation, it should be noted that the participants in this discussion proposed to bring scientific and technical cooperation to a new level and considered the possibility of creating joint high-tech industries in a number of areas. "Such directions <...> could be robotics, electric transportation, medical equipment and pharmaceuticals, laser technology"⁶ . By creating a full innovation cycle - from the idea to the production of high-tech products, the parties will expand promising areas of partnership, interacting on the educational foundation of new ideas, which ensures intellectual rapprochement between Belarus and China.

⁵ Universities of Brest signed cooperation agreements with Liaoning University [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vuzy-bresta-podpisali-soglasheniya-o-sotrudnichestve-s-ljaoninskim-universitetom-576902-2023/>

⁶ Shlychkov: the realization of joint projects with China will allow to reach the creation of new high-tech industries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/shlychkov-realizatsija-sovmestnyh-proektov-s-kitaem-pozvolit-vyjti-na-sozdanie-novyh-576315-2023/>

Brest region: Chinese vector of cooperation

In November 2023, the 6th China International Import Expo 2023 in Shanghai hosted the Day of Brest Region, which presented the economic, cultural, tourist, educational, and medical potential of the Belarusian region with a focus on the export of goods and services to the People's Republic of China (PRC). It should be noted that this exhibition forum was attended by "more than 150 countries representing the regions of Asia, Africa and Europe"⁷ and featured various thematic sections, including automotive industry, high-tech equipment and information technology, medical equipment and pharmaceuticals, consumer goods, trade in services, food and agricultural products. In this regard, the participation of Belarusian companies at the Import Fair in Shanghai is of strategic importance. After all, China is one of the largest and most dynamically developing markets in the world and "provides an opportunity for Belarusian companies to expand their horizons and establish business ties with potential partners and buyers, including Chinese state corporations"⁸. An important detail: if at the 5th forum China International Import Expo 2022 in Shanghai, 27 organizations from the food industry, logistics, science and education participated in the Belarusian exposition, this time more than 70 representatives from Belarus took part in the exhibition.

As for Brest Oblast, it is among the leaders among Belarusian regions in terms of trade and economic relations with China. Suffice it to say that "for eight months of the current [2023] year, the volume of trade turnover [with China] amounted to almost \$280 million and increased almost one and a half times. Thanks to contacts with businesses, Chinese foreign direct investment has

⁷ What will be the national exposition of Belarus at the international import exhibition in Shanghai [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kakoj-budet-natsionalnaja-ekspozitsija-belarusi-na-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-importa-v-shanhae-582374-2023/>

⁸ International import exhibition opened in Shanghai [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mezhdunarodnaja-vystavka-importa-otkrylas-v-shanhae-597935-2023/>

already increased by 40%."9 . At the import exhibition in Shanghai Brestchina demonstrated a wide range of goods and services that interested consumers not only from China, but also from other countries. In particular, at the collective stand of "Brestmyasomolprom" concern Brest meat processing plant, Berezovsky meat canning plant, Kobrin butter and cheese factory, Luninetsky dairy plant, Pruzhany dairy plant presented their products with tasting. The educational potential of the region was presented by Brest State Technical University, and the medical potential was presented by Brest Regional Clinical Hospital.

As a result, representatives of the Belarusian region "signed 18 bilateral documents at the exhibition: seven agreements, four memorandums, six commercial contracts, and one action plan. They concern different areas, including trade and economic cooperation, cooperation in education, health care, tourism"¹⁰ . For example, the Brest Regional Executive Committee signed agreements with two corporations involved in the creation of freight forwarding centers and the development of electronic commerce; Brest State Technical University signed agreements with the Hubei Institute of International Business and Economics. As for the memorandums on the development of cooperation, they were concluded by: the free economic zone "Brest" and the Brest branch of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry with the administration of the Coastal Park of the Integrated Bond Zone in the city of Shenyang, which is the administrative center of Liaoning Province; the Department of Sports and Tourism of the Brest Regional Executive Committee with the Belarusian-Chinese Center for Culture and Development of the PRC. Speaking about commercial contracts, they primarily concern supplies of Brest foodstuffs, mainly meat and dairy processing products, and are estimated at more than twenty million dollars.

⁹ Chinese partners are interested in the creation of production and logistics companies in Brest region [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kitajskim-partneram-interesno-sozdanie-proizvodstv-i-logisticheskikh-kompanij-v-brestskoj-oblasti-598059-2023/>

¹⁰ Gorodetsky, D. In China concluded commercial contracts and new cooperation agreements / D. Gorodetsky // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/v-kitaczakljuchili-kommercheskie-kontrakty-i-novye-soglasheniya-o-sotrudnichestve-8970/>

A separate conversation is about the twinning ties between Brest region and its Chinese partners. Brestchina has four twin cities in China - Liaoning, Shanxi, Anhui and Hubei provinces. In November 2023, in addition to the import exhibition in Shanghai, representatives of the Belarusian region held active negotiations in Anhui province. The agreement to establish friendly ties with it was signed back in September 2017. This time, the parties adopted an action plan to develop trade, economic, scientific, technical, scientific and cultural cooperation for 2023-2025. In addition, agreements were concluded on the establishment of twinning relations between the cities of Brest and Hefei, Berezovsky district and the city of Benbu, and Brest Regional Clinical Hospital agreed on cooperation with Anhui Medical University. In addition, Brest and Hefei already intend to draw up a roadmap for cooperation. The main points to find points of contact are "production, transportation and logistics, education, medical, cultural..."¹¹

Speaking about the economic aspect of twinning, the Chinese partners are particularly interested in setting up production and logistics companies in the Belarusian region. In turn, the Belarusian side "is ready to offer services for the conversion of railcars from narrow European gauge to broad gauge, as well as the implementation of a project to create a transport and logistics hub in Brest region"¹². The fact is that Brest is a nodal point of the Chinese "Silk Road" and an important element of the cross-border corridor to promote the project "Freight trains from China to Europe". In addition, Brest region is ready to provide the Chinese side with a site for the implementation of the project to build an educational center. And this is only the beginning of the realization of new joint mutually beneficial projects.

¹¹ Brest and Chinese Hefei intend to draw up a roadmap for cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brest-i-kitajskij-hefeji-namereny-sostavit-dorozhnuju-kartu-dlja-sotrudnichestva-599168-2023/>

¹² Brest and Bereza got twinned in the Chinese province of Anhui [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brest-i-bereza-obzavelis-pobratimami-v-kitajskoj-provintsii-anhoj-598126-2023/>

Belarus - Turkey: interaction in a wide range of areas

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

A separate conversation is about the participation of the Belarusian side in the work on the **reconstruction of Turkish areas** affected by the February 2023 earthquake. Belarus paid "attention to the restoration of infrastructure that was destroyed as a result of the crushing earthquake in 11 provinces of Turkey"¹⁵. In

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

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

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

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

Strengthening cooperation in the **agricultural** sector is among the main tasks for the development of bilateral interaction. In 2023, Belarusian supplies of dairy products to the Turkish market started moving forward. And there are serious prospects for increasing exports of meat products and beef from Belarus. This year, a number of Turkish firms have already expressed their readiness to cooperate with Belarus in the food sector. For example, "Zirhlioglu Corporate Group expressed its interest in establishing direct contacts with Belarusian enterprises on the supply of specific products and further cooperation with the National Marketing Center"¹⁷ . It is noteworthy that more than 30 Belarusian enterprises - producers and processors of food products - participated in the videoconference in September 2023 on this topic. Returning to the meeting of the intergovernmental commission, we note that the parties also reached an agreement to "finalize the procedures on the veterinary questionnaire sent by the Belarusian side by the end of 2024, as well as the intention to hold the second

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

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

meeting of the Working Group on Agriculture, without delay, at the beginning of the next [2024] year"¹⁸ .

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

Active and regular interaction with the Turkish-Belarusian Business Cooperation Council under the Foreign Economic Relations Committee of Turkey, the Association of Independent Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, as well as other associations of Turkish business, including exhibition companies, was named as important elements of the development of **trade and economic relations between the** two countries at the IGC meeting. In this regard, the parties "signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the National Center for Marketing and Price Study and the Association of Turkish Businessmen (ASRIAD), their representatives plan to participate in a joint business forum in Belarus in the first quarter of 2024"²⁰ . In February next year, Istanbul will host

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

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

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

the International Yarn Fair Istanbul Yarn Fair, which will be of interest to Belarusian light industry, chemical and petrochemical enterprises.

Recall that the high level of Belarusian products could be judged by the participation of exporters from Belarus at this exhibition forum - International Istanbul Yarn Fair, which was held in early June 2023 in Istanbul and where 650 companies from different countries, including China, India, Uzbekistan, Germany, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and the Republic of Korea, were represented. Belarusian petrochemical enterprises participated in the Made in Belarus exposition and demonstrated "a wide range of manufactured products based on the best world technologies, including various types of fibers, yarns and materials used in the textile, knitting and clothing industries"²¹. Thus, Naftan OJSC demonstrated at the exhibition acrylic fibers used in the production of yarn and artificial fur, and Polotsk-Steklovolokno OJSC - glass fiber and products based on it. The Belarusian chemical company "Mogilevkhimvolokno" offered a wide range of polyester fibers and yarns used in the production of yarn, fillers and artificial fur, and also presented polyester fabrics indispensable in the production of roofing materials and carpets. The branch "Khimvolokno Plant" of JSC "Grodno Azot" at the exhibition demonstrated cord fabrics for reinforcing pneumatic tires, polyamide yarns for production of ropes and fishing gear and polyamide-6. Also at the stand of the enterprise were presented polymer composite materials, which are widely used at the enterprises of automobile, aviation and oil industries. SvetlogorskKhimvolokno OJSC showed special fabrics, yarns and fibers intended for application in the automotive industry. As a result, Belarusian exporters held very effective negotiations not only with Turkish partners and counterparties, but also with representatives of companies from other countries. So let us hope that the exhibition in Istanbul in February 2024 will be a continuation of new interesting joint projects.

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

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

And already in November 2023, within the framework of this program, the Belarusian-Turkish Research Center was opened in Minsk on the basis of the Institute of Philosophy of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, which became another step towards the development of relations between the two countries. "Its main tasks are to coordinate and carry out joint research works, individual projects in the field of historical, cultural and philosophical heritage of Belarus and Turkey, to improve the qualifications of scientific personnel by studying Turkish, as well as to translate the works of Turkish and Belarusian philosophers and scientists into Belarusian and Turkish"²³ . At the moment the new center is focused on "Philosophical and spiritual-cultural heritage of Belarus and Turkey: history and modernity". Turkish researchers are preparing a "Review of the main achievements of Turkish philosophy", while their Belarusian colleagues are studying "The influence of the Belarusian-Muslim tradition on the formation of cultural and national identity". In addition, the center is expected to perform educational and popularization functions, as

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

²³ Belarusian-Turkish research center opened at the National Academy of Sciences [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belorusko-turetskij-issledovatel'skij-sentr-otkrylsja-v-nan-597558-2023/>

scientists of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus will study the Turkish language on its basis, and various lectures and master classes are planned.

Let's summarize the results. Back in April 2019, Minsk and Ankara identified the priority areas of Belarusian-Turkish cooperation at the highest level. At that time, they talked about cooperation "in trade and investment, implementation of joint projects in machine-building, agriculture, construction, finance, chemical and light industry, as well as outlined concrete steps to build up contacts in the areas of technology, innovation, education, intensification of interaction in the field of joint scientific developments..."²⁴ . Today we see that the two countries have already clearly built a multi-level system of interstate partnership, which jointly moves towards the realization of new strategic objectives. And in this regard, the decisions of the 11th meeting of the Belarusian-Turkish Joint Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation are another weighty confirmation.

²⁴ Zalessky, B.L. Belarus - Turkey: science, technology, education / B.L. Zalessky // Materialy XV Mezinarodni vedecko-prakticka konference "Vedecky pokrok na prelomu tysyachalety - 2019". Volume 14: Praha. Publishing House "Education and Science". - C. 39.

Belarus-Africa:

Instruments of cooperation needed

In September 2023, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus held a meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on the development of cooperation with African countries, at which the Belarusian government outlined the main areas of focus on this continent: medicine, education, ensuring food security of African countries, supply of agricultural machinery, and industrial cooperation. Assessing the objective foreign trade situation, Belarusian Prime Minister R. Golovchenko emphasized that Africa has a huge development potential and is a driver of international growth, but the accumulated political capital of Belarus has not yet been converted to a proper extent into successful trade and economic projects. "In 2022, exports of Belarusian goods to Africa amounted to just over \$200 million and show some downward trend. The maximum volume of exports - over \$400 million - was reached in pre-Kovy 2019..."²⁵ . Note that this continent is home to more than one and a half billion people. For this reason, the government of Belarus has set a clear task - every effort should be made to find the right tools and formula to reverse the negative dynamics in cooperation with the countries of this continent. The tools include "forming road maps, looking for concrete projects that can be implemented"²⁶ . And then there will be a practical result.

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

²⁵ Roman Golovchenko on cooperation with Africa: The potential is huge, we need to ensure significant growth of exports [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10698>

²⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs: it is necessary to form roadmaps for cooperation with African countries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mid-nuzhno-sformirovat-dorozhnye-karty-sotrudnichestva-so-stranami-afriki-591013-2023/>

example, Belarusian dump trucks operate in Zimbabwe, the Republic of South Africa, Angola, Algeria, and Morocco. Among the new potential partners is Kenya, where the first agricultural machines were delivered about six months ago. Serious dialog begins and continues with such countries as Nigeria, Egypt, Algeria, Sudan. Even "the distant South African Republic has received our tractors of Minsk Tractor Plant, now they are being tested and there is confidence that the supply of our machinery there will increase dramatically"²⁷ .

The Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Belarus pays special attention to the development of supplies to African countries, as the industry offers "the entire range of machinery of the machine-building complex - tractors, combines, trucks. It is also household appliances - TV sets produced by Gozizont Holding, refrigerators"²⁸ . For example, "Gomselmash" plans to supply a large batch of its equipment to these countries. Currently, already 80 units of Gomselmash machinery are working mainly in Zimbabwe and Kenya. And up to 80 more units will be shipped to the African region in the near future. Moreover, "a center of Belarusian machinery has been created in Africa, which accompanies and maintains all the equipment that is supplied to the continent"²⁹ . And on the way out - a contract for delivery to Zimbabwe. Contacts are being worked out in Togo and Malawi.

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

²⁷ Technique, training, export: Parkhomchik told about cooperation with African countries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tehnika-obuchenie-eksport-parkhomchik-rasskazal-o-sotrudnichestve-s-afrikanskimi-stranami-587303-2023/>

²⁸ Combines, tractors, TV sets. Rogozhnik told about the range of industrial products for delivery to Africa [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kombajny-traktory-televizory-rogozhnik-rasskazal-ob-assortimente-promproduksii-dlja-postavok-v-afriku-586805-2023/>

²⁹ "Gomselmash" plans to supply a large batch of machinery to the African region [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomselmash-planiruet-postavit-krupnuju-partiju-tehniki-v-afrikanskij-region-586884-2023/>

high demand for trucks, which is currently not fully satisfied"³⁰ . And Ethiopian firm Ethio - Engineering Group is interested in organizing the assembly of Belarusian cars from the supplied vehicle components at the company's existing facilities. In the same August this year, Belarusian holding AMKODOR and Ethiopian company Epitychia General Trading discussed the prospects of cooperation and possibilities of joint production in Minsk. During the talks, "it was decided to return to the discussion after a deeper analysis of the construction machinery market, which can most effectively support the needs of projects in Ethiopia"³¹ .

In addition to industrial exports, Belarus is starting to sell agricultural products and foodstuffs to African countries. Deliveries in this direction are growing. It is believed that in the next two to three years, food exports of up to ten billion dollars can be achieved with the help of African countries. For reference, we note that "based on the results of work for nine months [2023], Belarusian agricultural exports amounted to about \$5 billion"³² . As for Africa, this continent is very promising for the enterprises of Belgospischeprom Concern. For example, in mid-September 2023, "the first batch of products [malt] was shipped to Equatorial Guinea. This is a trial batch, this market is new and interesting for us"³³ .

And at the end of November 2023 in West Africa - the city of Accra (Ghana) - an exposition of Belarusian producers Made in Belarus will be organized within the framework of the 6th international exhibition Agrofood

³⁰ MAZ can create assembly production of trucks in Ethiopia [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/maz-mozhet-sozdat-sborocnoe-proizvodstvo-gruzovoj-tehniki-v-efiopii-582045-2023/>

³¹ "AMKODOR" and representatives of Ethiopia discussed the possibilities of joint production [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/amkodor-i-predstaviteli-efiopii-obsudili-vozmozhnosti-sovmestnogo-proizvodstva-581985-2023/>

³² Hare: exports of Belarusian agricultural products amounted to about \$5 billion in nine months [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zajats-eksport-belorusskoj-selhozproduksii-za-devjat-mesjatsev-sostavil-okolo-5-mlrd-597077-2023/>

³³ Zhidkov: African continent is promising for export of Belarusian food products [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zhidkov-afrikanskij-kontinent-perspektiven-dlja-eksporta-belorusskoj-pischevoj-produksii-588012-2023/>

Ghana, where exporters "in the field of agriculture, food processing and packaging, ingredients, bakery and confectionery products, food and hospitality in West Africa" will be presented³⁴. Last year, 98 exhibitors from 22 countries, namely Belgium, Burkina Faso, Egypt, France, Germany, Ghana, Ghana, Hungary, India, Iran, Italy, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Poland, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and the United States of America participated in the forum. This time in Accra, suppliers from Belarus will also show their "goods face", and hopefully, they will get a good practical result from this exhibition forum.

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³⁴ Belarus will present its exposition at the agricultural exhibition in Ghana [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavit-ekspozitsiju-na-selskohozjajstvennoj-vystavke-v-gane-587952-2023/>

Belarus - Africa: expositions create prerequisites for contacts

In 2024, Belarus intends to significantly intensify cooperation with African countries in a number of areas, including exhibition cooperation. After all, this continent has enormous resources and opportunities. Suffice it to say that "half of the 50 fastest growing countries in the world in 2022 are from Africa. The Republic of Belarus has something to offer to the rapidly developing market of this region, which is confirmed by multimillion contracts and agreements reached recently"³⁵. Moreover, in 2023, a number of Belarusian-African projects were initiated during international exhibitions in various regions of this continent.

For example, Belarus demonstrated its products and services at the **Zimbabwe** International Trade Fair in **Zimbabwe** in April this year. The Belarusian exposition Made in Belarus was presented by such companies as Bellact, Lidakhleboproduct, Smargon Bread Products Plant, BELAZ - the managing company of BELAZ-HOLDING, Sohra, AMKODOR - the managing company of the holding, Aftertrade, Minskintercaps, Borisov Medical Products Plant, Kamvol, and Mogotex. For example, Bellakt showed milk porridge, dry milk formula for children, while Lidakhleboprodukt showed its flour-milling products and semi-finished flour products at the multidisciplinary exhibition. Smorgon Bread Products Combine - oat flour and cereals. The machine-building industry was represented at the exhibition by the Belarusian Automobile Plant and Sohra, a group of companies that maintains Belarusian quarry machinery in various countries of the world. Also within the Made in Belarus exposition, the authorized supplier of Belarusian machinery, Aftertrade, at a collective stand demonstrated machinery of such famous Belarusian brands as Minsk Tractor

³⁵ Belinterexpo" told what exhibitions Belarusian exporters will go to in 2024 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-belinterekspo-rasskazali-na-kakie-vystavki-otpravjatsja-beloruskie-eksportery-v-2024-godu-598179-2023/>

Plant and AMKODOR, in particular, the Belarus-2022.3 energy-intensive tractor, supplies of which were launched to the Zimbabwean market in 2022. Belarusian light industry enterprises brought a wide range of fabrics to southern Africa. "Kamvol" familiarized the visitors of the exhibition with fabrics of school and women's assortment, and "Mogotex" - with textile fabrics of the highest class, "which can be an excellent alternative to fabrics from China, India, Malaysia." The company also produces both work clothes and clothes for law enforcement agencies"³⁶ . "Minskintercaps and Borisov Medical Preparations Plant presented new medicines at the exhibition.

And in North Africa - in **Algeria** - in June 2023, the 54th FIA International Exhibition took place, where about a thousand companies from 40 countries participated. The National Exposition of Belarus included 11 enterprises representing various industries. MAZ OJSC, the managing company of BELAVTOMAZ holding company, demonstrated at the exhibition the catalog of its trucks characterized by reliability, efficiency and innovative solutions. JSC "Belarusian Metallurgical Plant - managing company of the holding company "BMK" (BMZ) presented advanced metallurgical technologies and quality rolled metal products. Slutsk Cheese Factory OJSC and Minsk Dairy Plant No. 1 OJSC showed their high-quality dairy products. And the collective stand of the State Committee for Science and Technology presented the developments of the institutions of the Ministry of Education and organizations of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, which demonstrated "more than 30 scientific, technical and innovative developments"³⁷ . Organizations and institutions were interested in the opportunity to establish business contacts with industrial enterprises of various sectors, educational institutions, and technoparks.

³⁶ Belarus presents its products and services at the exhibition in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavljaet-svoi-produkty-i-uslugi-na-vystavke-v-zimbabve-563849-2023/>

³⁷ FIA exhibition became a platform for negotiations and meetings between Belarusian and Algerian companies [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/vystavka-fia-stala-ploschadkoj-dlja-peregovorov-i-vstrech-mezhdubelorusskimi-i-alzhirskimi-kompanijami-573076-2023/>

In particular, the exposition of the Belarusian State University included products developed in the laboratories of research institutes and faculties of the university. "This is a multifunctional complex "Alma Meter-2", synthesized carbon materials, heat-resistant composite materials based on solid phosphate binders, nanoscale technology of diamond processing of structural composite materials, non-ferrous metals and alloys..."³⁸. Smart Windows were shown as a natural exhibit. The invention has no analogues in the post-Soviet space. They can be used as an alternative to conventional glass structures. The innovative development protects the room from sunlight, penetration of ultraviolet radiation and partially blocks infrared rays. This allows the user to do away with curtains and blinds. The innovation can also be used as an information board to replace paper price tags in shopping centers. Changing the price and name of goods throughout the retail outlet from a centralized control unit on the computer is done remotely. The visitors of the exhibition were also presented radio-absorbing materials of "KUP" series. They are designed to protect aircraft from electromagnetic radiation, have low density, high elasticity, have thermal resistance up to 400-450 degrees and chemical resistance to acids, alkalis, solvents.

This exhibition showed that Algeria is of interest to Belarus as a proven partner with a huge market. After all, more than 40 million people live in this country. In this regard, "Belarusian producers of dairy products and other foodstuffs have good prospects in Algeria. There are special plans for industrial cooperation. The issues of creating joint production facilities for trucks and agricultural machinery are currently under consideration"³⁹. It only remains to add that in April 2024, an exposition Made in Belarus will be organized for the first time in Algeria at the international exhibition of food industry, agricultural machinery and technologies Djazgro.

³⁸ Scientific and technical developments of BSU will be presented at the 54th International Industrial Exhibition "FIA-2023" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://bsu.by/news/nauchno-tekhnicheskije-razrabotki-bgu-predstavjat-na-54-y-mezhdunarodnoy-promyshlennoj-vystavke-fia-2-d/>
³⁹ Terentyev, S. Milk, technology and scientific developments / S. Terentyev // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/moloko-tehnika-i-nauchnye-razrabotki-posol-belarusi-o-proryve-belorusskih-tovarov-v-alzhir-8770/>

As for other Belarusian expositions to be organized at international exhibitions in Africa next year, they will be located in a number of countries. In July - at the FILDA multi-industry forum in Luanda (**Angola**). In October, at the multi-sectoral SWAiTEX in Swakopmund, **Namibia**, and the East Africa International Trade Exhibition in Dar es Salaam, **Tanzania**. And in December 2024 - in Cairo (**Egypt**) - at the largest in North Africa international food industry exhibition Food Africa Cairo. Let us hope that cooperation between Belarus and its African partners will receive a significant impetus next year, including thanks to the Made in Belarus expositions, which create good prerequisites for the development of trade and economic relations.

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Belarus - Equatorial Guinea: aiming to promote concrete projects

In October 2023, Minsk hosted the first meeting of the Joint Standing Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, at which the parties agreed to ensure constant growth of trade turnover to bring it in line with the potential of the two countries, as well as to promote specific projects in industry, technological development, agriculture, healthcare, science, technology, education, culture, and construction. Minsk and Malabo identified as priority areas of cooperation "agriculture; health care; industry; construction; woodworking and forestry; cooperation in the oil and gas sector; cooperation in banking, finance and taxation; digitalization of the economy; cooperation in the field of culture, including museum, archive, library; cooperation in tourism; cooperation in the field of sports; and environmental protection, among others"⁴⁰.

It should be noted that Equatorial Guinea is one of the leading economies in Africa, which is the third largest oil producer on the continent and has a developed port infrastructure. Over the last quarter of a century, the gross domestic product of this country has increased more than 52 times and ranks among the leading economies in Africa per capita. In addition, "Equatorial Guinea is a member of the African Continental Free Trade Area, which unites 54 states, as well as the Economic Community of Central African States, which includes 11 states"⁴¹. In this regard, the Belarusian side considers this country as a kind of "gateway" to West and Central Africa.

⁴⁰ Joint communiqué on the results of the first meeting of the Permanent Joint Commission for Cooperation between Belarus and Equatorial Guinea (October 19, 2023) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/cba05c3a89729e69.html

⁴¹ Machine building, roadmap, opening of embassies. Minsk and Malabo have defined the prospects of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/mashinostroenie-dorozhnaja-karta-otkrytie-posolstv-minsk-i-malabo-opredelili-perspektivy-594759-2023/>

It should be recalled that in June 2023, Belarusian Foreign Minister S. Aleinik visited this African country for the first time. Aleinik. During this visit, a Joint Statement on the Development of Political Dialogue was signed, and "practical steps to expand the contractual and legal framework of bilateral relations were outlined, where agreements on cooperation in agriculture and agro-industrial complex will also be developed"⁴². And in September 2023, President of Equatorial Guinea Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo paid his first visit to Belarus, during which seven documents were signed aimed at developing relations on a wide thematic spectrum - from the economy to the humanitarian sphere, including the establishment of a Joint Permanent Commission between the two states. At the first meeting of the commission in October 2023, where from the African side "more than 20 representatives of practically all key ministries, agencies, including 8 heads of ministries came"⁴³, the participants in the discussion decided to create a number of subcommissions or working groups to achieve results as soon as possible on the main sectors of Belarusian-Ekwatoguinean interaction. "These are the spheres of industry, agriculture, science and technology, health care and pharmacology. These four priority areas have been identified and highlighted separately"⁴⁴.

In particular, with regard to industry, the Belarusian side is already working on supplies of cargo, passenger, trailer, special-purpose machinery, and dump trucks for the needs of Equatorial Guinea's growing economy, as the country's task is to shift from the raw materials sector to a more technological, knowledge-intensive, and innovative path of development. Belarus is also ready

⁴² Zaleskii, B. New models of partnership. Transformation of international interaction in the context of sustainable economic ties / B. Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 38.

⁴³ "A good start of cooperation has been given". Aleynik on the first meeting of the intergovernmental commission with Equatorial Guinea [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/dan-horoshij-start-sotrudnichestvu-alejnik-o-pervom-zasedanii-mezhpravkomissii-s-ekvatorialnoj-gvineej-594724-2023/>

⁴⁴ Transcript of the approach to the press by Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Aleinik following the meeting of the Permanent Joint Commission of Belarus and Equatorial Guinea (October 19, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/ed7ba0f461785b44.html

to "supply optoelectronic products, multifunctional unmanned aerial and robotic systems, create closed-cycle enterprises for the production and processing of meat and dairy products"⁴⁵. African partners are interested in the Belarusian experience of efficient livestock breeding, improvement of veterinary services and food quality control, development of crops with the highest resource potential, creation of a high-quality and effective system of personnel training. Especially since "Equatorial Guinea has a great need for dairy and meat products, which we [Belarus] produce in sufficient quantities" .⁴⁶

As for medicine, in accordance with the agreement on cooperation in healthcare signed in Minsk during the first meeting of the commission, it is planned to establish a training center at one of the medical universities of Belarus to train students from Equatorial Guinea and other African countries, as well as to improve the qualifications of doctors. The parties have identified cooperation in the field of forestry and environmental protection as one of the new directions. In addition, "there are plans to create a production and logistics hub for Belarusian products in this African country"⁴⁷, which will be used, among other things, to supply and promote products from Belarus to neighboring countries of Central and West Africa.

In short, the first meeting of the Belarus-Ekwatoguinea Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation showed that the parties intend to expand long-term cooperation and develop and adopt the Roadmap to 2030 by the end of 2023. In addition, plans have been outlined to develop the legal framework and sign new bilateral agreements to reach a level of trade turnover of at least \$100 million by 2030 in terms of economic activity.

⁴⁵ Speech by Minister S. Aleinik at the opening of the meeting of the Joint Commission for Cooperation between Belarus and Equatorial Guinea (October 18, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/c32017cdfb25123b.html

⁴⁶ Belarus is ready to help Equatorial Guinea in the development of agro-industrial complex and training of agricultural specialists [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-gotova-pomoch-ekvatorialnoj-gvinee-v-razvittii-apk-i-podgotovke-selhozspetsialistov-586755-2023/>

⁴⁷ Aleinik: the issue of creating a hub of Belarusian products in Equatorial Guinea is under consideration [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/aleinik-prorabatyvaetsja-vopros-sozdaniya-v-ekvatorialnoj-gvinee-haba-belorusskoj-produktsii-594535-2023/>

Belarus - Zimbabwe: prospects are encouraging

The Republic of Zimbabwe is an African country with which the Republic of Belarus established diplomatic relations back in April 1992. The new stage of cooperation with this South African state dates back to January 2023, when a Belarusian delegation paid a state visit to Zimbabwe. At that time, "a package of important bilateral documents was signed, which includes basic economic agreements that are designed to ensure the development of industrial cooperation and economic cooperation..."⁴⁸ . Speaking about the economic component of this partnership, "the trade turnover between Belarus and Zimbabwe has grown eight times since 2018"⁴⁹ . At the same time, the parties have significantly expanded trade and economic interaction, established humanitarian cooperation and strengthened the legal framework of bilateral relations.

In particular, during this time, a single center of Belarusian enterprises was established on the Zimbabwean soil, which provides a whole range of services for all types of machinery supplied from Belarus, and where one can receive education in the field of vehicle management, necessary recommendations, purchase spare parts, and services for performing routine maintenance on Belarusian machinery. Speaking about the nearest plans, more than 130 fire trucks will be delivered by the end of 2023, "they are now at different stages of delivery. Contracts were signed for the delivery of 3,161 tractors, 80 combines, by the end of the year we [the Belarusian side] will start to fulfill these contracts, and we will try to solve these issues in 2023-2025. We have also reached agreements on the delivery of grain drying complexes there"⁵⁰.

⁴⁸ Zalesky, B. Export growth strategy. Opportunities and challenges of open economy in modern conditions / B. Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 30.

⁴⁹ Parkhomchik: the trade turnover between Belarus and Zimbabwe has grown eight times since 2018, it is important to maintain the dynamics [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/parhomchik-tovarooborot-belarusi-i-zimbabve-s-2018-goda-vyros-v-vosem-raz-vazhno-sohranit-dinamiku-586362-2023/>

⁵⁰ Parkhomchik: exports of Belarusian goods to Zimbabwe increased eightfold [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/parhomchik-eksport-belorusskih-tovarov-v-zimbabve-uvlichilsja-v-vosem-raz-587300-2023/>

In the medium term, Belarusian exporters are only willing to increase their supplies to the Zimbabwean market. For example, the Belarusian Automobile Plant is interested in developing fruitful cooperation with mining companies in Zimbabwe, as the mining industry of the country, which has large reserves of minerals, including coal, copper, gold, diamonds, is developing rapidly. After all, 55- and 130-ton dump trucks from Belarus are used in mining coal and diamonds in Zimbabwean quarries, Belarusian special-purpose machinery - bulldozers, loaders, tractors and irrigation and drainage machines - is also in operation. And "BELAZ is ready to offer for the mining industry of Zimbabwe not only efficient quarry machinery, but also ready-made complex solutions for the supply of machines with all the necessary infrastructure, equipment and software on a turnkey basis"⁵¹ .

Belarusian manufacturers of agricultural machinery also have interesting plans to export to this South African country. After all, agricultural mechanization in this region of Africa is now receiving increased attention. Suffice it to say that "last year [2022] Zimbabwe harvested a record wheat crop for the last 25 years thanks to Belarusian-made agricultural machinery"⁵² . And there are plans to promote joint projects to provide agricultural machinery from Belarus, including tillage units, cotton growing machines, and tractor trailers. It should be noted that only Minsk Tractor Plant "in 2023-2024 it is planned to supply 3,575 tractors to Zimbabwe, their shipment has already begun"⁵³ . In addition, this year, the use of improved agricultural machinery from Belarus has made the harvesting season in this country problem-free. The fact is that in Zimbabwe in 2023, a record harvest of cereals is expected, which will exceed

⁵¹ BELAZ is interested in developing cooperation with mining companies in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belaz-zainterisovan-v-razvitiisotrudnichestva-s-dobyvajuschimi-kompanijami-zimbabve-581975-2023/>

⁵² "Bobrujskagromash" and the Ambassador of Zimbabwe discussed projects to provide the region with Belarusian agricultural machinery [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bobrujskagromash-i-posol-zimbabve-obsudili-proekty-pobespecheniju-regiona-belorusskoj-selhoztehnikoj-582296-2023/>

⁵³ MTZ intends to continue cooperation with partners from Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-nameren-prodolzhit-sotrudnichestvo-s-partnerami-iz-zimbabve-581256-2023/>

440 thousand tons. As of early November, wheat harvesting is almost complete across the country. "To harvest faster before the rainy season, the government has deployed 249 state-of-the-art Belarusian combine harvesters. The flagship GS12 combine harvester handles at least 40 hectares a day"⁵⁴. So the purchase of machinery from Belarus has been a success.

Another relevant topic of Belarusian-Zimbabwean interaction is the establishment of joint ventures for food production. Back in May 2023, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus discussed with partners from Zimbabwe the issues of organizing supplies of Belarusian foodstuffs, as well as "setting up joint ventures for processing dried milk into whole milk products"⁵⁵. In addition, the issues of beef and poultry meat processing were discussed. And in Grodno region last spring with Zimbabwean partners discussed the issue of cooperation in the field of baby food. "At the first stage it can be the supply of ready-made baby food with the subsequent transfer of part of technological operations to the territory of Zimbabwe with the subsequent possibility of building a full-fledged production and performing the whole list of works"⁵⁶. And taking into account the capacities of the Grodno-based Bellakt plant, the geographical location of Zimbabwe and active interaction with its neighbors, it would be possible to consider the possibility of joint production, which would cover not only the needs of Zimbabwe, but also those of other African countries. In short, the prospects for Belarusian-Zimbabwean trade, economic, industrial and cooperative cooperation are quite optimistic. And not only in agriculture, machine-building, and the creation of assembly plants, but also in other areas.

⁵⁴ Belarusian machinery helps to harvest a record harvest in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskaja-tehnika-pomogaet-ubirat-rekordnyj-urozhaj-v-zimbabwe-597984-2023>

⁵⁵ The Ministry of Agriculture and Food will discuss with Zimbabwe the creation of joint ventures for the processing of dried milk [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minselhozprod-obsudit-s-zimbabwe-sozdanie-sovmestnyh-predpriyatij-po-pererabotke-suhogo-moloka-566042-2023/>

⁵⁶ "Bellakt" plans to create the production of dry infant formulae in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bellakt-planiruet-sozdat-proizvodstvo-suhih-detskikh-smesej-na-territorii-zimbabwe-560414-2023/>

Belarus - Nicaragua: commission resumes work

In October 2023, Minsk hosted the third meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, which discussed the current state of interaction between Minsk and Managua and outlined further steps to expand bilateral partnerships. In particular, they considered opportunities and prospects "in the field of housing and industrial construction, building up bilateral trade, cooperation in investment, food, light industry, pharmaceuticals, culture, strengthening business contacts between the two countries, establishing ties between the capital authorities of Belarus and Nicaragua"⁵⁷.

The first two meetings of the commission were held in September 2014 in Minsk and in September 2015 in Managua. During this period, Belarusian exports were based on agricultural machinery and components, "horticultural and forestry equipment, parts for internal combustion engines, and bearings. In the commodity structure of imports, the largest specific weight was occupied by supplies of bananas, coffee and strong alcoholic beverages"⁵⁸. And in May 2023, the parties stated that they aimed to seriously intensify trade, economic and humanitarian ties in order to constantly fill them with new projects and cooperation programs. At the same time, a number of important bilateral documents were signed in Minsk: A general agreement between the governments of Belarus and Nicaragua on the provision of export credits; a basic agreement on the supply of Belarusian machinery to the Nicaraguan market; and "an agreement on cooperation in education, which will provide a

⁵⁷ About the meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan joint commission on trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/b2665dfb1e8ad9b4.html

⁵⁸ Trade and economic relations between the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Nicaragua [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://cuba.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/N/trade/

legal basis for interaction between the parties and the establishment of working contacts between educational institutions of the two countries"⁵⁹. In June 2023, the parties discussed the possibilities of cooperation in agriculture and agreed to work out the prospects of organizing cooperation in such areas as "exchange of genetic material of agricultural crops, livestock breeding, internships for scientists and specialists, training of Nicaraguan specialists at the master's and postgraduate schools of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus"⁶⁰.

In July 2023, a Belarusian delegation headed by Foreign Minister S. Aleinik visited Nicaragua to discuss at the highest and highest levels "investment projects, contracts for the supply of Belarusian machinery, prospects for Belarus' participation in major infrastructure projects in Nicaragua, cooperation in agriculture, logistics and opportunities to use port infrastructure, credit and finance, and options for joint work in the markets of Latin America."⁶¹. Following the visit, Belarus and Nicaragua adopted another package of bilateral agreements and contracts. In particular, they signed intergovernmental agreements on mutual visa abolition and on the resumption of the work of the joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, as well as approved the Roadmap of Cooperation in Agriculture. In addition, MTZ signed a framework contract to supply products of the Belarusian plant to Nicaragua for a two-year period. <...> MAZ and the mayor's office of Managua also signed a contract for the supply of Belarusian machinery. An agreement was reached to supply 236 units of AMKODOR machinery for the construction industry and municipal

⁵⁹ Zalesky, B.L. When partners have respect, trust and friendship / B.L. Zalesky // Materiały XX Międzynarodowej naukowo-praktycznej konferencji, "Aktualne problemy nowoczesnych nauk - 2023". Volume 1. Przemysł: Nauka i studia. - C. 41.

⁶⁰ Belarus and Nicaragua discussed areas of cooperation in agriculture [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-nikaragua-obsudili-napravlenija-sotrudnichestva-v-selskom-hozjajstve-573073-2023/>

⁶¹ The Belarusian delegation held extended negotiations with the economic bloc of the Nicaraguan government [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskaja-delegatsija-provela-rasshirennye-peregovory-s-ekonomicheskim-blokom-pravitelstva-nikaragua-577785-2023/>

services in Nicaragua"⁶². In the field of culture, the Bolshoi Theater of Belarus, the Ruben Dario National Theater, and the Nicaraguan cultural foundation Incanto signed a memorandum of cooperation.

During the 3rd meeting of the joint commission, the Belarusian side emphasized that it considers Nicaragua an important political, trade and economic partner in the Latin American region and a reliable ally in the international arena. As for the supply of Belarusian machinery to the Nicaraguan market, further steps have already been outlined. The products of Minsk Automobile Plant, Amkodor, Minsk Tractor Plant and other giants of the national industry will be in demand in the Latin American country "when implementing ambitious infrastructure projects planned by the current government. There are serious developments in the agricultural sector, in particular, the application of Belarusian agricultural technologies in Nicaragua"⁶³.

Note that Nicaraguan land is very fertile. But only less than half of it is cultivated. "That is, 50% of the fertile land is not cultivated because there is not enough machinery and not enough people. The government of the country <...> is moving in the right direction. They have built 4,000 kilometers of roads"⁶⁴. In this regard, the Nicaraguan side expressed interest in organizing the supply of a large batch of machinery of the Ministry of Industry of Belarus for various purposes - road-building, agricultural, passenger - "for municipal needs, as well as for the implementation of large infrastructure, transport and logistics

⁶². About the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus S. Aleinik to Nicaragua. Aleinik's visit to Nicaragua [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL:

https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/a423b01505b9ac36.html

⁶³ Transcript of the approach to the press of Deputy Minister E. Shestakov following the meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan Joint Commission (October 4, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/ab8c63a09ebb1fec.html

⁶⁴ Dried milk to Cuba and machinery to Nicaragua. The Ambassador told about the directions of Belarusian exports [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/suhoe-moloko-na-kubu-i-tehnika-v-nikaragua-posol-rasskazal-o-napravlenijah-belorusskogo-eksporta-579482-2023/>

projects"⁶⁵ . As a result of the negotiations, the parties agreed to form a list of necessary types of equipment for the preparation of commercial offers and delivery terms. On the whole, the successful implementation of the agreements will bring the relations between Belarus and Nicaragua to a new, higher level of development.

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⁶⁵ Rogozhnik discussed the issues of intensification of supplies of Belarusian equipment with the delegation of Nicaragua [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rogozhnik-s-delegatsiej-nikaragua-obsudil-voprosy-intensifikatsii-postavok-belorusskoj-tehniki-591732-2023/>

Belarus - Brazil: rapprochement will only deepen

The Federative Republic of Brazil is the main partner of the Republic of Belarus in foreign trade with Latin American countries and is among the top ten partners of the Belarusian state in the world. Suffice it to say that "in 2021, the volume of bilateral trade amounted to \$782.9 million. The volume of bilateral trade amounted to \$782.9 million (growth rate of 108.9%). Exports amounted to \$585.1 million. USD 585.1 MILLION (108.3%)"⁶⁶ . At that time, Belarusian supplies were based on petrochemicals and products of the Belarusian Metallurgical Plant. In 2022, due to a number of limiting factors, the figures of the Belarusian-Brazilian trade turnover slightly decreased.

But since January 1, 2023, Brazil has undergone significant changes: a new president of the country has taken office and a new government is already functioning. These changes have to some extent affected the relations between Belarus and Brazil, which were established more than 30 years ago - in February 1992. One can say that today the two states, which are separated by 14 thousand kilometers, "have all grounds for the progressive development of bilateral cooperation both in the political and economic spheres"⁶⁷ . And the dynamics of 2022-2023 demonstrates the recovery of foreign trade volumes. In particular, "trade turnover for the first nine months of the current [2023] year amounted to almost \$700 million. This is twice as much as last year's figures"⁶⁸ . Judging by the available facts, two areas of cooperation stand out in the interaction between the two countries today - **agriculture** and **education**.

⁶⁶ Trade and economic relations [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL:

<https://brazil.mfa.gov.by/ru/exportby/tev/>

⁶⁷ Lukashevich: the volume of trade of Belarus with Brazil is hundreds of times higher than with some neighboring countries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/lukashevich-objem-torgovli-belarusi-s-braziliej-v-sotni-raz-vyshe-chem-s-nekotorymi-sosednimi-stranami-555506-2023/>

⁶⁸ Trade turnover between Belarus and Brazil amounted to almost \$700 million for nine months [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tovarooborot-belarusi-i-brazilii-za-devjat-mesjatsev-sostavil-pochti-700-mln-600698-2023/>

With regard to the first area, we recall that "Brazil has about 5 million agricultural enterprises, of which 70% are small businesses. They need equipment, tractors <...>. For example, BELARUS-152 and BELARUS-622 models, which are just suitable for such farms"⁶⁹. The Brazilian side believes that the machines of Minsk Tractor Plant (MTZ) are of high quality, easy to operate, and help to increase productivity. This can be judged, for example, by the results of the International Agricultural Exhibition-Fair AgriShow, which was held in May 2023 in the Brazilian city of Ribeirão Preto. This business forum is "the largest agricultural event in South America, which is attended by all representatives of agribusiness of the continent without exception. In terms of its characteristics, the exhibition is more like a district or even regional center: the number of participants and visitors exceeds 200 thousand people, and exhibition areas and pavilions occupy an area of 520 thousand square meters"⁷⁰.

In 2023, AgriShow had a record number of participants - from more than 90 countries. And at this agro-industrial summit, Belarus presented MTZ tractors for the first time: not only small but maneuverable models for individual farmers, but also large multifunctional machines for large farms. Specialists of Minsk Tractor Plant, Smorgon Aggregate Plant, Bobruisk Tractor Parts and Aggregates Plant, Borisov Metalist Plant worked at the exhibition. And at the same time the "niche for Belarusian agricultural machinery was defined: low-powered basic tractors with a capacity of up to 20-25 horsepower, which can become an indispensable assistant for family farming, which is the basis of agriculture in Brazil"⁷¹.

⁶⁹ Ambassador: Brazil has a high interest in Belarusian machinery [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/posol-brazilii-v-nashej-strane-est-vysokij-interes-k-belorusskoj-tehnike-582274-2023/>

⁷⁰ Belarus presented its tractors at the largest agricultural exhibition in South America [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavila-svoi-traktory-na-krupnejshej-agrovystavke-v-juzhnoj-amerike-564485-2023/>

⁷¹ Belarus plans to help Brazil create its new tractor [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-pomoch-brazilii-sozdat-svoj-narodnyj-tractor-564487-2023/>

Back in March 2023, Belarus and Brazil agreed to build two factories for the production of MTZ tractors in this country. Consent has already been received from the governors of two Brazilian states - Ceará and Goiás, "project activities are underway. <...> specialists have already started discussing these nuances, there are positive signals"⁷². And in July of this year, a roadmap of the project on the creation of joint Belarusian-Brazilian assembly plants, including small tractor machinery oriented at family farms, has already been signed. And this interesting initiative in the field of industrial cooperation may have an impressive result.

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

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

⁷² Belarus and Brazil agreed on the construction of two plants for the assembly of MTZ tractors [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-brazilija-dogovorilis-o-stroitelstve-dvuh-zavodov-po-sborke-tractorov-mtz-555498-2023/>

educational programs, publications, implementation of research projects, to hold conferences, seminars, workshops, <...> exchange students and teachers, educational and scientific materials"⁷³ .

In September 2023, the partners of the Brazilian university also included the Belarusian State Economic University (BSEU) and the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics (BSUIR), which adopted respective memorandums with AHIF, which became the first step towards fruitful Belarusian-Brazilian cooperation in this field. In particular, BSEU and AHIF have already identified specific areas of partnership. First, "the focus is on teaching Portuguese for Belarusian students and Russian for Brazilian students"⁷⁴ . Secondly, it is the creation of joint programs in English in the specialty "World Economy". In addition, the Center for Latin American Studies has already been "established and is successfully functioning at the Faculty of International Business Communications of BSEU, where joint projects are conducted by scientists from both universities. A center for the study of the Portuguese language will also be developed"⁷⁵ . All these joint projects, which are interesting for both sides and are already being implemented in the near future, will certainly serve to bring the two peoples - Belarusian and Brazilian - closer together. A rapprochement that will only deepen.

⁷³ Memorandum of Understanding signed between BSU and the Federal University of Minas Gerais in Brazil [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-podpisan-mezhdu-bgu-i-federalnym-universitetom-minas-zherajs-v-brazilii-588360-2023/>

⁷⁴ Memorandum of Understanding signed between BSEU and Brazilian Federal University of Minas Gerais [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-podpisan-mezhdu-bgeu-i-brazilskim-federalnym-universitetom-minas-zherajs-588101-2023/>

⁷⁵ Rector of the Brazilian university: cooperation in education will serve to bring our countries closer together [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/rektor-brazilskogo-universiteta-sotrudnichestvo-v-obrazovanii-posluzhit-sblizheniju-nashih-stran-588136-2023/>

Belarus - Uzbekistan: regions continue active dialog

In January 2023, Belarus and Uzbekistan celebrated 30 years of diplomatic relations. In recent years, the two countries have significantly intensified bilateral dialog, including at the regional level. Suffice it to say that as of April this year, the parties have already signed 15 interregional agreements. "Delegations from the regions of Belarus and Uzbekistan regularly exchange visits. The practice of developing roadmaps for the implementation of interregional agreements has proved effective"⁷⁶ . Among the active participants of this interregional interaction are such oblasts as **Vitebsk** and **Kashkadarya**, **Gomel** and **Fergana**.

In particular, in October 2022, **Vitebsk** Regional Executive Committee signed a cooperation agreement with the khokimiyat of **Kashkadarya** region. This document promotes the building up of mutually beneficial "trade and economic ties between enterprises and organizations of the regions. In addition, it will define ways to develop cooperation in scientific and technical, tourist, cultural, sports and health care areas"⁷⁷ . In the same October 2022, several important documents were also signed, developing the interaction between the individual participants of this interregional partnership: two agreements and two memorandums of cooperation. As for the agreements, these are the interaction between the Eufrosinia Polotskaya Polotsk State University and the Karshi Institute of Engineering and Economics, as well as between the P.M. Masherov Vitebsk State University and the Karshi State University. Memorandums were adopted between the free economic zones of the two regions, the concern "Meat

⁷⁶ C. Rachkov: Belarus considers Uzbekistan as an important partner in Central Asia [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <http://sovrep.gov.by/ru/news-ru/view/srachkov-belarus-rassmatrivaet-uzbekistan-kak-vazhnogo-partnera-v-tsentralnoj-azii-22630-2023/>

⁷⁷ Delegation of Vitebsk region in Uzbekistan will sign an agreement with the khokimiyat of Kashkadarya region [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/delegatsija-vitebskoj-oblasti-v-uzbekistane-podpishet-soglashenijs-hokimijatom-kashkadarjinskoj-527596-2022/>

and Dairy Products" and an enterprise for the supply and processing of dairy products. In addition, the parties signed contracts worth about three million dollars. It's about food and woodworking products, as well as the supply of electrical equipment for the oil industry and measuring devices. And "Vitebsk region has been working out the issue of supplying its products to the Uzbek market. The Kashkadarya region was very interested in meat and dairy products, electrical appliances, cable products in terms of sharing the experience of enterprises in production within this country"⁷⁸ .

At the same time, the Belarusian and Uzbek regions planned to cooperate in other areas as well. For example, back in 2021, in the territory of the free economic zone of Kashkadarya region, the Vitsebsk holding Marko established an enterprise where more than two hundred employees sew shoes. Now Uzbek partners are interested in new competencies - in light industry, dairy farms, milk processing enterprises. In May 2023, at the XI International Economic Forum "Innovations. Investments. Prospects", held in Vitebsk, the parties proposed a number of other new areas of cooperation, including the linen industry. "Vitebsk region is ready to assist in providing varieties that can be grown under the conditions of Uzbekistan. These proposals are being prepared by specialists of RUE "Flax Institute". In addition, options for cooperation in woodworking are being actively worked out, in particular, for the manufacture of individual wooden houses, furniture, including for educational institutions of Kashkadarya region"⁷⁹ . There are also initiatives in the pharmaceutical industry. For better development of contacts in economic, tourism and other spheres, the parties plan to organize joint information tours. Thus, joint activities of Vitebsk and Kashkadarya regions already create favorable prerequisites for both sides for the

⁷⁸ Enterprises of Vitebsk and Kashkadarya regions signed contracts for \$3 million [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/predpriyatija-vitebskoj-i-kashkadarjinskoj-oblastej-podpisali-kontrakty-na-3-mln-529745-2022/>

⁷⁹ Vitebsk and Kashkadarya regions plan to organize infotours to intensify cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vitebskaja-i-kashkadarjinskaja-oblasti-planirujut-organizovat-infotury-dlja-aktivizatsii-567511-2023/>

implementation of projects that in the future can strengthen new points of contact in mutual cooperation.

As for **Gomel** region, which is also actively developing cooperation with Uzbek partners, we note that its trade turnover with Uzbekistan has more than tripled over the past three years and amounted to 33 million dollars. And according to the results of 2022 Gomel exports increased almost one and a half times. "The main export positions of Gomel enterprises are paper, cardboard, wallpaper, chipboard boards, wood pulp, cattle meat, timber, paint, polyethylene products, wire, chemical threads, dairy products, agricultural machinery, furniture..."⁸⁰. Among the regions of Uzbekistan interested in joint projects with Gomel partners is **Fergana region**, which intends to develop cooperation with the Belarusian region in the production of agricultural machinery, woodworking, chemical industry, and tourism. In February 2023, Gomel Oblast Executive Committee and Fergana Oblast Hokimiyat signed a roadmap for 2023, which includes various directions. And there are already concrete developments. In the near future, "it is expected to open a company store in Fergana region, where woodworking products of the Belarusian region will be sold. Some of them will be sent for re-export to the neighboring countries of Uzbekistan"⁸¹. And in Homel the idea to open a trading house for selling fruits, dried fruits and vegetables from Uzbekistan is being worked out. In addition, Fergana entrepreneurs are interested in joint production of chemical and pulp and paper products with Gomel companies. To all appearances, the roadmap of the two regions - Belarusian and Uzbek - will soon be filled in other areas as well.

⁸⁰ Trade turnover of Gomel region with Uzbekistan has increased more than three times in the last three years [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/tovarooborot-gomelskoj-oblasti-s-uzbekistanom-vyros-bolee-chem-v-tri-raz-za-poslednie-tri-goda-549254-2023/>

⁸¹ From combine-building to tourism: Gomel and Fergana regions intend to develop cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/ot-kombajnoostroenija-doturizma-gomelskaja-i-ferganskaja-oblasti-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-549242-2023/>

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