

Italian Prime Minister invites to Milan's EXPO-2015

Belarus is invited by Italian Prime Minister to take part in World EXPO-2015 in Milan

The Presidential Press Service has informed BelTA about the acceptance of the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, to an invitation from Silvio Berlusconi, the Chairman of the Italian Council of Ministers. The Head of the Italian Government has asked Belarus to participate in the World EXPO-2015 in Milan — under the slogan 'Feeding the Planet'.

Mr. Lukashenko notes the considerable progress made in developing bilateral co-operation, achieved by Belarus and Italy after personal meetings with Mr. Berlusconi in 2009.

The message reads: 'Legislation governing relations in all spheres has been passed, with turnover and Italian investments into the Belarusian economy ever growing. New prospects are opening up for Italian business in our country and within the Customs Union of Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan, promoted by our joint decision to set up an industrial district of Italy in Brest'.

The President is confident that EXPO-2015 will give additional stimulus to trade-economic collaboration between our two states and open up new mutually beneficial areas while enabling our two nations to best realise the potential of business communities for the benefit of Belarusian and Italian people.

Electronic air ticket for rail travel

Belavia National Airline signs one-sided interline agreement with Belgian Railways

The document will enable passengers on the Minsk-Amsterdam flight to travel to Brussels or Antwerp on board the new FYRA high-speed train. The rail journey takes just one hour and 20 minutes. A single e-ticket will allow airline passengers to transfer to any train on arrival in Belgium without needing to buy an additional railway ticket, although the ticket is only valid on the same day that their flight from Minsk arrives in Amsterdam (and within 24 hours of departing from Belgium).

"We were seeing particular demand for passenger transportation from Minsk to Belgium and, as no direct flights were operational, we decided to sign this agreement," explains Belavia's General Director, Anatoly Gusarov. "It's not the first such for Belavia, as we've had an interline agreement with German Deutsche Bahn for several years, operating successfully. Our passengers can board a train to any destination in Germany without needing to buy an additional rail ticket — upon arrival in Frankfurt, Berlin or Hannover."

State security embraces comprehensive approach

Alexander Lukashenko meets Nikolai Bordyuzha, CSTO General Secretary



Alexander Lukashenko and Nikolai Bordyuzha discuss preparations for CSTO informal summit

By Igor Slavinsky

Belarus currently presides over the CSTO, with an informal summit in Astana scheduled for August 12th. "We, as the presiding country, will have to work hard, as will you," the Belarusian President has told Mr. Bordyuzha. "We must discuss the existing situation and issues which may arise," Mr. Lukashenko stressed. "There are so many serious questions. It's no secret that the whole Muslim world is boiling and

we can't exclude the fact that difficulties may appear in our Muslim states — primarily in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan; Kazakhstan is also feeling the heat on all sides."

General Bordyuzha recently visited Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Armenia, so was able to tell Mr. Lukashenko in detail about his trips. "Other issues of joint activities must be discussed — particularly those relating to our military collaboration," continued the Belarusian leader.

Since Belarus became chair of the CSTO, Minsk has been active in reforming the organisation. The major goal is to turn this consultative body into a true military-political bloc, ready to render prompt assistance in a crisis situation. Everyone remembers that, when the political crisis in Bishkek inspired ethnic collisions in the suburbs of Kyrgyzstan, the international community, including the CSTO allies, stood aside. That crisis clearly demonstrated that the CSTO lacks

the ability to be considered a true power.

The summit in Kazakhstan will be informal, with no official documents due to be signed. However, as a rule, the most significant initiatives are discussed during such casual meetings, before being written down. For example, Minsk believes that the CSTO needs a serious peacekeeping element, of course under the aegis and with the approval of the UN. Moreover, the UN General Assembly has already adopted a special resolution on co-operation with the CSTO. Definite powers are allocated for this purpose, to include the 120th Independent Guards Mechanised Brigade from Belarus. The CSTO also needs a targeted programme of equipping CSTO forces with military weaponry and equipment.

Of course, the CSTO's security requires integration and a wide scope of influence — tackling drug trafficking, illegal migration and organised crime. Security officials are able to share experience while conducting joint operations within the organisation. In May, the 'Nelegal-2011' (Illegal) operation was held and June hosted the 'Kanal-2011' (Channel) anti-drug operation. It's no secret that major flows of illegal migrants and drugs come from Asia to Europe, with almost no borders inside the Customs Union. As a result of the anti-drug operation (featuring CSTO states, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine) almost 3,000 crimes were detected and over 12,000 criminal cases were initiated. In this sphere, a military-political bloc would provide tangible aid.

Nadezhda Yermakova appointed as major banker

President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, appoints Nadezhda Yermakova to be Chairperson of the Board of the National Bank of Belarus

The further co-ordination of her appointment is being made with the National Assembly's Council of the Republic.

Nadezhda Yermakova was born in 1953, in the village of Rozalmov (Mogilev Region's Khotimsk District). In 1978, she graduated from the V. Kuibyshev Belarusian State Institute of National Economy (now known as the Belarusian State Economic University). After graduating from the Pinsk College of Accounting in 1971, Ms. Yermakova worked as a loan officer, a senior loan officer, deputy head of the



Nadezhda Yermakova

Khotimsk branch of the State Bank, deputy head of the Kirovsk branch of the State Bank, head of the Shklov department of the State Bank, deputy chairperson of the district executive committee, chairperson of the planning commission at the Shklov District Executive Committee, head of the finance

department at the Shklov District Executive Committee, head of the Severo-Zapad commercial bank's branch in Shklov, and head of Belagroprombank's department in Shklov.

From 1996, she was Deputy Chair of the Board of Belarusbank and Chair of the Board of Belarusbank. Ms. Yermakova was elected a member of the National Assembly's Council of the Republic — of the first, second, third and fourth convocations. She was also a member of the Board of the National Bank of Belarus. Ms. Yermakova is a Distinguished Economist of the Republic of Belarus, awarded with the Medal of Honour. Since 1999, she has headed the Belarusian Union of Women Public Association.

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