

Region has ambitious plans

Gomel Region farmers have action plan to tackle climate change

The President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, recently met the Chairman of Gomel's Regional Executive Committee, Vladimir Dvornik, to discuss the region's development last year, alongside plans and prospects for the future.

Mr. Lukashenko is keen to see the agrarian sphere react to climatic change, saying, "The Gomel Region's crops and farming should adjust to the climate." Mr. Dvornik reported that his region has expanded its share of drought-resistant crops — primarily maize.

The development of the Polesie area was also discussed: especially the western part of the Gomel Region and the eastern part of the Brest Region. Mr. Dvornik noted that, in 2011, only two of 16 socio-economic development figures failed to match those of 2010 (housing construction and attraction of investments). Meanwhile, last year, the Gomel Region attracted over \$200m of direct foreign injections — triple that of 2010. An investment portfolio has already been outlined for 2012, expecting figures to rise.

The project to develop Petrikov potash salt deposit should inspire further regional development. "It's a huge breakthrough for industry in the Gomel Region, creating good conditions for people," Mr. Dvornik emphasises. Mr. Lukashenko has asked that measures be actively implemented to ensure socio-economic development in the Gomel Region.

In necessary direction

President of Belarus welcomes Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev

By Denis Krymov

Early in the meeting, Alexander Lukashenko noted, "We've created a Single Economic Space. Already, positive and negative issues are clear in our military-political union — the CSTO — as never before. However, these allow us to say that all CSTO member states agree that it is developing in the right direction. In recent times, it has become more dynamic. We're beginning to take definite, useful steps, which are vital for SES members." The Belarusian President also added, "All problems have been settled."

The approval of all the necessary documents regarding the establishment of a single regional air defence system has become the keynote. Our degree of defence integration is extremely high including in the sphere of common security. Only those who are strong and self-sufficient are respected in our turbulent world. "We've adopted all decisions. In this respect — I already feel this — we should take further steps. I won't say that everything will be easy but, naturally, Belarus and Russia should commence in this direction. Of course, we should determine our starting position before we advance. We need to discuss those spheres in which we can significantly progress."

According to the Belarusian leader, Kazakhstan (also a SES partner) won't be left out of discussions. He notes, "We



Alexander Lukashenko promotes military-political co-operation of Belarus and Russia and as part of CSTO

have close economic collaboration so, naturally, military-political matters mustn't lag behind." Discussion is open to remaining CSTO member states, while substantive dialogue with Russia will continue soon after the electoral campaign. The President has expressed his confidence that it'll be a success, "Probably, we'll be able to discuss these issues without losing time: in March, April or May. The power succession in Russia is very rapid."

Mr. Patrushev agrees with this forecast, calling negotiations with Belarusian partners 'interesting and content-rich.' He has also

told journalists some details regarding international and regional security, which aim to ensure the security of the Union State. The world is changing quickly, so joint analysis and adjustment of strategy remain vital. According to Mr. Patrushev, information security is of special importance and will be high on the agenda at a forthcoming meeting of the heads of both states' Security Councils in Moscow.

Mr. Patrushev has spoken of the EU's policy towards Belarus, echoing the joint statement of the presidents of the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation, and that

of Vladimir Putin. "Recently, we've become used to the fact that living standards in the EU are quite high. I think the leaders, including those of the European Union, have also become used to this; against this background, they consider it possible to teach other states and nations how to live... Are there principles which should universally guide a particular country on how to live? No! Each state has its own constitution, which should be fulfilled."

Mr. Patrushev has spoken much on the situation, noting that not everything is changing for the better in the EU — including economi-

cally. He stresses that various regimes exist in European countries: presidential, parliamentarian and monarchies. No one says that they are non-democratic. "Why do they doubt the democracy of a country which has its own constitution? Why do they think it right to introduce sanctions and restrictions in any particular case? Does this lead to positive results? Does this help nations to communicate better?" asks Mr. Patrushev. "Not at all! Positive developments result from negotiations and compromises via diplomatic channels. Everything should be solved this way."

Liaisons become closer

Belarus plans to suggest Russia to establish large and powerful joint company to manufacture fertilisers



Belaruskali JSC — the largest supplier of potash fertilisers

"We'll discuss joint Belarus-Russia work with fertilisers in general. We have a potash company which sells nitrogen fertilisers, so we have experience. We'll suggest to the Russians that we create a powerful corporation, which will be able to naturally influence world market prices. We don't con-

ceal this. It would also provide better quality products to our foreign partners," noted President Alexander Lukashenko, agreeing the appointment of Valery Ivanov as Director General of the Belarusian Potash Company JSC.

"Setting up the company with the Russians [BPC],

we've agreed that all sales of Belarusian and Russian fertilisers will be handled by the Belarusian Potash Company. It should remain thus. It's up to you to decide on cheaper loans for more effective operation... but it should be done. You should follow the principles we've agreed upon," added the Belarusian

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