

Some values are enduring

Belarus has no geopolitical ambitions but must protect its national interests and strengthen its military security

By Kirill Denisov

Accordingly, its armed forces are ever combat ready, noted President Alexander Lukashenko, speaking to graduates of military educational establishments from Belarus and Russia. Early in July each year, when Independence Day is celebrated, the President traditionally meets military graduates to congratulate them and give words of encouragement. This year, he told them, "Today, we recollect the heroism of soldiers and of-



During meeting with graduates

ficers of the fraternal Soviet peoples during the Great Patriotic War. They, as representatives of different

nationalities, fought shoulder to shoulder, defending the freedom, prosperity and peaceful sky over our

Republic."

Mr. Lukashenko stressed that the values bequeathed by those victors are vital as never before. He noted that humanity's security still hangs in the balance, with the world's superpowers often using the language of force towards those who reject their influence. He emphasised the importance of strengthening the military security of Belarus, telling the graduates that their priority should be the strengthening of patriotism among the military.

"Of course, not everyone can really become a general, or maybe everyone can, at least I wish this for you all. However, all those trained at our military institutions should use their skills and knowledge to protect our country," underlined the President. He spoke warmly to representatives of the Armed Forces of Kazakhstan, noting that the joint training of Belarusian and Kazakh officers is further evidence of effective military co-operation and strengthening of friendship between our

countries and peoples.

The President of Belarus presented senior officer personnel with general shoulder stripes. Meanwhile, at the Belarusian Embassy to Moscow, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Russia, H.E. Mr. Andrei Kobayakov, presented Belarusian Orders of Merit to Russian military men for their part in promoting military co-operation between Belarus and Russia, following a decree by the President of Belarus.

Diplomacy in wider sense

Belarus Today photo exhibition by Belarusian Telegraph Agency opens at Enav Cultural Centre in Tel Aviv

At the opening of the exhibition, the Minister for Immigration and Absorption of Israel, Sofia Land-

ver, expressed hope for further strengthening and development of friendly relations between Israel and Belarus.

Opening the exhibition, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Israel, H.E.

Mr. Igor Leshchenya, noted that the exhibition is dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and Belarus. He also commented that firm foundations exist for the development and rein-

forcement of Belarusian-Israeli relationships.

Over 50 BelTA photographs are on show, revealing aspects of contemporary Belarus. Moreover, some illustrate the life of the Jewish community in the Republic.

Infrastructure plays an important role

By Ivan Dobrov

IAEA completes comprehensive assessment of national infrastructure for nuclear power in Belarus



"The assessment notes significant progress in Belarus creating the necessary infrastructure to support the building of a nuclear plant," explains the Head of the Department for International Co-operation on Nuclear Energy at Belarusian Ministry of Energy, Lilia Dulinets. She tells us that there are 17 recommendations in the final draft of the document, alongside several suggestions for further infrastructure development, improving legislation in the sphere of nuclear energy, strengthening regulatory monitoring, technical support and other areas connected with the nuclear energy programme.

"Most of the 19 aspects identified in the IAEA report on infrastructure show that the country has acquired the level of infrastructure necessary to commence building a nuclear power station. These include site selection, environmental security, integration of the power plant into the Belarusian power system and industry par-

ticipation," Ms. Dulinets emphasises.

The IAEA experts identified a number of good practises in Belarus, which the IAEA Secretariat will recommend for use in other countries. They attributed to such practices experience in the sphere of radiation protection and environmental monitoring, the creation of a special interagency commission of high level representatives from all concerned government agencies and organisations, and others. The commission discusses issues relating to the building of the nuclear power plant and a programme of staff training, adopted at an early stage of nuclear power engineering development.

During the final meeting, the head of the delegation, who heads of the Division of Nuclear Power in the IAEA Department of Nuclear Energy, Jong Park, noted the high level of competence of those Belarusian specialists involved in the nuclear energy program. In his concluding remarks, he expressed his absolute confidence that the nuclear power programme of Belarus will be implemented successfully, safely and for peaceful purposes.

In total, 14 experts from the IAEA Secretariat and states with great experience in the field of nuclear energy took part in the assessment, as well as representatives of more than 20 Belarusian state agencies and organisations involved in the implementation of the national nuclear energy programme. The final IAEA report will be presented in September 2012.

Novogrudok ready to answer positively

Most ancient city in Grodno Region to join European initiative on energy conservation and ecology matters this autumn



Covenant of Mayors programme participants meet in Novogrudok

By Inessa Brodova

Novogrudok is to become the second city in Belarus taking part in the international UNDP *Covenant of Mayors* programme (joining Polotsk, which is currently the sole member from the Republic). A recent meeting was devoted to the city joining the ecological movement, with guests including those from

the local authorities, the Energy Charter Secretariat and the Italian province of Chieti, alongside international experts in sustainable energy.

To ensure efficient implementation of sustainable energy development in the Novogrudok District, a working group has been set up comprising experts in the spheres of energy, industry, agriculture and construc-

tion. They are to monitor a pilot project and assess its results. Vladimir Kuzmich, a local programme expert with 20 years experience in international renewable energy projects, will be collecting and analysing data, to create a strategy for sustainable energy development, training and informing people, and promoting close co-operation with local authorities.

"I think that decision on the inclusion of our city into the influential *Covenant of Mayors* programme will be positive," stresses the Chairman of Novogrudok District Executive Committee, Anatoly Markevich. "We hope to receive additional investments into the region's economy, helping us implement the most urgent projects to ensure economic use of fuel and energy resources and maintain the balance of the environment. We've already begun work in this area, with solar panels being installed at a pre-school institution in the city to heat its swimming pool. Grodnoenergo has made significant investments into energy-efficiency, with the first wind turbine in the Novogrudok District showing serious results just one year after installation. The heads of major enterprises across the city can share their ideas on promoting efficient energy consumption."

Further meetings are planned in Novogrudok and it is hoped that investors, interested in the UNDP project may soon come.