

# Important to preserve stability

Events in Tajikistan and the unexpected position of Uzbekistan become central to meeting between Alexander Lukashenko and CSTO Secretary General Nikolai Bordyuzha

By Veniamin Mishutin

Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are currently in the foreground in the context of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation. The former has announced its withdrawal from the organisation, while Tajikistan is carrying out major operations against rebel armed forces in the east of the country. The President noted with interest, "It is a member of our organisation but the situation is complicated and the address of the President of Tajikistan cannot be ignored."

Regarding Uzbekistan, Mr. Lukashenko enquired, "What is its position and upon what is it based? You've met with the leaders of Russia and know their position. A decision should be taken; we cannot escape this." Mr. Bordyuzha answered, "All of these trends are negative, showing that the situation is deteriorating across the former Soviet Union." He noted that Uzbekistan's withdrawal from CSTO membership is within its rights, since the president of each country can decide.

Later, talking to journalists, Mr. Bordyuzha expressed his

personal point of view, saying, "In my opinion, Uzbekistan's withdrawal from the organisation won't be to its benefit, as it will miss out on collective efforts to stabilise the situation in Central Asia. This is complex, being primarily related to what's happening in Afghanistan." He is convinced that Uzbekistan will feel the consequences of its move, since it's quite difficult to solve security issues alone. Nevertheless, there are no immediate 'fatal results'.

"The CSTO has received a lot of negative press but I believe this is totally unfounded.

The organisation is capable enough of functioning and, importantly, has the power to collectively respond to threats and challenges faced by its member states. Some 'experts' may rejoice at the CSTO 'collapsing' but it's really not so. The CSTO is capable of functioning and can perform the tasks facing it."

According to Mr. Bordyuzha, the CSTO is ready to lend a shoulder to Tajikistan, in the form of material resources for the military. However, there is no talk of direct intervention in conflict resolution. "As for the

essence of the processes taking place in Tajikistan, they are entirely related to the internal life of Tajikistan, so do not require intervention of any collective forces. I do not see any need. I know that the power structures of Tajikistan are capable of resolving the situation in Gorno-Badakhshan."

During the meeting, the current activities of the organisation were also discussed. According to the Secretary General, training will soon begin for Collective Rapid Reaction Forces in the Central Asia Region. In September, the KSOR



Nikolai Bordyuzha

in Armenia will receive training, with those in Kazakhstan taking their turn in October.

The main objective is the preservation of stability and tranquillity across the CSTO zone of responsibility.

## Relevancy in today's information world

Oldest and most prestigious newspaper in the country celebrates 85th anniversary

By Vladimir Kharitonov

An anniversary always inspires reflection, pondering how others see us. The First Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration of Belarus, Alexander Radkov, read a greeting from the President, and added many warm words from himself, noting the importance of prudence and thoughtfulness in journalism. He believes that we need to show philosophical understanding of life and our world when disseminating information to the public on such concepts as sovereignty and independence. Mr. Radkov is an interesting speaker, so his praise is always valuable.

The good words of colleagues are also worth having, of course. The First Deputy Information Minister of Belarus, Lilia Ananich, joined the leaders of national newspapers and the Belarusian



Congratulations to newspaper in honour of its jubilee

Telegraph Agency in congratulating SB. In a professional sense, journalists are always critical of one another, so their praise is worth its weight in gold.

Of course, it takes more than one swallow to make a summer and, as the Chief Editor of SB emphasises, we must look forward rather than back. The newspaper boasts a glorious history worthy of respect but journalists are only truly remembered for their last story.

In our swiftly moving times, filled with the immediacy of the Internet, we must work hard to keep up with the latest developments and trends.

The leadership of SB and its whole team has many ideas for the future, being most keen to remain relevant, with a loyal readership in hard copy as well as virtual space. In depth analysis and acute social and political journalism will remain essential.

## Professionalism remains most important criterion

State border violations shouldn't go unpunished and must be prevented by all means possible, noted the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, appointing the new Head of the State Border Committee, as announced by the Presidential Press Service

Mr. Lukashenko emphasised that it was a mistake to allow the State Border Committee to be diverted into spending time on policy matters rather than performing its direct duty to protect the state border. He notes that the State Border Committee insisted on being involved in policy making. However, 'it still needed to protect our border'. "It was wrong to let them turn from military men into politicians. Their major task is to protect the state border," asserts the President.

The Head of State commented, "As for my recent decisions, including those tackling personnel, there shouldn't be much fuss — quite the opposite. My punishment was too lenient. In Soviet times, they'd have been jailed. Most of the blame lies with the border guards, as the unit detected the plane but failed to give any order to punish the trespassers. Violations of the border shouldn't be left unpunished. They should be prevented by all means, including with the use of weapons. Border guards should prove their loyalty to their Fatherland. You know my personal attitude towards border guards; I'll never allow anyone to mar their image. After all, my children and I served with them."

"Whether this is an insider or outsider, or one close to the President, it matters not. Professional or unprofessional is the only criterion to evaluate the work of border



Frontiers on patrol

guards," he added. Speaking of Alexander Boyechko's appointment as the new head of the State Border Committee, Mr. Lukashenko emphasised that he is a border guard and is well aware of the situation from inside.

"Protecting the state border is the number one task for border guards. International relations and other issues are secondary. Belarusian border guards should not run about Europe in search of funding; it should be Europeans who should come to you and ask to protect their borders. We should primarily defend our own interests. Any provocation should meet an adequate response on our part," explained Mr. Lukashenko.

## Museum opens to honour memory of famous writer

Even if Vasil Bykov were the only representative of Belarusian literature, it would be known worldwide

His creativity needs no advertising, as his hard-hitting works bearing their messages to humanity have such psychological depth and national colour that they'll always remain topical. The People's Writer of Belarus is the pride of our nation, so the establishment of a museum dedicated to Vasil Bykov (by order of the President) comes as no surprise.

On July 27th, 2012, the Government adopted a resolution that the writer's widow, I. M. Bykova, would donate the cottage once lived in by Vasil — found in Zhdanovich-6, in the Minsk District. It is now state property, for use as a museum honouring the author of the famous work *Alpine Ballad*. "This day marks the launch of work to perpetuate the memory of the writer and to preserve his artistic heritage," emphasises the Ministry of Culture.

By June 2014 (the 90th anniversary of the birth of Vasil Bykov)

the first visitors will be able to enter the museum. Meanwhile, much work is to be done to make it worthy of its star status. The cottage needs repair, with rooms adapted to the needs of the museum — and facilities for visitors. Archives and personal belongings are now being sifted to find appropriate materials, with work conducted by the State Museum of the History of Belarusian Literature (under which the writer's museum will operate).