

# Topics require further discussion

**On August 8th, at the initiative of Russia, a telephone call took place between the presidents of Belarus and Russia, raising a wide range of bilateral and international issues**

The Heads of State discussed social-economic issues of common interest, emphasising that our co-operation is developing rapidly in the right direction. Both agreed that we could improve our level of socio-political liaisons

within the Union State.

During the call, Mr. Lukashenko and Mr. Putin discussed traditional foreign policy problems, confirming their readiness to continue joint work to strengthen common defence. Mr.

Putin was keen to hear about the building of the Belarusian power plant and assured Mr. Lukashenko that Russia intends to fulfil its obligations on time and absolutely correctly. Both agreed that the topics raised require further discussion.

## Special emphasis made

**On meeting the State Secretary of the Union State, Grigory Rapota, President Lukashenko asserts that Belarus will always promote the development of the Union State**

Urgent issues regarding the development of the Union were in the spotlight at the meeting, including preparations for Supreme State Council meetings (of the Union State of Belarus and Russia) and those of the Union Council of Ministers. Special emphasis was given to the theme of improving the functioning of Union State institutions, with more dynamism of processes required.

The President noted that Belarus and Russia 'seem to have fewer problems regarding Union construction', but added that 'we must continue developing the process'. 'Every day, every week, every month, we should show our dynamic relationship,' he stressed.



**Grigory Rapota**

Mr. Lukashenko noted that Belarus is studying all proposals carefully, including those of Grigory Rapota, aiming to improve the efficiency of structures within the Union State. He emphasised that Mr. Rapota can be confident of continued Belarusian support of the Union State. He asserted, "Russia was and will remain our strategic partner."

# Effect of modernisation is already apparent

**A new dry cement production line has begun at the Belarusian Cement Plant in Kostyukovich, officially launched by President Lukashenko**

By Vladimir Mikhailov

Also present was the Minister for Architecture and Construction, Anatoly Nichkasov, who couldn't hide his joy. He told us, "This is a great gift to the construction industry, to the country and to the region. It is symbolic in being launched on the eve of Builder's Day and, this spring, a similar line was launched at Krasnoselskstroyaterialy OJSC. Krichevcementnoshifer OJSC is next in line, being almost ready. The effect of modernising the cement industry is already obvious, with no deficits on the domestic market and exports reaching \$41m over six months (equivalent to the whole of 2011)."

In December of 2008, the decision was taken to modernise the cement industry as volumes of construction grew countrywide. Construction materials were also in great demand abroad and our cement plants were not able to benefit from the situation, earning revenue. A third of our machinery needed replacement to allow increased production. Moreover, high energy consumption was reducing the competitive element of exports.

Modernisation at these three plants, suggested by Chinese investors, should solve these problems, aided by a Chinese loan of \$16bn. The President, talking to employees of the construction industry and representatives of the Chinese party, including the Ambassador, H.E. Mr. Gong Jianwei, asked many questions -Q- regarding payback timescales to restructuring and the use of new kinds of construction materials in demand on the market. Mr. Lukashenko also paid attention



**Third complex launched for Belarusian Cement Plant**

to the less pleasing fact that launching of new lines at these three enterprises has been deferred. The heads of enterprises gave objective and subjective reasons, without offering

excuses. The President has set the launch date for the line in Krichev as May 1st 2013. Major investments have been made to ensure not only export growth but cost savings. Mr.

Nichkasov stresses that the launch of new lines at these three enterprises will allow the state to save up to \$80m annually.

Can we sell only cement? Dry blends, concrete components and pavement decorative plates are also in demand on the market. The country has resources of chalk, marl, sand and clay to last perhaps hundreds of years. Mr. Lukashenko emphasised that we should diversify our production over the years, developing new avenues, with help from Chinese partners if they are willing. He explained "Launching production of prefab reinforced concrete at the Belarusian Cement Plant will be profitable to both of us. Give us an answer by October. Meanwhile, the Government should consider other ways of implementing the project."

Needless to say, the opening of a new production line in a town like Kostyukovich means a great deal, since it creates jobs. According to the Director General of the Belarusian Cement Plant, Vladimir Kiselev, 155 new jobs are available, paying adequate salaries. It is sure to inspire further development of the town and others like it.

Soon, the whole south-east Mogilev Region should become more economically active, with new factories and farms opening. The President has tasked the Chairman of the Mogilev Region Executive Committee, Piotr Rudnik, with local socio-economic development, having heard his report. Mr. Lukashenko is also keen to reconsider the distribution of regional funding relating to alleviating the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, making all as fair and efficient as possible.

# Beginning seems to be promising

By Valentin Kharitonov

**The Belarusian satellite launched into orbit about three weeks ago is the first step in a major space programme. Excitingly, we are on the verge of a new stage of industrial development, with much to offer partners, as discussed by President Alexander Lukashenko on meeting the Director General of the Chinese Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation, Ma Xingrui.**

Mr. Lukashenko is convinced

of the viability and mutual benefit of co-operation, saying, "We've been liaising with the People's Republic of China in this area for a few years, with some success. However, this is only the beginning. We have further prospects and are ready to utilise the experience of China and its achievements in this area, while offering our services to China in the space realm. We believe this to be a sphere of great importance not only because we have a good school of specialists but because we see our national security developing via space technologies."

Partnerships between our two countries are solid and promising, with a great level of understanding, formed at the highest level. The President noted that this 'opens up opportunities and contributes to the development of co-operation between Belarus and China in all areas and in all directions — especially the space industry and high-tech projects'.

Mr. Xingrui, agreed, noting, "Co-operation between Belarus and China in the space industry is showing good progress and good results. Belarus has provided excellent equipment to China in the



**Chinese partners meet the President**

field of remote sensing of Earth, and it's being applied at our devices." He expressed his hope that co-operation in the space industry

will continue to grow, developing projects for the benefit of both nations and supporting the peaceful exploration of outer space.