



Igor Petrishenko

During the ceremony of appointment, Mr. Lukashenko especially stressed that, besides working as ambassador, Igor Petrishenko would be representing Belarus at various integration structures. "The reasons for this combination — which was my decision — are various," he said. "Vitaly, we see no sense in appointing one dedicated person to serve some posts, since they do not require ma-

Focus on further integration

In appointing Igor Petrishenko as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Russia, President of Belarus stresses that Russia is Belarus' most important foreign, political and economic partner

major work. The Minister and the Head of the Administration have been ordered to make rapid suggestions on how best to reduce our representation where it is unnecessary. Around two hundred people represent our country in structures but there is really only work for about half of them. Accordingly, we'll apply a new approach."

The President also expects to see this approach applied to liaisons

with Russia — due to the active development of integration processes. "The volume of work is huge. Our integration has not merely resumed but is active, due to Russia's focus on integration. At your suggestion, we're ready to reconsider this as necessary," he added.

As the Head of State noted, Mr. Petrishenko previously worked at the Russian Embassy, understanding its work from 'inside'. Mr. Lukashenko

stated, "You are well-known in the Russian Federation and your work is highly appreciated." Moreover, the new ambassador is familiar with the issue of integration, having participated in the formation and development of related legislation.

The President said, "I hope you understand that an ambassador to the Russian Federation — as well as to Venezuela or other key regions — is more than a mere ambassador.

The Russian Federation is our most important foreign political and economic partner, so I hope you'll worthily represent the Belarusian state's interests there."

The President also agreed to appoint Alexander Mikhnevich as First Deputy Foreign Minister, relieving him from his post as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland.

In absolute compliance with highest level requirements

Belarusian publishers win Grand Prix and six more awards at 9th CIS International *Art of Book* Contest, with awards ceremony hosted by 25th Moscow International Book Fair

By Alexander Sergeev

Dmitry Strukov. *Album of Drawings. 1864-1867*, published by the Petrus Brovka Belarusian Encyclopaedia, won the Grand Prix at the event, while the publishing house has been given a first degree diploma in the 'Commonwealth' nomination for its *Living Faith. Vetka* album. A second degree diploma went to *Valentin Gubarev. Everything is Important* pictorial album, released by Mastatskaya Litaratura Publishing House, winning the 'Art Book' nomination. *The Life of Yevfrosiniya Polotskaya, Mother Superior of the Monastery of Our Saviour in Polotsk*, published by the Belarusian Exarchate, took the same award in the 'Printed in the Commonwealth' category. *Minsk — City and People* photo album, released by Artiya-Group enterprise, claimed a second degree diploma in the 'My Country' nomination. Moreover, *The*



Belarusian publishers present unique editions at exhibition

CIS: 20 Years photo album, published by the Belarusian Telegraph Agency, and a book on Kazakhstan, released by the Minsk International Culture of Books Centre, were given special diplomas.

According to Belarus'

First Deputy Information Minister, Lilia Ananich, Belarusian publishers have received more awards than their colleagues from other CIS states. Moreover, Belarus has been awarded the Grand Prix at the contest for the second year in a row. She believes

that Belarusian book publishing has achieved this through highest level state support.

The International *Art of Book* Contest has been held since 2004 under the aegis of the Inter-State Council for Co-operation in Periodical Publication, Book Publish-

ing, Book Distribution and Printing. The competition aims to expand collaboration, enhance culture and develop book art in the CIS while encouraging the brightest and most talented endeavours in book publishing.

In assessing the editions, the international jury looks at content, illustrations, design, the level of preparation, and scientific and reference information. The polygraphic quality is also assessed, as is its public and professional importance. The highest award — the Grand Prix — is bestowed to a unique edition and is the most prestigious of the contest.

This year, the event brought together 121 editions — from every member of the CIS except Turkmenistan. The international jury examined books in seven nominations and winners in each category were determined through secret vote. These were awarded diplomas of the first, second and third degree.

Timely opening of centre

National Data Centre for Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty opens at Emergency Ministry of Belarus

The Director of the International Data Centre of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO PrepCom), Lassina Zerbo, took part in the opening ceremony of the National Data Centre at the Ministry of Emergency Situations. The Centre boasts the latest equipment, delivered and installed at the expense of the CTBTO in July 2012, in accordance with a programme to strengthen the potential of members of the treaty.

Mr. Zerbo met the leadership of the Foreign Ministry, the Emergency Ministry and the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environmental Protection, and of the Sosny Joint Institute for Power and Nuclear Research (of the National Academy of Sciences). He also attended the opening of a national seminar discussing the operation of the National Data Centre and the development of co-operation with the Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organisation — held in Minsk from September 12th-13th.

The Secretariat of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission joined representatives of the Foreign Ministry, the Emergency Ministry and the National Academy of Sciences, alongside those from higher educational institutions across Belarus, in sharing information on the opportunities within the CTBTO. They discussed prospects for expanding practical co-operation, including the participation of Belarusian experts in international training and seminars — conducted under the auspices of the CTBTO.

Visas to become thing of the past for Belarusians

By Alexander Levkovsky

Israeli businesses taking great interest in Belarus, with visit by Israeli Tourism Minister Stas Misezhnikov to Minsk proving intensive

Over his four day visit, the Minister took part in a session of the Belarusian-Israeli Commission on Trade and Economic Co-operation and in the Belarus-Israel Business Forum. He also met Prime Minister Mikhail Myasniko-

vich and the Chairman of the Grodno Regional Executive Committee, Semen Shapiro.

The first Israeli investments into our country primarily focused on the agrarian sector, but have since expanded to cover IT, tourism and pharmaceuticals. According to Mr. Misezhnikov, last year, Israeli injections into our economy totalled \$276m and this is far from the limit. Both sides are to increase the level of state guarantee on investments to \$300m per year.

The Tourism Minister is especially interested in the Grodno Region, where 15 companies using Israeli capital are already operating. A major joint project being realised there deals with raising turkeys at Novaya Yelnya Combine of Bread Products. An equipment supplier has been chosen and a site allocated for construction.

He announced pleasant news that visas are to be eventually abolished for Belarusians visiting Israel and



Stas Misezhnikov during visit to Grodno

Israeli coming to Belarus; at present, negotiations remain underway to liberalise the regime. Mr. Misezhnikov explained, "At the first stage, the fee for visas will be abolished; a decision on this issue is expected within a few months. Around 140-150 thousand

Belarus-born people reside in Israel and many would like to visit Belarus to satisfy their 'nostalgia'."

Guests will also be able to satisfy their desire for relaxation; the Israeli Minister was delighted by the level of agrotourism in Belarus.