

# ‘With no other country have we so quickly advanced in our relations’

President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, interviewed by China’s central media

By Vladimir Vasiliev

The 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Belarus and China inspired a recent press conference in the Presidential Residence’s Blue Hall. Unsurprisingly, much was spoken of the past... but even more of the future. As Alexander Lukashenko believes, a promising path is ahead for Minsk and Beijing. Journalists from the Xinhua Agency, China Central Television (CCTV), the *People’s Daily* newspaper and China Radio International were in attendance; moreover, the guests were able to ask questions without need for a translator.

Beforehand, the Chinese journalists received a press tour through Minsk, visiting the Midea-Horizont joint Belarusian-Chinese company and Minsk’s heat and power station #5 (being modernised with funds from China Development Bank). They also visited the Belarusian State University’s Republican Confucius Institute of Sinology, the National Library and Stolitsa trading complex.

Examples of Belarusian-Chinese co-operation exist throughout the Republic — such as the powerful generators at the Bereza and Novolukoml hydro-electric power stations (using a loan on privileged terms from the Chinese Government). Chinese partners have financed the establishment of new lines and equipment at the Krichev, Kostyukovich and Kras-



President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko meets Chinese journalists

noselsk cement plants. In addition, a Svetlogorsk factory producing bleached pulp is to be constructed (using a Chinese loan). The new Belarusian-Chinese industrial park is to cover 80sq.km in the Smolevichi District, with up to \$30bn of investments planned. The sum may seem huge but the matter is actually settled. Twenty years of Minsk-Beijing diplomatic relations have brought evident results.

Mr. Lukashenko told

the Chinese media that Belarus is keen to encourage tourism from China and stressed that the Republic boasts many sites interesting to foreign guests. “We’d love to see more Chinese people visit. You probably have more wealthy people than America. They may not be billionaires but they are quite wealthy enough to afford to come to Belarus — to see its sights and relax,” Mr. Lukashenko added.

The President believes

that the people of our two states should become better acquainted with the culture and traditions of each. Belarus is ready to help the Chinese study Belarusian culture, history and nature. “We should represent our culture, organising Days of Culture; we need to take our opera, ballet and pop singers there — although China has also significantly advanced in this direction,” Mr. Lukashenko noted.

With regard to the

forthcoming Year of the Dragon (following the Chinese calendar), journalists asked if the President had a message for the Chinese nation. He replied, “It’s probably no accident that a dragon has become China’s symbol. You possess all that which a dragon symbolises. You have enough wisdom, money and happiness now and your country is developing along normal lines. I wish you peace and stability. May your country be calm, with no conflict

or war. This calm development will take our friends — the People’s Republic of China — to a top position in the world.”

Answering questions from Chinese journalists, Mr. Lukashenko stressed, “With no other country have we so quickly advanced in our relations as with the People’s Republic of China. We have no closed topics — including the sale of potash fertilisers and the construction of a space satellite for China. The scope of our co-operation is huge. We already know what to do and how.”

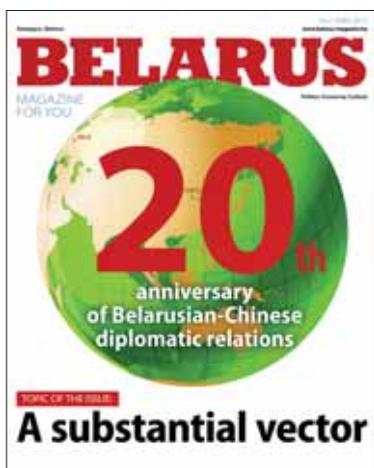
Other extracts from the interview are to be published after coverage by the Chinese media. Just one hour has given the Chinese reporters the President’s views on future Belarusian-Chinese relations, the Single Economic Space with Russia and Kazakhstan, and the possibility of political and economic reform in Belarus. He also spoke of his talk with the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Chinese People’s Congress, U Bango, when they met by a global map in September 2011.

At the end of the interview, a journalist from China Radio International told the President that her radio’s programmes are available on the Internet, in Belarusian. She also asked Mr. Lukashenko to speak in Belarusian. He reacted with a small improvised speech, advertising Belarus to the Chinese audience. It was good advertising for China Radio International itself of course.

## Efficient bilateral vector along Minsk-Beijing axis

By Vasily Kharitonov

This year’s first issue of *Belarus* magazine is almost completely dedicated to Belarusian-Chinese relations. It should be noted that many materials in this issue have been prepared in co-authorship with journalists from *China* magazine. Accordingly, relying on views from both sides, journalists have traced the past 20 years of diplomatic relations between our two friendly states. High ranking officials have also given their assessments of these relations — such as Belarus’ Deputy Prime Minister and Co-chair of the Chinese-Belarusian Commission for Trade and Economic Co-operation, Anatoly Tozik, and Belarus’



Foreign Minister, Sergei Martynov. Meanwhile, China’s Foreign Minister, Yang Jiechi, describes the definite

content of the bilateral relations. China’s Vice Minister for Commerce, the deputy representative of international trade negotiations, Zhong Shan — who also co-chairs the Chinese-Belarusian Commission for Trade and Economic Co-operation, shares his views, as do ambassadors from both countries, accredited in Minsk and Beijing.

In this issue of *Belarus* magazine, there is a look at the joint economic and scientific projects. Each year, increasing numbers of Chinese students choose to study in Belarus, while a great many Belarusians also work or study in China. The rich culture of the contemporary nations helps in bringing us together in friendship.

IT  
ALWAYS  
EXISTS

INTERNATIONAL  
The Minsk Times

Socio-political Weekly

To Defend Expectations

Don't be late to subscribe to The Minsk Times!  
Indexes: Departmental - 637302, Individual - 63730