

# Making full use of countries' combined intellectual potential

Belarus and Russia are ever developing their joint military-technical co-operation, with President Lukashenko recently meeting the Deputy Chairman of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Rogozin, in Minsk

By Vladimir Khromov

Mr. Lukashenko noted, "We have a great many questions to discuss regarding the defence industry of Russia and the military-industrial complex of Belarus; issues need to be solved."

He noted that much time was spent discussing such issues at his last meeting with the President of Russia in Sochi, adding, "I'd like to discuss our strategy of co-operation seriously, taking into account our existing liaisons and mutual work. Most importantly, I'd like to find concrete solutions to specific issues, to guide us in future."

Mr. Lukashenko suggested that Mr. Rogozin learn about opportunities in the Belarusian military-industrial complex, noting, "In truth, we have a 'common' army so should have a common defence sphere; you know all that is happening around the world and the threats which exist." Mr. Rogozin stressed the good dynamics of Belarusian-Russian military co-operation, saying, "Indeed, this year, we've come a long way in finding new paths of strategic partnership."

The Russian Deputy Prime Minister stressed the importance of combining the potential of Belarus and Russia in the military-technical sphere, explaining, "We don't simply aim to trade ready-made products but wish to combine our intellectual potential and industrial abilities. Our existing strategic partnership can be taken to a new level of industrial capitalisation."



Alexander Lukashenko and Dmitry Rogozin discuss further development of military-technical co-operation between Russia and Belarus

Mr. Rogozin noted that the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, has launched a huge state arms programme with the aim not just of strengthening defence of Russia and its allies, but to inspire further industrialisation. He added, "No one can afford to be weak in this world. Of course, weakness is determined not only by a lack of weapons and military equipment but by market conditions. True

protection lies in powerful industrial potential. In this sphere, we see great possibilities in the co-operation of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus." The President of Belarus confirmed this assessment, saying Belarus felt similarly regarding security.

Following the Minsk meeting, a working group is to continue discussing the best path to military-industrial co-operation. Mr.

Rogozin notes that the Russian military industry is interested in close co-operation with Belarusian military-industrial enterprises, as well as with Integral and MAZ. "Industrial co-operation between the enterprises of our two countries is connected not only by acquisition of assets, purchase of shares and other transactions. Co-operation may also preserve between enterprises which preserve their inde-

pendence and have different forms of property," he said.

Belarus and Russia have now signed a programme of measures to strengthen co-operation between their military-industrial enterprises from 2012-2015. The First Deputy Prime Minister, Vladimir Semashko, is confident that this joint action plan will promote integration of military-industrial complexes of Belarus and Russia.

## Inflation level to be controlled via monetary and market measures

Alexander Lukashenko stresses that particular foreign exchange market rate must be followed

The President of Belarus listened to a report from the Chair of the National Bank, Nadezhda Yermakova, then noted, "Recently, we've managed, to some extent, to overcome small but negative trends in the foreign exchange market



**Nadezhda Yermakova** — primarily connected with rumours and politics. We should firmly stick to our defined course, as an-

nounced, as people should understand and believe us. If the National Bank proclaims a policy, we should follow it."

The President was also interested in Ms. Yermakova's forecast for the Belarusian economy as a whole, particularly with regard to exports. The Head of the National Bank announced that 2012 targets had been met, saying "Inflation is

within planned limits. From January to October 16th, the price index stood at 117.1 percent. The average monthly increase was 1.7 percent while core inflation was just 14.1 percent. Administratively regulated prices and those for seasonal vegetables stood at 21.6 percent. So, inflation is being controlled via monetary and market methods — as per the designated policy."

## Upwards through world rankings

By Alexander Levkovsky

Belarus improves world ranking for business conditions

Belarus is ranked 58th among 185 economies globally for ease of doing business, according to a new report by the International Finance Corporation and the World Bank: *Doing Business-*

2013. Over two years, Belarus has moved up 11 positions. Comparing Belarus with its partners in the Customs Union and the Single Economic Space, it is slightly behind Kazakhstan but ahead of Russia and considerably more attractive than Ukraine, China, Brazil or India.

According to experts, the improved position should encourage investors;

each step forward brings a measurable rise in direct foreign investments. However, Alexander Shvets, the Chairman of the Belarusian Scientific and Industrial Association, believes that we still have much to do to form a truly competitive environment. For example, an equal economic environment for all forms of ownership is required.

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