

to success and prosperity

maintain their families. They should be people's official and love and respect people, rather than push out from them.

Moreover, the reduction shouldn't tackle only state authorities. We have lots of various state organisations who 'are sitting' on the budget, as well as career development centres, methodical and other organisations. Sometimes, many people are registered there but there's no one to work. There're examples when heads have up to five deputies while the number of their employees is just 20-30. What do they do?

The recently signed decree contains corresponding instructions for the Government and regional executive committees. I charge the Presidential Administration to check their fulfilment in 2013. If these won't be fulfilled this will be already political provocation. You're aware of the people's attitude towards us — civil servants and officials. The same situation is in any other country and this is normal. We shouldn't complain, since our people don't throw sticks and stones into us, so let's be worthy of this respect.

Many say and I'm often informed that there's some tension among state officials in the view of the reduction and that some feel offended by the President's decision. My dear, I underline that we won't offend anyone. All those who are worthy to serve in the state apparatus to the nation and the state will be employed and involved. Those talented people who've found their way to the state service accidentally will be obligatory given the work. However, this refers to only those who want to work... and I think there won't be many such, so there's no need to write to me how state officials react towards this decree. I'm aware of their reaction. Time will pass, everything will and they will even be grateful that such decision has been adopted.

There will be enough work for everyone!

Optimisation and the improvement of the state apparatus' activity directly refer to the power bloc. The major purpose of the law enforcement system, alongside the army and other power structures, remains unchanged — reliable protection of personality, community and state from various external and internal threats and the provision of conditions for dynamical development of the country and implementation of national interests.

I'd like to note that, in total, these tasks are fulfilled and sometimes rather successful.

However, to stop the development here and to freeze means to lag behind life and the needs of the society, so we're modernising our power structure nowadays. We're doing this calmly and gradually while proceeding from real conditions and opportunities of the state. By reducing the total number of this segment of the state service we simultaneously outline priority and new areas. We shift our efforts to those sections which are designed to make the life of Belarusian citizens more comfortable, protected and secure now, rather than in the future.

The Armed Forces are undergoing serious modernisation. Of course, we

aren't going to be at war with anyone; however, we've always paid and will continue to pay special attention to the provision of military security. The quality of preparation of overhead personnel and the troops has been significantly raised. Meanwhile, the previously achieved level of military and mobilisation readiness has been preserved and most rational ways of its maintenance under contemporary conditions have been elaborated.

The foundation of the Investigation Committee has completely justified itself. The structure and functions of the Interior Ministry have been optimised and the work is currently being finished to set up an independent State Committee of Expert Evidence.

A range of serious organisational and personnel decisions was adopted to strengthen the protection of the state border and the order will be established at the checkpoints.

I've addressed this issue at least thrice and have warned the top officials of the State Border Committee that have been renewed considerably recently: God forbid that anyone else easily crosses the state border, you will have yourselves only to blame.

I'd like to warn everyone, who tries to cross the state border (where I also used to serve), that we'll act without mercy. The border service has been given relevant instructions. The situation has deteriorated so much that border guards are afraid to stop a trespasser, who crushes everything on the way to enter Belarus. We had to spend days and a lot of money to catch him inside the country, had to mobilise the Interior Ministry, the Customs Committee, and the border service. So I would like to issue a public warning that the border service will use firearms upon the first act of disobedience. The border isn't a hole!

In total, the major tasks for the power bloc have been set in the beginning of the year and I won't repeat them. However, I'd like to again pay your attention to the necessity of absolute provision of economic security of the state. Economy is the basis which is the foundation for the state and the whole national security.

We can't slow down in struggling against corruption primarily there where there's big money budgetary money. Each official should clearly understand that they will have to answer according to the law for the use of powers in mercenary purposes.

I also warn the heads of enterprises who don't adopt the necessary measures aiming to establish the trustworthiness of their counter-agents and who don't understand and don't want to understand that they should be crystal — as a tear, as glass. They are always in the forefront and they're always face to face before their people and their staff. I believe that the bar of personal responsibility, control and adequate reaction from the state's side should be enhanced here many times.

Belarus on the world arena

Our relations with the neighbours are a natural priority of Belarus.

We're connected by the Union State relations with brotherly Russia and we have no political disagree-

ments. We enter the highest level of the bilateral collaboration as part of the Union State.

I'd like to say again sincerely and absolutely honestly or the European State, the Unites State and other countries that on negotiating with you we won't ever proceed from the fact: we're either with you or with Russia. We don't have such choice and there can't be such choice. Russia, the Russian people and Belarusians are like a single tree. Of course, we can't live without Russia, just like Russian can't failure us. None is able to violate this sacred law: neither Lukashenko, nor Putin, nor Medvedev, nor someone else. This is natural. It's counter-productive to demand from us to turn away from Russia. There won't ever be so! If someone demands this from us, even don't set at the negotiation table with us. Nev-



ertheless, we don't create any problems and difficulties to our neighbours, especially our western neighbours.

We are the most decent, excuse me for immodesty, and reliable people who live in the centre of Europe.

A great deal of oil products and oil is pumped from the east to the west. Do you remember that they primarily cross the Belarusian territory? No. This is because everything is calm and quiet here for you. If, God forbid, some small accident happens, it's being eliminated within just several hours. When the Yamal-Europe-2 gas pipeline is put into operation you'll receive more than half of your natural gas through Belarus. Haven't you ever blamed us that we perform our factions unfairly? We fulfil them honestly.

Millions and hundreds of millions of people annually go to and from. Haven't you ever experienced some difficulties on the Belarusian territory? No. If we construct a road we try to repair or build a bypass road. This is beneficial for us and is even more beneficial for you.

We're struggling to your advantage against migration flows, uranium, various nuclear technologies and other hazardous substances and drugs which we arrest in kilograms and tonnes at our border.

This is a good agenda to start the normalisation of the relations with the EU and the USA. We don't want to quarrel and argue with you. We'd like to be in good and normal relations with you. However, I'd like to repeat again that we won't ever fall on our kneed in front of someone.

As far as our foreign policy is concerned, I won't speak long about this. Much has been already said about it

and I won't bring here concrete examples. Everything we've agreed with our partners — with China, Russia, India, Latin America, now with Africa and we begin to develop relations with the South East Asia and Australia, as well as with the EU which is our major export consumer — will be obligatory fulfilled.

There's no need to make pressure on us. You've already assured that all these sanctions are counter-productive. Don't face us a choice: either in this way or in that way. We're situated in the centre of Europe and you say yourselves that Belarus acts as some connecting link, bridge and corridor between the West and the East, so it should be calm and secure. We guarantee you that it will be so and there won't be less democracy in our country than in yours in any way.

conditions for work in Belarus for our partners to the uttermost, which presupposes visa regime, Let's take Israel for example. 15 percent of its population and maybe even more come from the former Soviet republics. These people have significant political weight in the country, let alone the prospects of joint business.

However, we have visas today with Israel. Is it normal? No, it isn't normal, Mr. Ambassador. I'm aware that you advocate the abolishment of the visa regime but we need to work jointly with you and Israeli government so that we come to these decisions together s quicker as possible. Are you afraid of us? No. I think you shouldn't be afraid of us.

Meanwhile, Singapore is the most important regional financial centre and a potential source of investments into the Belarusian economy. Soon it may become one of the major grounds for promotion of Belarusian produce to the markets of the South East Asia. We have the same approach towards the United Arab Emirates. Our people tend to select this country for rest and trips more often.

Therefore, I instruct the Foreign Ministry jointly with the Interior Ministry and other departments to submit comprehensively worked-out proposals aimed to simplify and abolish visa regime regarding these and other states.

The Belarusian-Chinese co-operation is a positive example. It has reached a higher level of credit-investment collaboration. There have been much talk about the Belarus-China Industrial Park and we have already kick-started this project. I believe it's extremely important to activate interaction with the Chinese partners in telecommunications, IT and the renovation of cable network in our country. The same applies to India, Vietnam, Venezuela and the neighbouring states.

Belarus has begun tapping into the huge African market, too. It's not right to think that Africa is a poverty-stricken continent. That is far from truth. Today's world will not do without Africa and this developing continent is currently in the spotlight and we should not be late with our own proposals.

I've already said about the USA and the European Union. If there's will from their side, we'll cover our way very quickly.

Dear friends!

The most vital thing in this Year of Frugality is to take care of each other. We tend to listen to ourselves more than to our conversation partners, and we are sometimes unrestrained. Each of us and the public conscious still has much sharpness and intolerance. Even Myasnikovich, Lukashenko and others at the top are guilty of this. This refers to everyone.

Historically, we have learnt to be distrustful. Life has never indulged Belarusians, sending centuries of struggle for physical survival. However, life is changing. Today, we need to be more delicate, tolerant and kind. Our hearts will lead us. See the good and light in each person. This will bring the true sense of the Year of Frugality: taking care of each other. In doing so, we'll be taking care of our Belarus.

Thank you for attention!

Don't force us to introduce same-sex marriages. This will not happen in the near future. That is for sure, when I am the President. Our people don't accept this! You demonstrate in this way that you go away from Christian values. This is alien for us and we won't do this. Moreover, we won't organise any revolutions either and we won't allow any revolutions to happen. We won't press anyone. Let opposition exists; however, let it be true opposition who struggles at presidential and parliamentary elections honestly but not break, destroy and bomb. If they bomb they will get beaten.

What is unclear here? We act in the same you do. Absolutely in the same way.

I won't speak much about the Single Economic Space, as pour policy here is absolutely clear and transparent. We're moving towards the Eurasian Union jointly with Russia and Kazakhstan. Probably, we're ready for this Eurasian Union even more than others do and we'll definitely build it.

We also enter the markets of Singapore and Indonesia. Some may ask what is the reason of going so far away. My dear friends, the world is so close today that it's silly to say that Indonesia is very far away from us. We should go where we're waited for.

I've already instructed the Foreign Ministry to completely reorient the policy of our foreign economic and political missions according to our interests. We should seek out those countries where we are welcomed and which are ready to open new markets for us. We should take the best in the world and bring it here, to our country.

In this respect, we should ease the