

# New faces join diplomatic corps

By Veniamin Mikhailovsky

## The formation of a 'belt of neighbourliness' is a priority of Belarusian foreign policy

The ambassadors of Angola, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Iran, Cote d'Ivoire, Laos, Lithuania, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines and Chile have presented their credentials to the President of Belarus. Addressing the diplomats, the Head of State underlined that history has taught Belarusians to appreciate peace and trust, making friends without bearing grudges. He sees this as a reliable basis for dialogue and mutually beneficial co-operation. "Whatever regions you represent, you're acquiring a long-term, sincere partner in the centre of Europe in Belarus. We aren't

just ready for efficient interaction but are ready to assist our friends where necessary," Mr. Lukashenko asserted.

Accepting the credentials of the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Lithuania to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Evaldas Ignatavičius, the Head of State stressed that Belarus and Lithuania are united by common history, culture, treasures and traditions. "There's nothing to divide us, as our two countries have many joint interests: in the spheres of security, trade and industrial co-operation. We should jointly use and expand our existing transport and logistics potential. We're ready to make our relations an example of truly neighbourliness," noted the Belarusian leader. "We hope that Lithuania's presidency of the EU in the second half of

2013 will help stabilise Belarusian-European relations."

Accepting credentials from the ambassadors of Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Chile, the President emphasised that Belarus is keen to expand its interaction with Latin America. The ambassadors are, respectively, H.E. Mr. Estuardo Meneses Coronado, H.E. Mr. Rubén Alberto Beltrán Guerrero, H.E. Mr. Gustavo Antonio Otero Zapata and H.E. Mr. Juan Eduardo Eiguren Guzmán.

"Every year, interaction with Latin American states embraces new spheres and projects. Last year, our total trade turnover with countries in this region exceeded \$2bn. Moreover, various major projects are being successfully implemented: in the spheres of oil extraction,

construction and industrial and agricultural manufacture," noted the Head of State. "We can now confidently say that Belarusian goods, technologies and specialists are known for their high quality in Latin America."

"We're ready to share our accumulated experience with Mexico, Peru, Chile, Guatemala and other states. I'm confident that our nations boast huge potential for collaboration," noted the President.

The Head of State noted that Asian countries are Belarus' traditional partners but that a new phase of co-operation is possible. Accepting the credentials of the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Iran to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Mohammad Reza Sabouri, Mr. Lukashenko expresses confi-

dence that our level of interaction may be significantly raised if Iran wishes to do so. "Belarus is interested in successfully implementing joint projects with Iranian capital and will continue to create necessary conditions to support this," the Belarusian President added, emphasising that our countries also share similar positions on most international issues.

Laos and the Philippines are also invited to step up their mutually beneficial collaboration with Belarus, as President Lukashenko noted on receiving credentials from the H.E. Mr. Thieng Boupha and H.E. Mr. Alejandro Bunola Mosquera.

Mr. Lukashenko added that major opportunities exist to develop relations with African countries, speaking to the ambassadors of An-

gola, Guinea-Bissau, Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria: H.E. Mr. Joaquim Augusto de Lemos, H.E. Mr. Seko Intchasso, H.E. Mr. Bernard Tano-Boutchoue and H.E. Mr. Assam Ekanem Assam. He emphasised, "Belarus plans to expand its network of diplomatic missions in Africa and has much to offer partners from Nigeria, Angola, Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea-Bissau."

"With your aid, co-operation between our countries could gain considerable impulse, reaching new heights," stated the Belarusian leader.

Mr. Lukashenko expressed his hope that relations between Belarus and the countries represented by the diplomats will become a worthy example of friendship and mutually beneficial collaboration.

# Advanced format for information

Today, in Belarus, we can share news in seconds, read newspapers on tablets and mobile phones, and watch 3D TV at home. The recent 20th International Specialised *TIBO* Exhibition and Congress on Telecommunications, Information and Banking Technologies and the 17th International Specialised *Mass Media in Belarus* Exhibition presented the latest innovations of modern society

By Vasily Kharitonov

Needless to say, our ever-changing world of information revolution has brought the emergence of hundreds of new products and services, ensuring the promotion of the global economy. Belarus is part of this, as President Lukashenko stressed in his address to the Belarusian people and the National Assembly. The informatisation of society is being conducted on a national scale, covering all areas of life, without exception, promoting the renewal of the state.

Specialists from various spheres are employed on this task, as was evident at the *TIBO* and *Mass Media in Belarus* forums. Everyone from mobile operators and medical specialists to tourist agencies and the media is digitalising information, making it more widely accessible to the public, and easier to store and retrieve. Of course most printed magazines and newspapers already have online versions, incorporating multimedia galleries. Journalists also blog and chat with readers via social networks.

When reading a greeting from the President of Belarus at the opening of the 17th International *Mass Media in Belarus* Specialised Exhibition and 20th International *TIBO-2013* Specialised Forum on Telecommunications, Information and Bank Technologies, Alexander Radkov, the First Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration, Internet versions of Belarusian media became publicly accessible sources



All diversity of the Belarusian press on show at the exhibition

of fresh information. The State Secretary of the Union State of Belarus and Russia, Grigory Rapota, noted, "He who owns information, owns the world." A common information space has now appeared. "Mass media around the globe has an independent online presence, thanks to the Internet," said Mr. Rapota. "We are keen to encourage its development, rather than see it destroyed."

The *Mass Media in Belarus* event was held as part of *TIBO-2013*, since the latest technologies and print media are inseparable. Online and PDF versions of most publications exist, while video calls enable news to be

reported directly from the scene; centralised telephone exchanges ensure quality and modern technologies allow news to be related faster than ever.

*TIBO* also presented the latest surveillance systems and 3D home TV sets. Systems for recording road accidents were on display, alongside Horizon's plans for digital television broadcasting. Beltelecom showed its 'smart home' technology, which can be used to remotely control home appliances, lighting and heating.

"Belarus is paying considerable attention to the development



Acquaintance with innovations in telecommunication technology

platforms. Ali Mohammed Oglu Abbasov, Azerbaijan's Minister for Communications and Information Technologies, noted, "Conditions have been created to showcase the latest developments and there are opportunities to discuss current issues in the field of new technologies and mass media."

Over 300 companies, from 30 countries, presented modern developments and technological solutions, including representatives from about 600 publications — from Belarus, Russia, China, India, Cuba and Venezuela. Major companies set up alongside regional authorities, allowing levels of efficiency to be compared. The Gomel Region's stand saw visitors looking at a virtual 3D-view of the town of Petrikov and a system of online diaries for parents. Meanwhile, the Minsk Region presented a new version of the Minsk Region Executive Committee's website, with e-services.

Deputy Information Minister Vladimir Matusevich stressed that new technologies are vital to the media. He explained, "Mobile formats are of particular interest, allowing readers to receive all the same articles as are present in printed editions, using a tablet or cell phone. More than half of the Belarusian population is using the Internet so media editions need to master new formats, especially if they want to attract a younger readership. The slogan for the 17th *Mass Media in Belarus* Exhibition is 'Convergence, multimedia, interactivity.'"

ALEXANDER RUZNECHKA