

Belarus-China: New Opportunities

In September 2022, the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China adopted the Joint Declaration on the Establishment of an All-Weather and Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, which contains the Belarusian-Chinese agreements to intensify scientific and technical cooperation, expand practical interaction between research institutes, higher education institutions and enterprises, and encourage the establishment of platforms as joint centers of applied scientific research and laboratories. At the same time, the development of bilateral relations has moved to a new stage, where interaction in the field of innovation has been continuously strengthened. In this regard, three priority components can be identified. The first is in the field of scientific research, where the parties are involved in the implementation of major joint projects. The second is in the field of innovation, where a network of joint innovation centers and scientific laboratories is being formed and developed. The third one is in the field of education, where joint training and mutual internships of specialists, teachers and students take place. What steps are being taken in these areas both in Belarus and China? We will discuss them in this study.



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Belarus-China: New Opportunities

Strategic engagement in an era of exemplary partnerships

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Table of contents

Industrial park development and regional co-operation.....	3
Prospects for co-operation identified	15
Priorities for a new phase of partnership.....	27
Strategic partnership enters a new era.....	36
On a foundation of new ideas.....	50
Literature	59

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Industrial park development and regional co-operation

Directive No. 9 "On the Development of Bilateral Relations between the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China", adopted in December 2021, lists building up trade and economic, financial, and investment interaction and expanding interregional ties among the priority tasks until 2025. Within the framework of the declared course to raise the status of Belarusian-Chinese relations to the level of iron brotherhood, exemplary all-round strategic cooperation and all-weather partnership, an important component is the activity of the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park "Great Stone", one of the main tasks of which is to ensure the effective activity of its residents, attract new ones, actively develop innovative activities, startups, cluster cooperation, as well as attract Belarusian enterprises. At the same time, a specific goal is outlined: "To ensure that by 2025 the number of park residents is not less than 170 companies..."¹

It should be noted that a number of specific measures to fulfil this task were taken in Veliky Kamen back in 2021. In particular, over the three quarters of this year, residents of the industrial park increased investment in fixed assets by more than a third. At the same time, "the volume of industrial production increased more than 2.5 times to Br222.6 million. <...> Exports of residents' products and services increased by more than 16% and are exported to 20 countries of the world"². An important detail: if "at the end of 2020, 68 companies from 14 countries were registered [in the park]"³, then by mid-November 2021, 81 companies from 15 countries were already registered as residents. The work on the expansion of Veliky Kamen continues unabated.

Thus, in October, the Belarusian-Latvian SMD Bai LLC was registered here, which "plans to create a high-tech production of electronic products (boards) of small

¹ Directive of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 9 "On the Development of Bilateral Relations between the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China". - Minsk, 2021. - C. 6.

² In "Veliky Kamen" for 9 months by more than a third increased investment in fixed capital [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-velikom-kamne-za-9-mesjatsjev-bolee-chem-na-tret-uvelichilis-investitsii-v-osnovnoj-kapital-470611-2021/>

³ Zaleskii, B. With the aim of sustainable development. Collection of articles / B. Zaleskyy. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2021. - C. 13.

and medium series"⁴ , widely used in telecommunications, medicine, automotive industry, instrumentation, for supplying them to the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union. In November, the list of residents of the industrial park was supplemented by several more business entities. One of them is Rufais LLC. The investment project of the new resident is related to the production and application of the latest polymer materials in construction. The innovative approach here is that "the composite material is the company's own development and differs from its analogues by higher operational properties. It has a wide sphere of application, including the production of roofing and other elements of buildings and structures"⁵ , which gives good reason to hope for the realisation of this product not only in the domestic market, but also in Russia and the countries of the European Union.

Among the new residents is the Belarusian InKata LLC, which was previously registered in Veliky Kamen as an investor to build facilities here to support subjects of innovative activities of the industrial park. "The project will provide design, prototyping, and technical documentation development services, as well as workplaces and equipment"⁶ . Another November resident of Veliky Kamen is the China-Belarus Centre for Innovative Bioengineering Technologies LLC, which intends to cooperate closely with the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. "The company will produce reagents for diagnostics of coronavirus and some other diseases, as well as for food safety diagnostics"⁷ , which are supposed to be exported to the countries of the Eurasian Economic and European Unions, as well as to China.

In the first half of December, the industrial park registered a new subject of innovation activity - Needle Med LLC, which is going to implement in Veliky Kamen a project to create an ideal simulator for practicing practical manual skills by

⁴ The new resident of "Great Stone" will produce electronic boards [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-proizvodit-elektronnye-platy-465743-2021/>

⁵ The new resident of "Great Stone" will produce composite materials [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-proizvodit-kompozitnye-materialy-469205-2021/>

⁶ LLC "InKata" became a resident of "Veliky Kamen" [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ooo-inkata-stalo-rezidentom-velikogo-kamnja-471320-2021/>

⁷ The new resident of "Great Stone" will produce reagents for diagnostics and diagnostics of diseases [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-proizvodit-reagenty-dlja-diagnostiki-zabolevanij-471849-2021/>

workers of various specialities - surgeons, tattoo masters, medical students. Interestingly, this project was created in 2019 by a group of students. "Its idea is to create a simulator, as close as possible to real human tissues, to prepare specialists for practical activities"⁸. Thanks to the opportunities that the industrial park provides to innovators, the development of young specialists, it must be assumed, will find a wide application in real life. In the second half of December, Veliky Kamen registered another resident - Tianyu Changyin UAV Science and Technology Company (MSC) LLC, the founder of which is one of China's leading enterprises in the development and production of intelligent unmanned systems - Beijing Tianyu Changyin UAV Science and Technology Company. The purpose of this investment project in the industrial park is to "establish a high-tech production facility for universal logistics systems of unmanned aerial vehicles and equipment for them"⁹.

Speaking about the development of cluster co-operation in Veliky Kamen, it should be recalled that back in June 2021, the Republic of Belarus adopted a decree that improves the legal regulation aimed at improving the investment climate in the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park Veliky Kamen. In particular, this document provides for: 1) making the park administration more independent by transferring additional powers from local authorities in terms of administrative procedures; 2) expanding the types of activities of the industrial park; 3) supporting start-ups; 4) creating preferential conditions for large investment projects with investments of more than \$50 million.

Among the new areas of Veliky Kamen's activities are, first of all, the creation and development of production facilities in the fields of biopharmaceuticals, medical products and medical services. A very attractive innovation in this regard is the special conditions for the development of medical activities on the territory of the park, where it will be possible to provide medical services using medicines, medical

⁸ The new company "Great Stone" will create simulators for practising manual skills in surgery [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/tech/view/novaja-kompanija-velikogo-kamnja-budet-sozdavat-trenazherv-dlja-otrabotki-manualnyh-navvkov-v-hirurgii-474239-2021/>

⁹ The new resident of "Great Stone" will start to produce unmanned aerial vehicles [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-nachnet-proizvodit-bespilotnye-letatelnye-apparaty-476043-2021/>

equipment and products, treatment methods from foreign countries without mandatory registration in Belarus and without the need to obtain a licence for medical services. The terms and procedures for registration and re-registration of medicines and medical devices, as well as clinical trials will be significantly reduced and simplified for manufacturers. In other words, all these changes "open wide opportunities for the development of a medical and pharmaceutical cluster in the park, and primarily in the field of traditional Chinese medicine"¹⁰ .

Focusing on the development of Belarusian-Chinese cooperation in the field of medicine in the context of the fight against the coronavirus epidemic is very timely. After all, Chinese traditional medicine "has unique advantages in the prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of diseases. <...> It not only has a good curative effect on mild COVID-19, but also has obvious advantages in treating critically ill patients, which has reduced the lethality rate of severe cases from 21% to 5%"¹¹ . The use of the Great Stone platform to realise the existing potential of Belarusian-Chinese cooperation in the field of public health could have a serious positive result in terms of preventing new "waves" of the coronavirus epidemic.

Recall that the Velikiy Kamen industrial park has 12 residents operating within the medical direction. "These are companies from Belarus, China, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Russia, and the USA"¹² . An important component of the medical cluster being created here will be Novoera Biotech, which became a resident of the industrial park in March 2021. Its founders include the Jingtai Institute of Culture and Economics, Xishanqingxue Chinese Medicine Clinic LLC (Beijing) and Xishanqingxue Pharmaceutical Technology Company LLC (Beijing). The new resident will undertake a project related to Chinese traditional medicine. "Medicines,

¹⁰ Koroteev, K. Support for startups, preferences for investors, simplification of land relations - about the innovations of the decree on the development of the park "Great Stone" / K. Koroteev // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/podderzhka-startapov-preferentsii-investoram-uproschenie-zemelnyh-otnoshenij-koroteev-o-novatsijah-ukaza-po-7805/>

¹¹ Xiaoyun, S. Belarus and China: the growth of business cooperation and interaction in the release of drugs in the treatment of coronavirus / S. Xiaoyun // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/belarus-i-kitaj-rost-delovogo-sotrudnichestva-i-vzaimodejstvie-v-vypuske-lekarstv-pri-lechenii-koronavirusa-7873/>

¹² The Centre for Expertise and Testing in Healthcare and the Great Stone Park agreed on cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/tsentr-ekspertiz-i-ispytanij-v-zdravoohranenii-i-park-velikij-kamen-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnichestve-441421-2021/>

supplements that are planned to be produced are based on environmentally friendly natural material. They will be in demand not only to help in the treatment of coronavirus, but also in the treatment of colds, flu, asthma¹³. In particular, the production of Linlan Yiqing, a drug aimed at effectively treating coronavirus infection, will be organised. It was assumed that at the first stage the produced medicines, the production of which was planned to start in 2021, would be exported to Ukraine, Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkey and India.

In March 2021, plans were also announced to establish a Eurasian Centre of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Veliky Kamen, which will provide medical services to residents of the industrial park, its Chinese and foreign employees, as well as interact with research institutions, healthcare institutions of Belarus and neighbouring countries to share experience in the field of traditional Chinese medicine. In May 2021, a memorandum of cooperation was signed by the Industrial Park Development Company and the Centre for Expertise and Testing in Healthcare RUE. In July, an agreement was signed in Veliky Kamen to establish a Sino-Belarusian zone of in-depth cooperation and an international park of traditional Chinese medicine and healthcare, which imply a new model of cooperation between Belarus and China in the above-mentioned area.

All these facts testify to the active steps to deploy in the industrial park "an extensive cluster, which will bring together developments in the field of Chinese medicine. <...> A medical centre for diagnostic services is expected to appear in the future. This direction is already in the works"¹⁴. In addition, the development of medical tourism is also envisaged here, for which a kind of medical village will be built near the Volmyanskoye reservoir - clinics and various medical institutions in the field of rehabilitation. It should also be reminded that in the complex of measures for the development of the national innovation system in Belarus for 2021-2025 the

¹³ The new resident of "Great Stone" starts the project in the sphere of Chinese medicine [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novji-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-nachinaet-proekt-v-sfere-kitajskoj-meditsiny-433283-2021/>

¹⁴ Kryzhevich, I. Two new residents of "Great Stone" will be engaged in the development of artificial intelligence and the development of equipment for data processing and storage / I. Kryzhevich // [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.sb.by/articles/zvanvv-biznes.html>

Chinese-Belarusian industrial park "Veliky Kamen" is defined "as a platform for the organisation of innovative productions"¹⁵ . Judging by the above facts, this site is developing quite successfully, confidently and dynamically in the current five-year period.

Turning to the task of expanding interregional ties, which is one of the priorities in the development of Belarusian-Chinese relations, one can note the successful experience of such Belarusian regions as Minsk and Homiel Oblast in addressing this task. Speaking about the Belarusian capital, it is enough to say that "in January-May of this [2021] year, Minsk's trade turnover with the PRC totalled \$730.6 million, while last year it was \$613.8 million for the same period"¹⁶ . The main exporters were RUE Bellesexport, Best Meat Company LLC, Meat and Dairy Company CJSC, Mobiora CJSC, Integral OJSC. The basis of Minsk supplies to the Celestial Empire were timber, meat and food by-products of poultry, milk and condensed cream, rapeseed oil, electronic integrated circuits and microassemblies, tanned or dressed fur pelts, measuring or control devices, collections and collectibles on zoology, equipment for measuring or controlling electrical values, ready-made carriers for sound recording. In terms of consolidating this trend in the future, it is important to intensify the Belarusian capital's ties with Chinese sister cities, of which Minsk has four - Changchun (1992), Shenzhen (2014), Beijing (2016), and Shanghai (2019).

Changchun, the administrative centre of Jilin Province, located in the north-east of China, where science, automotive and optical instrumentation industries are developed and about eight million people live, occupies a special place in this list of sister cities. May 2022 will mark 30 years since the signing of the Agreement on the establishment of twinning ties between Changchun and the Belarusian capital. In 2010, a Belarusian-Chinese technopark was opened in the high-tech manufacturing

¹⁵ Measures for the development of the national innovation system up to 2025 are defined [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/opredeleny-meropriyatija-po-razvitiu-natsionalnoj-innovatsionnoj-sistemy-do-2025-goda-475735-2021>

¹⁶ Kukharev and the Ambassador of China discussed cooperation between Minsk and the cities of the People's Republic of China [Electronic resource] - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kuharev-i-posol-kitaja-obsudili-sotrudnichestvo-minska-s-gorodami-knr-453612-2021/>

zone of this Chinese city to become a platform for working on joint projects and further promotion of products not only in China but also in neighbouring countries. It was based on about 15 enterprises that were part of the zone and had long-standing sustainable ties with Belarusian scientific and innovation enterprises. At that time, among the joint projects planned in the technopark were "the establishment of an enterprise for the production of medical laser equipment, an agreement on the creation of a joint venture for the production of high-precision electric motor. At the first stage, about 30 hectares of land for construction of office and production premises have been allocated for the project, and another 30 hectares may be allocated in the future"¹⁷. More specifically, the technopark is divided into six functional zones: a research and development centre, a project incubator, a museum, as well as three complexes - international cooperation, regional cooperation and service. In addition, it is planned to create an art gallery, bookshop, exhibition and concert halls on its territory. But the main thing is that here "the developments are based, among other things, on a fund of 80 Belarusian projects"¹⁸.

Today, "a complex of technopark buildings has already been built there, and one of the pressing issues at present is to fill it with joint high-tech projects"¹⁹. And it has already accepted its first three residents: Sino-Belarusian Centre for Research and Development of Precision Medical Equipment of BNTU Technopark "Polytechnik" and Belarusian-Chinese Technopark in Changchun; Belarusian-Chinese Centre for joint development and application of carbon-carbon composite materials between JSC "SvetlogorskKhimvolokno" and "Jilin Lenke" company; Belarusian-Chinese centre for the development of functional berry crops between the Central Botanical Garden of the National Academy of Sciences, Polesskie Zhuraviny Ltd. and the Northeast Institute of Geography and Ecology of Agriculture of the Chinese

¹⁷ Palezhai, T. Belarusian-Chinese technopark opened in the city of Changchun / T. Palezhai // [Electronic resource]. - 2010. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/president/view/belorussko-kitajski-tehnopark-otkrvlsja-v-gorode-chanchun-134192-2010>

¹⁸ Chinese-Belarusian technopark is being built in Changchun [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://primgazeta.ru/news/v-chanchune-strovat-kitajsko-beloruskij-tehnopark-08-07-2019-05-00-12>

¹⁹ Technopark in Changchun will make a significant contribution to the development of relations between Belarus and China - Shumilin [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tehnopark-v-chanchune-vneset-suschestvennyj-vklad-v-razvitie-otnoshenij-belarusi-i-kitaja-shumilin-405335-2020/>

Academy of Sciences. To support this growing dynamics of bilateral interaction, the Belarusian and Chinese sides set the task to "focus on improving conditions for mutually beneficial co-operation, expanding and deepening contacts, including among young people"²⁰. And today, the main thematic areas of the technopark already include "photo-electronics, laser technology, new materials, construction and energy, agricultural technology and biotechnology, informatics"²¹.

The Belarusian-Chinese technology park in Changchun is not the only area of cooperation between Minsk and this twin city. Back in June 2014, the parties agreed to develop business co-operation, for which they planned to hold business forums. "During such events, businessmen will have an opportunity to agree on the implementation of specific projects. In addition, the forums will contribute to further strengthening the economic basis of our co-operation"²². In June 2017, in order to expand twinning ties, the Minsk City Executive Committee and the Changchun People's Government adopted an agreement to establish cooperation in the field of tourism and the development of cultural ties. And within the framework of the bilateral business forum held in the Chinese city at the same time, "memoranda of cooperation with Chinese partners were signed by SOAO Kommunarka, KUP Minskhhlebprom, KUP Small Wholesale Base on Western, OJSC Belryba, OJSC Minotel"²³. So the opportunities for expanding co-operation between the two twin cities are undoubtedly very extensive. It is only necessary to use them without wasting time and with mutual benefit.

As for Homiel Region, it has already signed documents on bilateral cooperation with four Chinese regions - the autonomous regions of Inner Mongolia (2011) and Xinjiang Uygur (2016), Sichuan (2015) and Jiangsu (2016). Naming

²⁰ About 300 applications are submitted to the Chinese-Belarusian youth competition of innovative projects [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/okolo-300-zajavok-podano-na-kitajsko-belorusskij-molodezhnyi-konkurs-innovatsionnyh-proektov-442132-2021/>

²¹ Belarusian-Chinese Science and Technology Park in Changchun [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <http://changchun.park.bntu.by/about-technology-park/>

²² Minsk and Chinese Changchun plan to develop business co-operation [Electronic resource]. - 2014. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/minsk-i-kitajskij-chanchun-planirujut-razvivat-biznes-sotrudnichestvo-47498-2014/>

²³ Minsk and Chinese Changchun signed an agreement on cooperation in tourism and culture [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/minsk-i-kitajskij-chanchun-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-v-sfere-turizma-i-kulturny-250871-2017/>

Sichuan Province in this list, we note that in April 2021, the two sides raised the level of their friendly relations by signing "an agreement on the establishment of twinning ties, which provides for the expansion of co-operation in the economic, social and cultural spheres"²⁴.

Such a variety of partnership and twinning ties could not but affect the interaction between Homiel Region and China in general. Suffice it to say that over the past three years, supplies from this Belarusian region to the Chinese market have grown 20(!) times. And "the export of Gomel enterprises to China in January-November last year [2021] exceeded \$100 million. The main export positions to China are wood pulp, timber, wool, meat, dairy and confectionery products"²⁵. And this level in the region is not considered the limit, as they see serious potential in increasing supplies to this East Asian country of beef, meat and edible by-products of poultry, whole-milk products, milk, condensed and dried cream, whey powder. For this purpose 16 enterprises of the region have already been accredited in the Celestial Empire: 6 meat processing, 7 milk processing, 2 distilleries and one confectionery. And three enterprises with Chinese capital have already been registered in the Belarusian region itself - one for the production of electricity by hydroelectric power plants, one for the production of concrete and one engaged in restaurant activities.

An important detail: Homiel will continue to actively expand ties with Chinese regions in 2022. Thus, in January, they held a round table on multifunctional cooperation with Hebei Province, whose business entities have been interacting with Homiel partners in terms of production cooperation for quite a long time. In particular, in September 2015, Chongqing Agricultural Machinery Enterprise Zongshen - Homel LLC was established in Hebei Province to assemble cob harvesters, forage harvesters and grain harvesters. The investor on the Belarusian side was Gomselmash OJSC and the investor on the Chinese side was Zongshen Industrial

²⁴ Zalesky, B.L. Gomel region: Chinese vector of partnership / B.L. Zalesky // *Materiály XVIII Mezinárodní vědecko-praktická konference "Efektivní nástroje moderních věd - 2021"*. Volume 5: Praha. Publishing House "Education and Science". - C. 16.

²⁵ Gomel region has increased exports to China 20 times in three years [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskaja-oblast-za-tri-goda-uvlechila-eksport-v-kitaj-v-20-raz-481090-2022/>

Corporation Ltd. This co-operation project enabled the Belarusian manufacturer to strengthen and expand its presence in the Chinese market. "In 2016, the amount of machine parts supplied to the PRC totalled about USD 2.6 million," the company said. In 2016, the amount of machine parts supplied to the PRC was about USD 2.6 million, in 2017. - USD 10 million. In 2017, the amount of machine kits supplied to the PRC was about USD 2.6 million, in 2018. - USD 7 million. USD"²⁶ .

As a follow-up to this project, in March 2017, the construction of a new plant for the production of combines for harvesting maize, grain and rapeseed was launched in Weixian County of Handan City District of the same Hebei Province by the Belarusian-Chinese joint venture Chongqing Zongshen-Homel Agricultural Machinery Enterprise. And at the same time "the first contracts were signed with agricultural companies of Hebei and Heilongjiang provinces for the purchase of Belarusian-Chinese-made combines"²⁷ . And in June 2019, a new contract was signed to supply another batch of forage harvester kits to China for more than \$1.5 million. And by mid-2019, "the company produced 500 harvesters"²⁸ .

A logical continuation of these partnerships was the adoption in October 2019 by the cities of Gomel and Handan of a memorandum of intent on the establishment of twinning ties to promote the development of mutually beneficial cooperation. In particular, the topic of increasing exports of food products, the same beef, was very relevant for the Gomel side in this context. It was also mentioned that "the parties should develop industrial co-operation on a partnership basis, in particular between Gomselmash and Hebei agricultural machinery enterprise Zongshen-Gomel. There

²⁶ Interregional ties between Belarus and China: state, problems and prospects of development / T.S. Vertinskaya [et al.]. - Minsk: Belaruskaya nauvuka, 2020. - C. 221-222.

²⁷ Grishkevich, A. A new Belarusian-Chinese plant for the production of combines started to build in the province of Hebei / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - 2017. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novvj-belorusko-kitajskij-zavod-po-proizvodstvu-kombajnov-nachali-stroit-v-provintsii-hebej-237889-2017>

²⁸ Gomselmash will supply China with machine sets of forage harvesters for the amount of more than \$1.5 million. [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://export.by/news/gomselmash-postavit-v-kitaj-mashinokomplekti-kormouborochnih-kombavnov-na-summu-bolee-15-mln-doll>

are prospects for the implementation of joint ideas in tourism, culture and education"²⁹ .

In this regard, it should be said that the twinning ties between the cities of Gomel region and Chinese partners very organically complement the whole complex of interregional interaction between this Belarusian region and China. At the beginning of 2022, seven bilateral documents were concluded between the administrative-territorial units of Gomel region and China. The eighth was the agreement on the establishment of twinning relations between Svetlogorsk district and the city of Baoding, located in Hebei province and having more than ten million inhabitants, signed in January 2022. This document "envisages the development of mutually beneficial co-operation in various spheres - economic, trade and humanitarian"³⁰ . The parties certainly have the necessary potential for the development of effective co-operation. And let's hope that the next step in the development of the Chinese vector of foreign economic relations of Gomel region will be the establishment of twinning ties with the whole province of Hebei.

²⁹ Gomel and Chinese Handan intend to develop twinning ties [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomel-i-kitajskij-handan-namerenv-razvivat-pobratimskie-svjazi-366580-2019/>

³⁰ Svetlogorskiy district and Chinese Baoding signed an agreement on twinning relations [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/svetlogorskij-rajon-i-kitajskij-baodin-podpisali-soglashenie-o-pobratimskih-otnoshenijah-481071-2022/>

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Prospects for co-operation have been identified

In May 2022, the sixth meeting of the Commission for Trade and Economic Cooperation of the Belarus-China Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee was held, where its participants discussed the status and prospects of bilateral trade and investment cooperation, transport and logistics partnership, and the implementation of the joint project - the China-Belarus Great Stone Industrial Park. Recall that in 2021, the volume of mutual trade in goods and services between the two countries came close to six billion dollars, while the share of Belarusian supplies to the Celestial Empire has more than doubled. At the same time, "the capabilities of Belarusian producers make it possible to ship almost \$2 billion worth of Belarusian-made goods to the Chinese market by the end of this year [2022]. This requires consolidation of the parties' efforts to accelerate the opening of the Chinese market for new Belarusian producers, create joint trading companies, and develop China's largest electronic trading platforms."³¹ .

During the commission meeting, the Belarusian side proposed to deepen trade co-operation in five promising areas. The first is the expansion of direct contacts between the business circles of the two countries. The second is to increase the range of products supplied to China from Belarus. The third is the promotion of new mechanisms for expanding bilateral trade with a focus on establishing joint export-import companies and positioning Belarusian goods on Chinese electronic trading platforms. Fourth, developing logistics through prompt delivery of goods by railway. Fifth - building up investment cooperation within the framework of existing bilateral projects and joint work on the creation of new import-substituting enterprises "through the prism of developing the Veliky Kamen industrial park and deepening interregional cooperation"³² .

³¹ Cherviakov: friendly and partnership relations with China are especially significant for Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/cherviakov-druzhestvennye-i-partnerskie-otnosheniya-s-kitaem-osobo-znachimyye-dlja-belarusi-504062-2022>

³² Trade turnover between Belarus and China totalled \$1.2 billion in the first quarter [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tovarooborot-belarusi-i-kitaja-v-i-kvartale-sostavil-12-mlrd-504056-2022/>

The results of the first quarter of 2022 testify to the fact that the work in these areas is quite active. In particular, Belarusian-Chinese trade turnover totalled \$1.2 billion over this period. The fact that Belarus is among the top ten largest suppliers of potash fertilisers, dairy whey, meat products and rapeseed oil to China is also indicative of a lot. The agreements reached during the work of the commission should contribute to the successful implementation of the planned areas of cooperation. For instance, the Ministry of Industry of Belarus intends to closely cooperate with the Chinese Chamber of Commerce on import and export of machine-building and electronic products. The memorandum signed by the parties "is aimed at strengthening the Belarusian-Chinese partnership in industry"³³. The memorandum of co-operation in the import and export of woodworking products was also adopted by Bellesbumprom Concern and the Chinese Association for the Circulation of Wood and Forest Products. The document is aimed at increasing the effectiveness of partnership ties, "analysing the problems of mutual trade and finding mutually acceptable ways to solve them"³⁴ by holding joint exhibitions, fairs, business meetings, exchange of economic, legal and scientific and technical information in all areas of cooperation.

The Chinese-Belarusian industrial park Veliky Kamen has been identified as a site for the organisation of innovative production facilities in the set of measures for the development of the national innovation system in Belarus for 2021-2025. One of the main tasks set for the park for the next five years is "to ensure the efficient operation of its residents, attract new ones, actively develop innovation activities, startups, cluster co-operation..."³⁵. The record increase in residents in 2021 - 21 - is evidence of how this task is being solved here. To be more precise, 85 residents were registered here at the end of 2021. By the beginning of 2022, "more than \$718

³³ Belarus and China strengthen partnership in industry [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kitaj-ukreplijaut-partnerstvo-v-promyshlennosti-504071-2022/>

³⁴ "Bellesbumprom" will cooperate with the Chinese association for the export of woodworking products [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bellesbumprom-budet-sotrudnichat-s-kitajskoj-assotsiatsiej-po-eksportu-produktsii-derevoobrabotki-504024-2022>

³⁵ Zalesky, B.L. Industrial Park "Great Stone": new projects bring the future closer / B.L. Zalesky // Materiały XVIII Międzynarodowej naukowo-praktycznej konferencji "Kluczowe aspekty naukowej działalności - 2022", Volume 1. Przemysł: Nauka i studia. - C. 3.

million has already been invested in the park, with 37 companies producing products, conducting research and development, and providing services. Veliky Kamen enterprises have created more than 1,700 jobs <...>. The volume of exports has also grown - by almost 17 per cent compared to 2020. Deliveries are made to 20 countries of the world"³⁶ . In the last days of 2021, the 85th resident was the Belarusian SinRubEnerg LLC with a research and development project in the field of creating digital energy facilities and smart city. "The company will develop complex automation and dispatching systems" .³⁷

With the arrival of 2022, the industrial park continued to work actively to expand the number of residents and increase the volume of their economic activities. Thus, as of mid-April 2022, 89 residents from 15 countries were "already registered here. The volume of declared investments amounts to \$1.24 billion, of which more than \$750 million has already been invested in the development of the park. Residents have created more than 1.8 thousand new jobs. In addition, almost half of the companies have started their business activities in the park"³⁸ .

The 86th resident of the industrial park in March 2022 was the Scientific and Technical Company Bel Samoyed Cloud LLC, which "will develop digital financial technologies and mobile payment systems. It is also planned to create an e-commerce centre in Belarus and provide Belarusian and Chinese companies with services in this area"³⁹ . An important detail: the initiator of this project is one of the largest providers of cloud solutions in China - Samoyed Cloud Technology Group Holdings Limited.

April 2022 was particularly "fruitful" for Great Stone in terms of registering new residents. For example, earlier this month, the 87th resident was Yuzhou Science

³⁶ Yaroshenko: Veliky Kamen enterprises supply products to 20 countries of the world [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/yaroshenko-predpriiatija-velikogo-kamnja-postavljanut-produktsiju-v-20-stran-mira-479114-2022/>

³⁷ A new resident of Veliky Kamen will be engaged in the creation of digital energy facilities [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-zajmetsja-sozdaniem-tsifrovih-energoobjektov-477402-2021/>

³⁸ Yakimov, P. "The Great Stone" opens wide opportunities for strengthening cooperation between Belarus and China / P. Yakimov // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/velikij-kamen-otkrvaet-shirokie-vozmozhnosti-dlja-ukrepljenja-sotrudnichestva-belarusi-i-kitaja-8150/>

³⁹ The new resident of "Great Stone" will deal with digital technologies and mobile payment systems [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-zajmetsja-tsifrovymi-tehnologijami-i-sistemami-mobilnyh-platezhej-490657-2022/>

and Technology Company LLC from Hong Kong, whose founder works in the field of product targeting and branding and has branches in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chongqing, Hangzhou and Wuhan. The new resident "plans to establish a digital promotion centre for e-commerce using internet marketing technologies"⁴⁰ , will cooperate with Belarusian manufacturers to promote their goods in China and intends to provide training on e-commerce.

A little later, the 88th resident - the Belarusian Cuby RND LLC - was registered in the industrial park with an investment project for the production of equipment and components for modular construction of smart houses. "The production is based on the innovative Cuby technology, which is the company's own development. It allows to produce high-tech structures with high environmental characteristics"⁴¹ . It is expected that 90 per cent of the products manufactured in Veliky Kamen by the new resident will be exported.

The 89th resident was another Belarusian company, HomeLand Group LLC, which plans to produce multifunctional noise-insulated Aerocapsule cabins with an automated control system based on the Internet of Things - the concept of data transfer - in the industrial park. Interestingly, this project in 2021 won second place at the national competition of innovative developments. Aerocapsules, created with the use of smart technologies and equipped with innovative built-in facilities, "can be widely used in open-air offices, airports, shopping centres, production plants and allow creating optimal conditions for recreation and work"⁴² .

By mid-May 2022, the number of residents increased to 90 with a declared investment volume of \$1.24 billion. In May 2022, a new resident of the industrial park was the Chinese company Transport Complex - AF LLC, which will create a transport monitoring centre using Internet of Things technology. At the same time, a

⁴⁰ The new resident of "Great Stone" will be engaged in digital promotion of goods [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novvj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-zajmetsja-tsfrovvm-prodvizheniem-tovarov-493650-2022/>

⁴¹ The new resident of "Great Stone" will start to produce equipment for smart homes [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novvj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-nachnet-vypuskat-oborudovanie-dlja-umnih-domov-495324-2022/>

⁴² The new resident of "Great Stone" will produce innovative aerocapsules [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novvj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-proizvodit-innovatsionnye-aerokapsuly-495913-2022/>

letter of intent was signed for Hongju Corporation JSC to enter the park, which "plans to engage in biotechnology activities in Veliky Kamen"⁴³. According to the results of the first quarter of 2022, the industrial park managed to ensure "growth of revenue from the sale of goods 1.8 times compared to the first quarter of last year (Br123.4 million), production of industrial products of residents 1.7 times (Br95.4 million), export of goods 1.4 times (\$22.6 million), investment in fixed assets 1.1 times (Br30.4 million)"⁴⁴.

An important area of Great Stone's activity is the creation of subparks, which are understood as the arrival of not just one investor, but a pool of iconic companies under the leadership of a separate management company, which opens up broad prospects for large corporations. Interaction with the Chinese province of Guangdong is developing particularly well in this respect. Recall that "back in January 2017 in its administrative centre - the city of Guangzhou - held a ceremony of signing an agreement on the establishment of the Chinese (Guangdong) subpark of LED products in the Industrial Park "Great Stone", as well as five more documents on the intention to join this subpark of specific companies"⁴⁵. Today, this subpark already has 15 residents specialising in areas such as LED production, integrated logistics, electric transport, unmanned systems and research and development. They will soon be joined by a joint innovation centre established by the Guangdong Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, which will focus on R&D in industrial and digital technologies, as well as new materials, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals. So, in this direction too, we see the successful realisation of the plans outlined several years ago.

The planned interaction of the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park with similar preferential economic zones in other countries should also contribute to further

⁴³ The new resident of "Great Stone" will create a centre for monitoring cross-border traffic [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-sozdast-tsentr-monitoringa-transgranichnyh-perevozok-501098-2022/>

⁴⁴ The number of residents of "Great Stone" increased to 90 with the declared volume of investments in \$1.24 billion [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chislo-rezidentov-velikogo-kamnja-vozroslo-do-90-s-zajavlennym-objemom-investitsij-v-124-mlrd-502265-2022/>

⁴⁵ Zalessky, B.L. "Great Stone": development perspective - subparks / B.L. Zalessky // Materials of the XVI International scientific and practical conference "Science and civilisation - 2020", 30 January - 07 February, 2020. Economic sciences. : Sheffield. Science and education LTD. - C. 21.

unlocking the potential of the Great Stone's innovative areas. In particular, in Cuba and Uzbekistan. Thus, back in January 2021, a memorandum of understanding was signed with Cuba's Mariel Special Development Zone (SDZ), which provides for cooperation "in attracting investment, strengthening ties between the business communities of Belarus and Cuba, and also provides for information interaction"⁴⁶. The priority areas of activity of the Cuban ZOR, established in November 2013, located 45 kilometres from Havana, where at the end of 2021 there were more than 60 residents from 21 countries, are electronics, logistics, pharmaceuticals, energy, as well as financial and banking industries. In January 2022, the parties have already started discussing specific areas of co-operation, "particularly in the area of attracting residents and developing interaction with Cuban pharmaceutical companies"⁴⁷. If we take into account that the pharmaceutical sector in Great Stone is on the rise, it is easy to assume that the emergence of concrete results from this co-operation will not be long in coming.

Another interesting example in this context is the Uzbek free economic zones (FEZ) "Jizzak" and "Syrdarya". In early April 2022, the Velikiy Kamen administration discussed with their representatives areas of possible cooperation, including "establishing interaction between residents of the park, free economic zones and enterprises in the field of import and export of component materials and finished products"⁴⁸. The parties agreed to sign a memorandum of co-operation, which will enshrine their desire to implement joint projects. The specialisation of Uzbek FEZs indicates that there may well be such projects.

In particular, FEZ "Jizzak" was established in March 2013 in Jizzak region to attract direct investment in the creation of high-tech and innovative industries. And today there are already several interesting examples in this regard. Thus, in March

⁴⁶ "Great Stone" and Cuban special development zone "Mariel" will cooperate in attracting investments [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/velikij-kamen-i-kubinskaja-zona-osobogo-razvitiya-mariel-budut-sotrudnicat-v-privlechenii-investitsij-426316-2021/>

⁴⁷ "Great Stone" intends to develop co-operation with Cuban pharmaceutical companies [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/velikij-kamen-nameren-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-s-kubinskimi-farmpredpriyatijami-487548-2022/>

⁴⁸ "Great Stone" and FEZ of Uzbekistan intend to develop co-operation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/velikij-kamen-i-sez-uzbekistana-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-493658-2022/>

2020, an agreement was signed here on the establishment of production of Volkswagen light commercial vehicles on the basis of "Jizzak Automobile Plant" LLC. The implementation of this project is divided into two stages. In 2020-2021, German cars were delivered here in a ready-made form for market research and marketing analysis. From 2022, "a full production cycle will begin, which includes welding, painting and assembly processes <...>. Dealer and service networks in every region of Uzbekistan will also be expanded"⁴⁹.

Another interesting example is the Uzbek enterprise ADM Jizzakh, located in the Jizzakh FEZ and producing KIA and Lada models there. In October 2021, it announced that in early 2023 it would start small-unit assembly of these vehicles. In total, "it is planned to organise the production of 314 parts and components, as well as launch welding and painting shops"⁵⁰. This will make it possible to produce 100 thousand of these models a year, to create three thousand new jobs and to bring the localisation of production up to 30 per cent. It is believed that such experience may be of great interest to the Belarusian side as well.

As for FEZ "Syrdarya", it was established on the basis of FEZ "Jizzak" branch in Syrdarya region in April 2018. One of its main objectives is to ensure the comprehensive and efficient use of the production and resource potential of this Uzbek region "on the basis of deep processing of mineral and raw material resources, expanding the production of products in demand in foreign markets, as well as import-substituting products with high added value"⁵¹. Such production areas for attracting investments and advanced technologies as deep processing, storage and packaging of fruit and vegetables and other agricultural products, textile, footwear, leather goods, chemical, food, electrical industry, agricultural machine building, construction materials industry have been identified as the main ones. With the help of the FEZ they intend to significantly strengthen the export component of the region,

⁴⁹ Production of Volkswagen cars in Uzbekistan will begin in 2022 [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://www.gazeta.uz/ru/2020/06/26/volkswagen/>

⁵⁰ Plant in Uzbekistan for the production of KIA and Lada in 2023 will increase localisation to 30% [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://uz.sputniknews.ru/20211022/zavod-v-uzbekistane-po-vvpusku-kia-i-lada-v-2023-godu-povvsit-lokalizatsivu-do-30-21019614.html>

⁵¹ A new free economic zone is being created in Syrdarya [Electronic resource]. - 2018. - URL: <https://kun.uz/ru/94899784?q=%2Fru%2F94899784>

where "more than 80 exporters' enterprises, which supply abroad more than 50 types of products" are already operating⁵². So here, too, the range of joint interests with Great Stone can be quite extensive. All this indicates that the China-Belarus industrial park retains its strategic importance as a country-scale growth point for Belarus.

As regards interregional cooperation, in the Joint Declaration on the Establishment of an All-Weather and Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, adopted in September 2022, the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China positively assessed the expansion of in-depth trade and economic interaction between Belarusian regions and cities and provinces of the Celestial Empire. Turning to the task of expanding interregional ties, "which is one of the priorities in the development of Belarusian-Chinese relations"⁵³, one can note the successful experience of its fulfilment in 2022 by such Belarusian regions as Vitebsk, Grodno and Brest regions.

Thus, in October 2022, **Vitebsk Region** and the Chinese **province of Jiangxi** signed an agreement on cooperation in economy, education, healthcare, sports and will establish contacts in trade, science and technology. The parties will interact in a comprehensive manner. For example, It is planned to organise meetings via videoconference, at which the Chinese partners will be presented the leading enterprises of Vitebsk, their developments and technologies that may be useful and interesting to companies from Jiangxi. In particular, we are talking about joint projects for the development of agriculture, mechanical engineering, as well as scientific parks and university developments. It should be noted that the two regions - Belarusian and Chinese - have previously held events: a conference on vocational education and training of engineering specialists, as well as on the fight against COVID-19. In addition, "there are regular container trains to Nanchang, the urban district where the authorities of Jiangxi are located, which are formed, among other things, by a logistics company from Orsha. Nanchang and Orsha have established

⁵² Mirzaev, G. Syr Darya opens its doors to investors / G. Mirzaev // [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://rg.ru/amp/2019/08/29/v-svrdarinskoj-oblasti-uzbekistana-gotovy-k-millionnym-investiciyam.html>

⁵³ Zaleskii, B. Time of concrete decisions. Chronicle of international co-operation / B. Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. - C. !00.

partnership ties, and another city of the province - Funzhou - with Polotsk⁵⁴ ". The signed agreement seems to help the northern region of Belarus and the Chinese province located in the south-east of China to reach a new level of relations. In the context of this topic, it is interesting that in September 2022, within the framework of the Year of Regions of Belarus and China, Days of Vitebsk Oblast were held in another Chinese province - **Heilongjiang**, where the "potential for cooperation between the twin regions in trade and economic, production, tourism and investment spheres" was presented⁵⁵ . By the way, this region of China is home to more than 30 million people.

And in October 2022, an agreement on establishing friendly exchanges and cooperation was also signed by the cities of **Grodno** and **Lanzhou** - the administrative centre of the Chinese province of Gansu, where the parties envisaged "deepening of bilateral interaction, expansion of exchanges and cooperation between the regions in trade and economic, scientific and technical, cultural and tourist and other spheres. The document is also aimed at strengthening friendly ties between the residents of the two cities"⁵⁶ . Recall that the memorandum on the establishment of twinning relations between **Gansu Province** and **Grodno Region** was signed in 2007. For 15 years more than 10 different agreements have been concluded between the regions, with trade and economic co-operation developing especially dynamically. In April 2022, Gansu and Hrodna signed the Cooperation Programme for 2022-2023, which is filled with concrete joint projects. It "further elaborated those areas where co-operation is not yet so actively developing <...>. These are

⁵⁴ Pushnyakova, A. Trade, science, sport: Vitebsk region signed a cooperation agreement with Chinese Jiangxi / A. Pushnyakova // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/torgovlja-nauka-sport-vitebskaja-oblast-podpisala-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-s-kitajskoj-tszjansi-532401-2022>

⁵⁵ Days of Vitebsk region are held in the Chinese province Heilongjiang [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/dni-vitebskoj-oblasti-prohodjat-v-kitajskoj-provintsii-hejluntszjan-525147-2022/>

⁵⁶ Hrodna and Chinese Lanzhou signed an agreement on the establishment of friendly exchanges [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodno-i-kitajskij-lanchzhou-podpisali-soglashenie-ob-ustanovlenii-druzhestvennyh-obmenov-532444-2022/>

agriculture, tourism, technology exchange, traditional Chinese medicine"⁵⁷ . And Novogrudok District and the Chinese city of Dunhuang from Gansu Province agreed to "conclude an agreement on establishing co-operation"⁵⁸ . For reference, Hrodna Region has also signed an agreement on twinning relations with **Hainan Province**.

And another interesting example: **Brest Oblast and Hubei Province**. In May 2022, the parties signed an action plan for the development of trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation for 2022-2024, which outlines the development of international interregional cooperation in four main areas: mutual trade, investment, medicine and education. In particular, the Chinese province has been receiving foodstuffs and woodworking products from Brestchyna producers for a number of years. But there are plans to significantly expand this interaction, including by establishing direct business relations between economic entities. For example, it is a question of establishing investment cooperation between the free economic zone "Brest" and enterprises of the automotive industry in Hubei province, as well as between the Berezovsky motor repair plant and manufacturers of diesel engines in this region of China. Also, "the possibility of participation of Chinese investors in the implementation of Brest region projects on the organisation of production of electric car charging units, production of powder and liquid detergents on the basis of JSC "Barkhim", technical re-equipment of Baranovichi cotton production association, production of clinker products on the basis of Goryn Construction Materials Plant, development of glass sands deposit "Gorodnoe" will be worked out"⁵⁹ . As for the medical sphere, the prospects of cooperation between Brest region and Hubei province are associated with the joint production of ultrasonic diagnostic devices, organisation of production of disposable systems for blood transfusion and medical solutions. There are also plans to establish a centre of

⁵⁷ Grodno region intends to expand co-operation with the Chinese province of Gansu [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grodnenskaja-oblast-namerena-rashirjat-sotrudnichestvo-s-kitajskoj-provintsiej-gansu-498323-2022/>

⁵⁸ Novogrudok district and the Chinese city of Dunhuang intend to conclude an agreement on establishing co-operation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novogrudskij-rajon-i-kitajskij-gorod-dunhuan-namereny-zakljuchit-soglasenie-ob-ustanovlenii-495725-2022/>

⁵⁹ Brest region and Hubei province signed a road map of cooperation for 2022-2024 [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/brestskaja-oblast-i-provintsija-hubej-podpisali-dorozhnyu-kartu-sotrudnichestva-na-2022-2024-gody-503065-2022/>

traditional Chinese medicine on the basis of the Brest Regional Clinical Hospital, for which the physiotherapy building may be reconstructed.

All these facts are a good illustration of how the multifaceted Belarusian-Chinese interaction is now reaching the level of all-round strategic cooperation and all-weather partnership, as it is written in Directive No. 9 "On the Development of Bilateral Relations between the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China" signed in December 2021.

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Priorities for the new phase of the partnership

In September 2022, the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China adopted the Joint Declaration on the Establishment of an All-Weather and Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, which contains Belarusian-Chinese agreements to intensify scientific and technical cooperation, expand practical interaction between research institutes, higher education institutions and enterprises, and encourage the establishment of platforms as joint centres of applied scientific research and laboratories. It is noted that the development of bilateral relations has moved to a new stage where "the interaction between research institutions and enterprises of the two countries in the field of innovation has been continuously strengthened. The spheres, mechanisms and methods of scientific and technological co-operation are constantly being expanded, improved and enriched"⁶⁰. In this regard, three priority components can be identified. "The first is in the field of scientific research, where the parties are involved in the implementation of major joint projects. The second is in the field of innovation, where a network of joint innovation centres and scientific laboratories is being formed and developed. The third is in the field of education, where joint training and mutual internships of specialists, teachers and students take place"⁶¹.

In particular, the National Academy of Sciences [NAS] of Belarus alone has already established more than 20 joint international research centres and laboratories with Chinese partners, which are engaged in the development and adaptation of advanced technologies, as well as their promotion in the markets of Belarus, China and third countries. "Contractual documents have already been signed by NAS of Belarus with leading scientific organisations of China - the Chinese Academy of Sciences, academies of sciences of a number of provinces of China, major

⁶⁰ Xie Xiaoyun: cooperation between Belarus and China in science and technology is continuously strengthening [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/se-sjaojun-sotrudnichestvo-belarusi-i-kitaj-a-v-sfere-nauki-i-tehnologii-neprerivno-ukrepljaetsia-534171-2022>

⁶¹ Zaleskii, B. Frontiers of multi-vectorism. Collection of articles / B. Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. - C. 471.

manufacturing corporations of China - Huawei, AVIC..."⁶² . In particular, in April 2022, the NAS of Belarus signed an agreement on scientific and technical cooperation with the Chinese company "SAMSE. Environmental Technologies", which specialises in environmental protection issues. The signed agreement, which is designed to promote scientific and technical cooperation and practical implementation of joint scientific and technical developments in the field of environmental protection, primarily concerns soil remediation technologies, which are of particular interest to the Chinese partners. The fact is that the Chinese company, uniting designers, scientists, equipment manufacturers, investors, operators in the field of ecology, is now concentrating its efforts on the expansion of activities in the field of municipal water supply and wastewater disposal, industrial wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, energy saving and management of cyclic use of waste as a resource raw material. At the same time, China SAMS Engineering Corporation was established, which also signed a co-operation agreement with NAS of Belarus. In this document, the priority areas of cooperation are defined as "energy saving and environmental protection, new energy sources, new materials, optics, precision instruments, semiconductors and biomedicine, as well as the expansion of commercial application of the results of joint scientific activities"⁶³ .

When it comes to interaction between higher education institutions of the two countries, the parties will develop cooperation "on the basis of the development of joint educational programmes with the subsequent establishment of joint educational structures (faculties, institutes) between leading institutions of higher education, including with the use of distance learning technologies..."⁶⁴ . Suffice it to say that Belarusian and Chinese partners have already signed more than 540 direct co-

⁶² NAS has established more than 20 joint centres and laboratories with partners from China [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-nan-sozdano-bolee-20-sovmestnyh-tsentrov-i-laboratorij-s-partnerami-iz-kitaja-494752-2022/>

⁶³ Biomedicine and new energy sources. NAS of Belarus signed an agreement with the Chinese corporation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/societv/view/biomeditsina-i-novve-istochniki-energii-nan-belarusi-podpisala-soglashenie-s-kitajskoj-korporatsiej-498676-2022/>

⁶⁴ China and Belarus issued the Joint Declaration on the Establishment of All-Weather and All-Round Strategic Partnership Relations [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://rg.ru/2022/09/16/kitaj-i-belarus-opublikovali-sovmestnuiu-deklaraciu-ob-ustanovlenii-otnoshenij-vsepogodnogo-i-vsestoronnego-strateicheskogo-partnerstva.html>

operation agreements. "To date, almost 500 citizens of the Republic of Belarus are studying in the PRC, the number of Chinese students in Belarusian universities has reached 8,000 people. The parties have developed more than 30 joint educational programmes..."⁶⁵ . Belarusian universities actively developing cooperation with China in science and education include Belarusian State University, Belarusian National Technical University, Belarusian State Technological University, Brest State Technical University, and Polesky State University.

For example, the first agreement between Belarusian State University (BSU) and Chinese partners was signed in 1990 with Chengdu University of Science and Technology. Today, BSU has more than 80 agreements with more than 50 Chinese institutions. Among the partners are Harbin University of Science and Technology, Henan, East China Normal University and Foshan University. "In 2019, bilateral partnership documents were signed with Peking University and Shanghai University of Transport"⁶⁶ . BSU has received the honourable right to host the Confucius Institute. The Chinese partner in this case is also Dalian Polytechnic University (DPU), co-operation with which has been developing since 2007. A significant result of co-operation was the opening of two joint institutes at BSU and DPU. Today there are 244 Chinese students in the Chinese-Belarusian institute. Two graduations have already taken place. "In 2021, 78 Chinese graduates and five Belarusians received diplomas of BSU and DPU, in 2022 - 74 Chinese and two Belarusian citizens. There are 142 Belarusian students studying at the Belarusian-Chinese joint institute. The first graduation will take place in 2023"⁶⁷ .

In May 2021, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between BSU and Tsinghua University, which is ranked 17th among the best universities in the world. The Memorandum "provides for the exchange of students, invitation of teachers and

⁶⁵ Belarus and China held a videoconference on cooperation in education [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kitaj-proveli-videokonferentsiju-po-sotrudnichestvu-v-sfere-obrazovanija-526453-2022/>

⁶⁶ Kremina, O. BSU on the development of cooperation with leading universities of China / O. Kremina // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/bgu-o-razviti-sotrudnichestva-s-veduschimi-universitetami-kitaja-8187/>

⁶⁷ Cooperation between BSU and Dalian Polytechnic University is depicted in the bronze tetrapod din [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/sotrudnichestvo-bgu-i-daljanskogo-politehnicheskogo-universiteta-zapechatleli-v-bronzovom-tetrapode-514967-2022/>

scientists, implementation of joint research, educational projects, exchange of publications, information, teaching materials, organisation of scientific, educational and cultural events"⁶⁸ . This university was founded in 1911. It is located in the northwest of Beijing in the Haidian student neighbourhood. Today about 53 thousand students are studying in Tsinghua, more than 3200 of them are foreigners. The educational process is provided by more than 3600 teachers. The university structure includes 21 institutes and 59 faculties.

And in September 2022, another BSU partner appeared in China - Huzhou University of Zhejiang Province. The Memorandum of Understanding between the two universities "provides for the implementation of joint research projects, educational programmes, student exchanges and other areas of cooperation"⁶⁹ . Huzhou University has a history of more than 100 years. Currently, the university specialises in a wide range of academic disciplines and has achieved internationally recognised results in research and teaching in mathematics, clinical medicine and engineering. In 2017, the university established the Intercultural Research Centre engaged in international projects, including with the Belarusian side.

As for the Belarusian National Technical University (BNTU), in February 2022, the Belarusian university signed an agreement on scientific and technical cooperation with Shenyang Technological University (STU) on the establishment of the China-Belarus Innovation Training, Research and Production Centre for Peening, Rehabilitation and Corrosion Peening, Rehabilitation and Corrosion Protection of Machine Parts, which will concentrate new technologies and equipment in one place, and will promptly produce prototypes of parts e "The centre will concentrate all new methods of hardening, restoration and corrosion protection of machine parts. There is no such centre in China in this form and of this type"⁷⁰ . At the request of STU, the

⁶⁸ BSU and Tsinghua University signed a memorandum of understanding [Electronic resource]. - 2021. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/societv/view/bgu-i-universitet-tsinhua-podpisali-memorandum-o-vzaimoponimani-441298-2021/>

⁶⁹ BSU and Chinese Huzhou University signed a memorandum of understanding [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/societv/view/bgu-i-kitajskij-universitet-huchzhou-podpisali-memorandum-o-vzaimoponimani-524518-2022/>

⁷⁰ Kravchuk, M.A. Opening of the Chinese-Belarusian innovative educational and research-production centre of hardening, restoration and corrosion protection of machine parts / M.A. Kravchuk // [Electronic resource].

centre includes such Belarusian technologies as: gas-flame spraying of thermoplastic polymer powders; hypersonic metallisation; deformation cladding with flexible tools; gas-flame spraying of metal, ceramic, polymer and composite powders; laser cleaning of the surface of materials from organic and inorganic contaminants, rust, scale and paint coatings; plasma coating with metal, ceramic and composite powders; restoration of working powders; and the use of plasma-assisted coating. And already in October 2022, this centre was opened at Shenyang University of Technology.

In addition, in October 2022, a conference on scientific exchange between BNTU and the Institute of Applied Chemistry of the Chinese Academy of Sciences was held in Changchun. Recall that in December 2019, the parties signed an agreement on the establishment of a joint Chinese-Belarusian laboratory of advanced materials and production "One Belt - One Road", which began its activities in February 2020. This structure is "engaged in the development of high-performance sodium-ion and potassium-ion batteries, catalysts for water electrolysis, hydrogen production, and research in solid oxide electrolysis for the efficient production of green hydrogen and green ammonia"⁷¹. During the conference, Belarusian specialists drew attention to BNTU's experience in modifying the surfaces of machine parts by high-energy impact methods and studying their structure and properties, which in the future will allow expanding the scope of scientific research and application of its results in the Chinese industry.

Speaking about the Belarusian State Technological University (BSTU), it has already signed 17 cooperation agreements with universities and organisations in China, which are located in many regions of the country, including Guangdong Province. "In cooperation with Chinese partners, joint educational programmes have been created and are successfully functioning in such areas as "Machines and apparatuses of chemical productions and enterprises of construction materials",

- 2022. - URL: <https://times.bntu.by/news/11923-otkrytie-kitajsko-belorusskogo-innovacionnogo-uchebno-nauchno-proizvodstvennogo-centra>

⁷¹ Sheleg, V.K. Conference on scientific exchange between BNTU and the Institute of Applied Chemistry of the Chinese Academy of Sciences / V.K. Sheleg, M.A. Kravchuk // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://times.bntu.by/news/11931-konferenciya-po-nauchnomu-obmenu-bntu-i-institut-prikladnoj-himii-an-kitava>

"Automation of technological processes and productions", "Mechatronics"⁷². In addition, in March 2022 BSTU signed memoranda: with "Guangzhou Knowledge City - Technology Industrial Service Company" on strategic cooperation in the field of energy saving and environmental protection to promote the construction of "carbon-free community"; with JSC "Guangzhou Hengyun Group of Companies" - in the field of hydrogen technologies for the joint construction of the industrial park of hydrogen energy.

Another example in this context is Brest State Technical University (BrSTU), where a joint Belarusian-Chinese project in the field of information technologies, funded by the Belarusian Republican Foundation for Basic Research and the National Natural Science Foundation of China, was launched in 2022. And in April 2022 it became known about the launch of a joint educational programme between BrSTU and Xinxiang University, which concerns the training of students in mechanical engineering technology. "The training will take place in a full-time format on the territory of the PRC on the materials presented by Brest university. A large block of the programme will be presented to Chinese students directly by Brest State Technical University professors"⁷³. In October 2022 Brest university also established cooperation with Guangdong Construction Vocational College to create long-term conditions for the training of qualified personnel in Belarus in the interests of the construction sector of China and to cooperate in organizing a joint educational programme for training specialists in architecture and construction. It should be noted that the Chinese partner of BrSTU is "the only state college in Guangdong province, which trains highly qualified specialists in the field of construction. The college was

⁷² BSTU and Belarusian companies signed memoranda of co-operation with Guangzhou [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bgtu-i-belorusskie-kompanii-podpisali-memorandumy-o-sotrudnichestve-s-guanchzhou-489362-2022>

⁷³ BrSTU and Xinyang University have started the implementation of the joint programme [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brgtu-i-sinsjanskij-universitet-nachali-realizatsiju-sovmestnoj-programmy-496937-2022/>

founded in 1979 and for 43 years has graduated more than 200 thousand highly qualified personnel"⁷⁴ .

As for the interaction between Polesky State University and colleagues from China, in September 2022, the Belarusian university held the first international scientific conference called "Pinsk Readings". Together with Belarusian and foreign partners, Pinsk residents discussed topical issues for the economy, banking sector, development of biotechnology, engineering, healthy lifestyle, preservation of historical and cultural heritage. At the conference PolesSU signed a cooperation agreement with the Shanxi Institute of Science and Technology, which "specialises in nature management, engineering, biotechnology. We aim to build serious partnerships"⁷⁵ . In addition to joint research projects, the universities see prospects for cooperation in academic mobility.

The high scientific, technical and innovation cooperation between Belarus and China is also evidenced by the fact that at the China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai - the largest exhibition event in the Celestial Empire, where almost three thousand companies from 127 countries took part in 2021 - in November 2022, the Belarusian country pavilion "High-tech equipment and information technologies" presented 126 scientific and technical developments of scientists from 32 organisations of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and institutions of the Ministry of Education and Science of Belarus. ⁷⁶In particular, the exposition of the Ministry of Education section included such areas of co-operation as "digital information and communication and interdisciplinary technologies and production based on them; biological, medical, pharmaceutical and chemical technologies and production; energy, construction, ecology and environmental management; mechanical engineering, engineering technologies, instrumentation and innovative

⁷⁴ BrSTU and Guangdong construction vocational college agreed to establish co-operation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/brgtu-i-guandunskij-stroitelnyj-proftehkolledzh-dogovorilis-naladit-sotrudnichestvo-530263-2022/>

⁷⁵ PolesGU will co-operate with the Institute of Science and Technology from China [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/polesgu-budet-sotrudnicat-s-institutom-nauki-i-tehnologii-iz-kitaja-524605-2022/>

⁷⁶ Universities of Belarus at the V China International Import Expo China International Import Expo [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://times.bntu.by/news/11970-vuzy-belarusi-na-v-china-international-import-expo>

materials; agro-industrial and food technologies; ensuring the safety of man and society" xml-ph-0000@d

Among the novelties presented were ultra-small orbital spacecraft created by the Belarusian State University (BSU). The first nanosatellite was launched into orbit four years ago. Under the State programme "Science-intensive technologies and engineering", the second nanosatellite has already been created, "the design of which implements an innovative modular layout of on-board subsystems of a small spacecraft. BSU is also presenting anti-tumour drugs Temodex, Prospidelong, Cisplacel"⁷⁷. Another interesting novelty is an electric scooter produced by Optron Instrument-Making Plant of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. Its maximum speed is 60 kilometres per hour, and its carrying capacity is 200 kilograms. In addition, such advanced developments as "unmanned aerial vehicle Burevestnik (Scientific and Production Centre of Multifunctional Unmanned Complexes of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus), automated system of registration of welding processes (Belarusian-Russian University), heat-resistant impact-resistant coatings (Gomel State University named after F. Skaryna), bread of increased nutritional value (Belarusian State University of Food and Chemical Technologies) were presented in Shanghai..."⁷⁸

Also. In November 2022, at the IX Belarusian-Chinese Youth Innovation Forum "New Horizons - 2022" held in Minsk, it was noted that this year the State Committee for Science and Technology of Belarus together with the Ministry of Science and Technology of China held a competition of Belarusian-Chinese scientific and technical projects. "Based on its results, 35 projects will receive state support from the two countries"⁷⁹. All these facts show that multifaceted scientific, technical

⁷⁷ More than 120 Belarusian developments are presented at the China International Import Exhibition [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/tech/view/boleee-120-belorusskih-razrabotok-predstavleny-na-kitajskoj-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-importa-533702-2022/>

⁷⁸ Novelties of the food industry and spacecrafts: what Belarus will present at the import exhibition in China [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novinki-pisheproma-i-kosmicheskie-apparaty-cto-predstavit-belarus-na-vystavke-importa-v-kitae-533240-2022/>

⁷⁹ Young scientists of Belarus and China develop cooperation in the field of innovation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/tech/view/molodye-uchenye-belarusi-i-kitaja-razvivajut-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-innovatsij-534160-2022/>

and innovation co-operation between the two countries with systematic and purposeful work of the partners to develop ties yields fruitful results.

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Strategic partnership enters a new era

In March 2023, the leaders of the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China adopted a **joint statement** on the basic principles of developing exemplary relations of all-weather and all-round strategic partnership between the two countries in the new era, which include mutual support for the state course and on issues affecting each other's indigenous interests. In addition to this joint statement, "Belarus and China during the state visit concluded 27 intergovernmental, interdepartmental and interregional agreements and more than 10 commercial arrangements in various fields"⁸⁰, and the cumulative economic effect of the visit is estimated at more than three and a half billion dollars.

Among the signed documents is the **Programme of Belarusian-Chinese Scientific and Technical Cooperation for 2023-2024**, which aims the two countries at creating joint innovative industries. After all, "a developed engineering base, a modern system of training highly qualified personnel, and many years of advanced experience of leading Belarusian design bureaus all form the basis for future high-tech industries"⁸¹. In this regard, we would like to emphasise that Chinese investors invested over USD 100 million in projects in Belarus in 2022. In addition, more than forty projects were implemented with the participation of Chinese companies, and about twenty more promising initiatives are being worked on this year. In this context, we should mention the Great Stone industrial park, where in 2022 "Belarusian resident enterprises launched production of glass for all types of land transport, innovative photographic printing products, automated process control systems in industry and energy. The InKata science and technology park was put into

⁸⁰ Foreign Ministry: the state visit of the President of Belarus to Beijing has become a significant event in the relations with China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/mid-gosvizit-prezidenta-belarusi-v-pekini-stal-znachimym-sobytiem-v-otnoshenijah-s-knr-557851-2023/>

⁸¹ Belarus and China are aimed at creating joint innovative industries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kitaj-natseleny-na-sozdanie-sovmestnyh-innovatsionnyh-proizvodstv-556688-2023/>

operation to accommodate companies carrying out scientific research and experimental development"⁸².

It should be recalled that in the last days of 2022, the number of residents in the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park Velikiy Kamen reached the mark of 100. For reference, we note that "as of the end of 2021, 85 residents were registered here"⁸³. In particular, the 99th resident was Yunchenbel LLC, the founder of which is a large Chinese company SUMEC International Technology Trading. "The new resident will create an e-commerce platform to enable the import and export of mechanical and electrical equipment"⁸⁴. And Belarusian company Human Kraft will produce medical products - customised bone tissue prostheses based on 3D printing technologies, which will be used in surgery, traumatology, dentistry and cancer treatment. Also at the end of December 2022, agreements of intent to enter the industrial park as residents of Foryu Information Technologies LLC and Tontun Information Technologies LLC (People's Republic of China) were signed.

In addition, at the end of 2022, the resident company IPD Group LLC signed a lease agreement for a 5.5 thousand square metres universal production building in the industrial park. This deal became one of the largest in 2022 on the Belarusian industrial property market. "A project for the development and serial production of high-tech data processing and storage devices will be realised on these premises. In particular, the company will produce computer hardware, server equipment, monitors, interactive smart panels. In the future, the resident plans to expand the range of import-substituting products"⁸⁵. In total, by the end of 2022, 19 residents were registered in Velikiy Kamen. Also. Last year, residents of the park exported their products for more than \$100 million to 20 countries.

⁸² Abramenko: "Great Stone" is a colossal opportunity for doing business on the platform of "Belt and Road" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/abramenko-velikiy-kamen-eto-kolossalnye-vozmozhnosti-dlja-vedeniya-biznesa-na-platfome-poias-i-put-556679-2023/>

⁸³ Zalesky, B. Partnership of flexible forms. Features of Eurasian cooperation dialogue in the context of global threats / B. Zaleskii. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. - C. 5.

⁸⁴ The number of residents of "Great Stone" has reached 100 [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kolichestvo-rezidentov-velikogo-kamnia-dostiglo-100-542481-2022/>

⁸⁵ Velikiy Kamen" finished the year with the largest deal [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-velikom-kamne-zavershili-god-krupnejshej-sdelkoj-542635-2022/>

In 2023, Veliky Kamen is expected to attract at least 20 residents. In January alone, several investors from Belarus have already been registered. In particular, "very interesting projects in the field of production of products for veterinary medicine. And the second project is in the field of science, <...> in the field of nuclear energy"⁸⁶. At the end of January, Veliky Kamen registered a new resident - BaikalGroup LLC. "The company with Chinese capital will create a transport and logistics centre <...> in the park. The park resident plans to provide warehousing and logistics services, including storage, packaging, tracking, labelling..."⁸⁷. Goods will be delivered to the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union.

In February 2023, three more new residents were registered in the industrial park: two with capital from Belarus and one from China. Heprotrade LLC will produce environmentally friendly thermal paper, the products of which will be widely used in sales and services. "The production capacity will be up to 300 tonnes per month. Realisation of the project will make it possible to provide the domestic market with such products and reduce imports, as well as to supply them for export"⁸⁸. The second February resident, Rivex LLC, will produce innovative dressing materials and for sterilisation, which are intended for both the domestic market and the Eurasian Economic Union countries. Bel-Nord Logistics LLC, founded by a Chinese international logistics company, one of the largest in the Inner Mongolia region, intends to "develop logistics infrastructure by building warehouses and introduce a wide range of services in this area. In addition, road transport of goods along the China-Europe route will be organised"⁸⁹. This initiative will also help in addressing

⁸⁶ "Great Stone" this year plans to attract at least 20 residents [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/velikij-kamen-v-etom-godu-planiruet-privlech-ne-menee-20-rezidentov-547180-2023/>

⁸⁷ The new resident of "Great Stone" will create a transport and logistics centre [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-sozdast-transportno-logisticheskij-tsentr-547574-2023/>

⁸⁸ Two more residents with Belarusian capital are registered in "Veliky Kamen" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/esche-dva-rezidenta-s-belorusskim-kapitalom-zaregistririvanj-v-velikom-kamne-549664-2023/>

⁸⁹ The new resident of "Great Stone" will develop international logistics [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-razvivat-mezhdunarodnuju-logistiku-551642-2023/>

the most important strategic task - expanding the presence of Belarusian products in the Chinese market.

In just one and a half months of 2023, seven new residents have already registered in Veliky Kamen. And in general, already during the life of the industrial park, "the total number is 107 residents with a planned investment volume of \$1.3bn"⁹⁰. It is expected that in order to create additional conditions for attracting new investors, work will continue in 2023 to further improve the special legal regime of the park with a focus on the implementation of new high-tech projects, including in the field of traditional and innovative Chinese medicine. Promising projects are also planned in logistics, e-commerce, fine chemistry, biotechnology, instrumentation, research and development. In February 2023, at a meeting of the working group on the China-Belarus Industrial Park, it was noted that on the sites of Veliky Kamen "it is possible to quickly increase the level of localisation in the production of medical and technological equipment, transport and other areas, to promptly replace falling imports with these products. In order to maximise the available potential, it is necessary to continue to actively develop the park, build infrastructure and announce the project on a global scale"⁹¹. In short, the current challenges dictate a window of opportunity for the residents of the industrial park - in particular, and also create additional competitive advantages for the prospective development of the Belarusian economy - in general.

Another important document adopted in March 2023 is the **Comprehensive Strategy for Joint Industrial Development**, implemented by the Ministry of Industry of Belarus and the Ministry of Industry and Informatisation of China, which provides for the creation of incentive mechanisms for Belarusian and Chinese enterprises to intensify and strengthen and technological cooperation. A roadmap with specific projects and initiatives has been prepared to implement this strategy. "It

⁹⁰ This year "Great Stone" registered 7 new residents [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-etom-godu-velikij-kamen-zaregistroval-7-novyh-rezidentov-551821-2023/>

⁹¹ Cherviakov: the current challenges of the economy - a window of opportunity for the residents of the Great Stone [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/cherviakov-tekuschie-vyzovy-ekonomiki-okno-vozmozhnostej-dlja-rezidentov-velikogo-kamnja-550498-2023/>

is planned to establish joint ventures in China, use Chinese technologies and competences to modernise Belarusian industries and attract Chinese investment to implement projects in Belarus"⁹² in such key areas as mechanical engineering, electronics, woodworking, opto-mechanical, pulp and paper and chemical production.

In particular, **Minsk Tractor Plant** is ready to intensify co-operation with China. The project to organise the assembly of BELARUS tractors with a capacity of 350 horsepower is currently underway in the Celestial Empire. The first prototype was tested in 2020-2021. Last year, two more BELARUS 3523 tractors were delivered to China for certification, after which a decision will be made on localisation of the assembly of Belarusian tractors. And in Minsk, testing of the BELARUS 3523 model with a diesel engine from the Chinese corporation Weichai continues. It is expected that 100 such engines will be delivered to the plant in the near future. "Another direction is related to the supply of components from China. Last year, imports from China totalled \$1.8 million, at the end of two months of the current [2023] year - \$400 thousand."⁹³ . So the parties are interested in joint investment projects.

During the state visit of the Belarusian delegation to China, several documents were signed concerning the development of production and **agro-industrial complex**. In particular, "the largest pig breeding complex in Belarus for 300,000 heads will be built in Minsk Region. <...> And we will modify our beef cattle breeding on the basis of Mogilev region. First of all - construction of a separate slaughterhouse. About a thousand lightweight sheds will be built for keeping cattle of Aberdeen-Angus or Limousin breeds"⁹⁴ .

Belarus also plans to almost double the volume of food supplies to China in 2023. Last year, these exports exceeded more than \$500 million. Belarusian supplies

⁹² Abramenko, A. On the peculiarities of doing business in CCW, joint projects and prospects for co-operation / A. Abramenko // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/ob-osobennostjah-vedenija-biznesa-v-knr-sovmestnyh-proektah-i-perspektivah-sotrudnichestva-8633/>

⁹³ General Director of MTZ told about intensification of cooperation with China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/ob-aktivizatsii-sotrudnichestva-s-kitaem-rasskazal-gendirektor-mtz-553348-2023/>

⁹⁴ Belarus expects to almost double the volume of food supplies to China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-rasschitvvaet-pochti-v-dva-raza-narastit-objemy-postavok-prodovolstvija-v-kitaj-553023-2023/>

"increased in poultry meat (3 times), rapeseed oil (3.1 times), milk and cream (1.4 times) <...>. At present, 148 Belarusian producers are accredited to supply China with 171 categories of goods"⁹⁵. By the beginning of 2024, the goal is to reach \$900 million in product exports. In general, in trade and economic cooperation with its partners from China, this year Belarus has every chance to increase the volume of exports to \$2.2 billion.

Two more interesting documents signed in Beijing in early March 2023 concern the topic of **regional cooperation**. The first: it is the **plan of the Year of Regions of Belarus and China for 2023**, which "contains more than 80 bilateral agreements and initiatives"⁹⁶ to attract at least \$150 million of direct Chinese investment by each Belarusian region and Minsk by 2026. Second: it is the **Agreement between the Ministry of Economy of Belarus and the Ministry of Commerce of China on deepening trade and economic cooperation between the regions of the two countries**, in which the parties emphasise three Chinese regions. Firstly, **Tianjin** is a city of central subordination, where the production and logistics orientation prevails. Secondly, **Qingdao**, located in **Shandong** province, where enterprises of production and medical orientation are especially developing and where the platform of the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation** free trade zone is actively used. Thirdly, **Chongqing** is another centralised city. "It is the heart of logistics, transit. Here it is mainly e-commerce, the emphasis on transport and logistics, including green corridors. This is when a train is not checked at the border, but controlled at the destination, which gives a big advantage in cost and time."⁹⁷.

Also in early March 2023, Belarus and China signed a **plan to develop cooperation in the field of health care for 2023-2025**, which notes that "the parties will develop cooperation in the field of health care, science and education based on

⁹⁵ Export of Belarusian goods to China almost doubled in 2022 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/za-2022-god-eksport-belorusskih-tovarov-v-kitaj-prakticheskii-udvoitsja-556681-2023/>

⁹⁶ Abramenko: Belarus and China seek to deepen bilateral cooperation in all areas [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/abramenko-belarus-i-kitaj-stremjatsja-k-uglubleniju-dvustoronnego-vzaimodejstvia-vo-vseh-oblastjakh-556675-2023/>

⁹⁷ . Nikolai Snopkov: The cumulative economic effect of the Belarusian-Chinese agreements is estimated at more than \$3.5 billion [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10547>

the principles of national legislation of the countries, as well as on the principles of mutual benefit and mutual assistance"⁹⁸ . The two countries will give priority to cooperation in such areas as: organisation of joint scientific research in the field of medicine, exchange of experience in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases; organisation of seminars and master classes for experts; cooperation in epidemiology and microbiology and exchange of data on the spread of epidemic diseases; cooperation in surgery, transplantation and haematology; and participation in international medical exhibitions held in the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Belarus. ⁹⁹It is important to note that as early as in the Joint Declaration on the Establishment of an All-Weather and Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, issued in September 2022, Belarus and China agreed to develop cooperation in the field of high-tech medicine, vaccines and pharmaceuticals and "prioritised the formation of a joint pharmaceutical cluster, commercialisation of new pharmaceutical products and technologies, as well as the establishment of a high-quality centre of traditional Chinese medicine in Belarus" xml-ph-0.

For reference: the two countries have long-standing ties in the field of medicine. The first agreement on cooperation in healthcare and medical science between the Belarusian and Chinese Ministries of Health was signed back in 1994. In 2021, a decree of the Belarusian government "On the state registration of strategically important medicines" was adopted, which allows for their accelerated registration to fight a pandemic. And at the same time, the Ministry of Health for the first time carried out state registration of the Chinese traditional medicine (TCM) drug - soft capsules "Qingyi". And today "810 items of medical equipment, 502 medical devices and 480 medicines produced in China are registered in Belarus. From April 2020 to the present day, the PRC has provided gratuitous assistance in the amount equivalent

⁹⁸ The plan for the development of cooperation in the field of health care for 2023-2025 between Belarus and China has been signed [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://minzdrav.gov.by/ru/sovtytva/podpisan-plan-po-razvitiyu-sotrudnichestva-v-oblasti-zdravookhraneniya-na-2023-2025-godv-mezhdu-bela/>

⁹⁹ China and Belarus adopted the Joint Declaration [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://zviazda.by/ru/news/20220916/1663330543-kitav-i-belarus-prinvali-sovmestnuvu-deklaracivu>

to \$30 million. Belarus has received personal protective equipment, medical and diagnostic equipment, vaccine against COVID-19¹⁰⁰ .

Our country has already established TCM centres and the necessary business conditions for setting up pharmaceutical production facilities. In particular, for the residents of the Velikiy Kamen park, the Ministry of Health of Belarus has developed a compendium "Main Aspects of Admission to Circulation of Medical Devices and Medicines" in Russian and Chinese languages to inform them about opportunities and preferences. In addition, work has already been completed on the architectural project "Construction of a polyclinic on the territory of the Veliky Kamen Park, taking into account the creation of a regional centre for the promotion of traditional and innovative Chinese medicine", and work is being completed on the inclusion of the specialty "doctor of traditional Chinese medicine" in the job nomenclature, which will give an additional impetus to the promotion of this topic in Belarus.

At the end of February 2023, the Ministry of Health of Belarus and the State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine of China said that they were preparing a memorandum on TCM issues, which should reflect the creation of a TCM centre in Belarus, a pharmaceutical cluster and the development of traditional Chinese medicine in the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park "Great Stone". It should be noted that "reflexotherapy methods, diagnostic methods, therapeutic gymnastics, classical acupuncture, Chinese massage, as well as treatment methods based on modern technologies - electroacupuncture, laser acupuncture, ultrasonic acupuncture <...> are used in Belarus. Centres of traditional Chinese medicine have been established in regional centres of Belarus. Co-operation has been established with a number of universities - Tianjin, Changchun, the University of Traditional Chinese Medicine of Zhejiang Province..."¹⁰¹ . In addition, the educational process in this speciality is carried out at the Belarusian Medical Academy of Postgraduate

¹⁰⁰ The Ministry of Health of Belarus and the Weigao Company signed a co-operation agreement [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/minzdrav-belarusi-i-kompanija-weigao-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-552445-2023/>

¹⁰¹ Belarus and China are preparing a memorandum on traditional Chinese medicine [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kr-gotovjat-memorandum-po-voprosam-traditsionnoj-kitajskoj-meditsiny-552902-2023/>

Education at the Department of Reflexology. On average, more than 200 doctors are trained annually. The staff of the department has been repeatedly trained in Beijing, Taiyuan and Tianjin. These methods have shown their effectiveness, including in the treatment of postcoccygeal syndrome. Reflexologists perform about 900 thousand reflexotherapy procedures in Belarus every year.

In 2023, the parties continue to actively co-operate in this context. In February, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Belarus signed a number of co-operation agreements with Chinese partners. Firstly, in the city of Weihai, Shandong Province, with Weigao International Medical Trading Company, which supplies Chinese-made medical devices and spare parts. Second, in Shijiazhuang City in Hebei Province, with North China Pharmaceutical Company Limited (NCPC). "This company has been selected as a strategic partner to represent the interests of Belpharmprom Holding Company in the procurement of pharmaceutical substances in the People's Republic of China, as well as to perform the functions of studying market conditions and submitting proposals for the supply of substances and raw materials to the holding company's management company in accordance with applications"¹⁰².

As for the development of cooperation between Belarus and China in the new era in the **field of education**, in February 2023, Beijing hosted the China Education Expo, which included a thematic exposition "Education in Belarus", where leading Belarusian universities made presentations of their educational programmes: the Belarusian State University of Economics, the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics, the Minsk State Linguistic University, and the Minsk State University of Economics and Radioelectronics. It should be noted that the Belarusian exposition was the only foreign one presented at this educational forum, which was visited by more than two thousand young men and women from China interested in studying in Belarus.

In addition, during the talks in the Chinese capital at the Beijing University of Civil Engineering and Architecture, the possibility for Belarusian higher education

¹⁰² Agreement on co-operation signed by the Ministry of Health of Belarus and Chinese pharmaceutical company [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-podpisali-minzdrav-belarusi-i-kitajskaja-farmkompanija-552543-2023>

institutions to join the International Engineering and Architectural Consortium of Educational Institutions was discussed. In general, "as a result of meetings of representatives of Belarusian universities in Chinese universities and consulting companies, 17 agreements on co-operation in the field of educational services were signed, 16 agreements are being worked out for signing"¹⁰³. For reference, we note that "Belarusian and Chinese partners have already signed more than 540 direct co-operation agreements. To date, almost 500 citizens of the Republic of Belarus are studying in China, the number of Chinese students in Belarusian universities has reached 8,000 people"¹⁰⁴. In addition, Belarus and China are actively promoting the creation of joint educational structures. For example, seven joint projects are already functioning: three laboratories, two centres and two institutes. There are 40 joint educational programmes at the first and second levels of higher education, 10 of which have been developed over the last two years.

In this context, an important participant of international co-operation with the People's Republic of China in the field of education is the **Belarusian State University** (BSU), which already co-operates with more than 50 Chinese higher education institutions, and its classrooms are currently attended by more than three thousand citizens of the Celestial Empire. In March 2023, BSU identified new vectors and forms of cooperation with leading Chinese universities to strengthen, intensify and expand the areas of partnership.

In particular, BSU is entering a new level of co-operation with Peking University, which is the oldest university in China and was founded back in 1898, where the local library has more than eight million books and where more than 46,000 students, including more than four thousand foreigners, study. Recall that the two universities signed a memorandum of understanding in 2019. In March 2023, the parties initiated cooperation in the field of mathematical sciences. "The development of joint research projects, academic exchange for lecturing on modern advances in

¹⁰³ Belarus - China: 17 new agreements in the field of education signed [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-kitaj-podpisano-17-novyh-soglashenij-v-oblasti-obrazovanija-553144-2023/>

¹⁰⁴ Zalesky, B. The route of interaction - Asia. Intensification of Belarus' multifaceted ties with the main economic partners on the continent / B. Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 19.

probability theory, mathematical statistics and data analysis are seen as promising"¹⁰⁵. Besides, co-operation in the sphere of joint training of master's and postgraduate students will be expanded. For this purpose, this topic will be analysed in detail in the near future to identify the specialities and scientific fields of knowledge in which they plan to cooperate.

Another partner of BSU in China is Beijing Foreign Studies University, one of the leading universities in the country in the field of linguist training. In March 2023, BSU signed an agreement on exchange of students to develop academic mobility of undergraduate and graduate students studying Chinese, Belarusian and Russian languages. The parties will also develop joint innovative pedagogical methods.

As a result of the meetings held in March 2023, the Chinese University of Political Science and Law became a new partner of BSU. The universities signed a memorandum of understanding, which will allow co-operation in the field of jurisprudence in numerous vectors. "These include exchange of students, opening joint educational programmes, implementation of joint research and educational projects, exchange of information, teaching materials and scientific reports, organisation of conferences, seminars, workshops and courses and preparation of joint publications"¹⁰⁶.

Brest State Technical University (BrSTU) is also among the active Belarusian universities developing co-operation with Chinese partners. In January 2023, BrSTU signed an agreement on cooperation in education, science, and culture with Guangdong Construction Vocational Technical Institute to combine the efforts of the two educational institutions to jointly train qualified specialists for the benefit of the economies of the two countries. The two sides plan to create a joint educational programme to train Chinese students. It is a question of recruiting training groups, where students will study in China for the first two years and then in Belarus. The

¹⁰⁵ BSU enters a new level of co-operation with Beijing University [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/bgu-vyhodit-na-novvj-uroven-sotrudnichestva-s-pekinskim-universitetom-557082-2023/>

¹⁰⁶ Student exchange, joint programmes: BSU and leading universities of China have identified new vectors of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/obmen-studentami-sovmestnye-programmy-bgu-i-veduschie-vuzy-ktaja-opredelili-novve-vektory-557224-2023/>

Chinese side was particularly interested in the speciality "architecture". "These joint educational programmes are very popular because they allow students to get two diplomas in one cycle of study"¹⁰⁷.

It should be noted that Guangdong Construction Vocational Institute is the largest and the only state higher vocational education institution that trains builders and architects and is located in the industrial centre of southern China. It has 22,000 students. With the support of the National Development and Reform Commission of the People's Republic of China, an industrial and educational integration base has been built on the basis of the institute, where students study various innovative and traditional construction technologies, design methods, water supply systems, BIM-technologies, and property management. As for BrSTU, more than 200 Chinese citizens are studying in Brest today. The most popular among them are specialities in economics, construction and mechanical engineering.

Finally, another set of documents signed in early March 2023 in Beijing concerned cooperation in the **media sphere**. This included an **agreement on co-operation between the news agencies of Belarus and China - BELTA and Xinhua**. In this regard, we note that the cooperation agreement between BELTA and Xinhua was first signed back in January 1993, then re-signed in June 2018. The new document - already the third - "implies the exchange of text news, photos and videos, mutual support and promotion on the Internet and social networks"¹⁰⁸. The agencies agreed to exchange experiences and train journalists, editors and technical staff to improve their skills.

All these initiatives and projects adopted this spring in the relevant documents show that cooperation between Belarus and China in general tends to strengthen in all directions, but there is still a great unrealised potential, which will be implemented

¹⁰⁷ Brest University and Guangdong Institute will jointly train architects and builders [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brestskij-universitet-i-guandunskij-institut-budut-sovmestno-gotovit-arhitektorov-i-stroitelej-543128-2023/>

¹⁰⁸ BELTA and Xinhua signed an agreement on strengthening co-operation and intensifying news exchange [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belta-i-sinhua-podpisali-soglashenie-ob-ukreplenii-sotrudnichestva-i-aktivizatsii-obmena-novostjami-553192-2023/>

already in a new era - the exemplary relations of all-weather and all-round strategic partnership between the two states.

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On a foundation of new ideas

In July 2023, the fifth meeting of the Belarus-China Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee (IGC) was held, which formed a new model of strategic partnership between the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China and created unique opportunities and mechanisms for deepening practical cooperation across the whole range of areas. The participants of the meeting agreed that "our common goal should be a new point of growth in trade turnover of at least 120 per cent compared to the last [2022] year"¹⁰⁹. To be more specific about the most important areas of Belarus-China economic co-operation, four key issues should be highlighted in this regard.

First, increasing and diversifying trade, systematic accreditation of Belarusian food producers, and launching procurement channels for important goods through Chinese operators. Second, increasing rail container traffic to deliver Belarusian goods to China and Chinese equipment to Belarus, ensuring the operation of green railway corridors, and organising subsidised reverse trains from Belarus to major logistics centres in China and back. Thirdly, "deepening investment cooperation, joint industrial development, technological cooperation in licensed automobile manufacturing, assembly of electric cars, machine tool manufacturing, joint production of medical equipment, development of bio- and digital technologies"¹¹⁰. Fourth, financing of strategic investment projects within the framework of China's favourable credit lines, their effective implementation, building up credit, financial, technical and economic cooperation, including the purchase of necessary equipment. Recall that "at the end of 2022, the countries [Belarus and China] reached a record volume of \$5.8 billion in goods turnover. Five months of this year were marked by a

¹⁰⁹ Snopkov: a new model of strategic partnership between Belarus and China has been formed [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/snopkov-sformirovana-novaja-model-strategicheskogo-partnerstva-belarusi-i-kitaja-576417-2023/>

¹¹⁰ Chervjakov singled out important areas of cooperation to strengthen the relations between Belarus and China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chervjakov-vydelil-vazhnye-napravlenija-sotrudnichestva-dlja-ukreplenija-otnoshenij-belarusi-i-kitaja-576438-2023/>

1.5-fold increase in trade turnover. Exports of Belarusian goods to China are growing at a record pace: 1.8 times in 2022 and 1.6 times in the first five months of 2023"¹¹¹ .

At the fifth meeting of the IGC, the parties agreed to focus their efforts on the implementation of major development and co-operation projects, including grant aid from the Chinese government. In this context, it should be stressed that Belarus has already implemented 15 important socially oriented projects totalling more than one and a half billion Chinese yuan. "About a dozen of new strategic projects are in the works, including infrastructure development of the Great Stone industrial park, supply of necessary technological equipment with the total amount of financing of over 900 million Chinese yuan"¹¹² . The parties plan to accelerate the implementation of these projects, including two international-class sports facilities - a stadium and a swimming pool - by September 2024.

As for other production and cooperation projects, in July 2023, the Belarusian Ministry of Industry and the Chinese corporation China National Machinery Industry Corporation (Sinomach) signed an action plan to develop cooperation "on priority areas of cooperation in the production of agricultural and municipal machinery, machine tools, as well as the implementation of investment projects at Belarusian enterprises"¹¹³ and even discussed the creation of individual models of agricultural machinery, the possibility of organising

In July 2023, the Chinese company Baimen and JSC Slutsk Cheese Factory signed a strategic commercial agreement on the establishment of a joint venture to produce dairy products already this year in Shenyang, the administrative centre of Liaoning Province. It should be noted that this Chinese company is a major exporter of "Belarusian dairy products (about \$50 million worth of products exported in

¹¹¹ Snopkov: Belarus and China demonstrates to the whole world an exemplary example of co-operation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/snopkov-belarus-i-kitaj-demonstrirujut-vsemu-miru-obraztsovvi-primer-sotrudnichestva-576412-2023/>

¹¹² Belarus and China have agreed to implement major projects in the field of development and cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kitaj-dogovorilis-o-realizatsii-krupnyh-proektov-v-oblasti-razvitiya-i-sotrudnichestva-576096-2023/>

¹¹³ The Ministry of Industry of Belarus and the Chinese company Sinomach signed an action plan for the development of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minprom-belarusi-i-kitajskaja-kompanija-sinomach-podpisali-plan-meroprijatij-po-razvitiyu-576228-2023/>

2022). It is implementing a project to process colostrum and produce whey protein at the site of the Great Stone Industrial Park"¹¹⁴ . By establishing a joint venture in Shenyang, Baimen and Slutsk Cheese Factory intend to further scale up the project, systematically increasing the range of dairy products produced for Chinese customers.

And one more interesting fact. In the same July 2023, OJSC "Managing Company of Bobruiskagromash Holding" held negotiations with YTO Group Corporation - a Chinese manufacturer of agricultural and construction machinery, part of the Sinomach complex machine-building conglomerate - "to organise joint production of self-propelled mowers, municipal machines, and also discussed issues of supplying components for Bobruiskagromash machinery from China"¹¹⁵ . In the near future, the parties will prepare the necessary documents on this project.

A separate conversation in this context is about the Chinese-Belarusian Great Stone industrial park. Let us recall that 2023 marks ten years since the President of the People's Republic of China (PRC) Xi Jinping announced the "One Belt, One Road" initiative, which marked a new era in the economic relations of states and united more than a hundred countries across the planet. Among the first participants of this megaproject was the Republic of Belarus, where the Great Stone Park is actively developing. It plays the role of a nodal platform of this initiative and already unites more than a hundred residents from 15 countries. Suffice it to say that "the volume of actual investments of the park has already exceeded \$830 million, and the volume of announced investments amounts to \$1.34 billion"¹¹⁶ . And in the first quarter of 2023 alone, 11 new companies with investment projects in logistics, e-commerce, medicine, biotechnology, instrumentation, research and development have already registered here. More specifically, "the number of residents of the Veliky

¹¹⁴ Belarusian-Chinese enterprise for the production of dairy products will be established in China this year [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorusko-kitajskoe-predpriyatje-po-proizvodstvu-molochnoj-produktsii-sozdat-v-knr-v-etom-godu-576098-2023/>

¹¹⁵ "Bobruiskagromash" and Chinese company YTO Group Corporation discussed the prospects of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bobrujskagromash-kitajskaja-kompanija-yto-group-corporation-obsudili-perspektivy-sotrudnichestva-575895-2023/>

¹¹⁶ Declared investments of the residents of "Great Stone" are estimated at more than \$1.3 billion [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zajavlennye-investitsii-rezidentov-velikogo-kamnja-otsenivajutsja-bolee-chem-v-13-mlrd-568784-2023/>

Kamen Industrial Park has now reached 108 <...>. The volume of production [for the three months of 2023] has increased 1.3 times, revenue from the sale of goods - 1.8 times, export of goods - 1.2 times, foreign direct investment on a net basis - 2 times, tax payments - 3.5 times"¹¹⁷ .

One of the priority areas of Veliky Kamen today is mechanical engineering. It should be reminded that the cluster of enterprises working in this area is the largest in the park and has more than 20 projects. In particular, there are joint Belarusian-Chinese enterprises producing internal combustion engines, gearboxes for passenger and freight transport. One of the Chinese residents produces construction machinery based on the chassis of Minsk Automobile Plant, and a Belarusian resident produces glass for all types of land transport, which is in great demand in the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union. Another topical area of Veliky Kamen is high-tech and competitive production - companies carrying out research and development. Now there are already more than 25 such companies registered in the park.

Speaking of new residents, in March 2023, another company was registered in the Veliky Kamen industrial park - IRBI LLC, whose investment project has an innovative import-substituting character. "The park resident will produce monoblocks, mini-computers for offices and industrial computers, as well as computer hardware components. In addition to production, the company will implement its own application software complexes"¹¹⁸ . These products will be intended for the domestic market of Belarus, as well as exported to the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union.

In April 2023, another resident was registered in the industrial park - SinoBelMedica LLC, initiated by the Chinese company Shanghai Electric Medical Group, which is part of the structure of the largest manufacturer of power and industrial equipment Shanghai Electric Group Company Limited. The new resident

¹¹⁷ Ministry of Economy: 11 new companies were registered in the "Great Stone" in the first quarter [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minekonomiki-za-i-kvartal-velikom-kamne-zaregistrovano-11-novyh-kompanij-567541-2023/>

¹¹⁸ The new resident of "Great Stone" will produce computers and components [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyj-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-proizvodit-kompiutery-i-komplektujuschie-558151-2023/>

"will implement a project to create a modern high-tech production of X-ray tubes on the territory of the industrial park. The sale of products on the Belarusian market will contribute to import substitution"¹¹⁹ .

In May 2023, at the talks between the park's management and a delegation from Gansu Province, the issues of traditional Chinese medicine development in Belarus were discussed, and "the possibility of establishing a centre of traditional Chinese medicine and developing pharmaceutical production in the territory of the park was discussed"¹²⁰ . And in June 2023 an agreement on cooperation between the Belarusian Ministry of Health and the Chinese pharmaceutical company Jifei was reached to work out "the issue of creating a biotechnology cluster for the production of medicines, vaccines, insulin, CAR-T technologies <...> in the Great Stone Industrial Park. Work is underway to determine the prospects for localising the nomenclature of Jifei's pharmaceuticals"¹²¹ .

And in June 2023, the Belarusian and Chinese sides said that they would continue to attract investors with large projects to the Great Stone Industrial Park, with special attention being paid to the development of traditional Chinese medicine at the park's site. Also, "the Ministries of Economy of the two countries and the largest shareholder companies of the Industrial Park Development Company agreed to continue active work on attracting anchor investors with major projects to Velikiy Kamen, to organise new demanded production facilities, in particular in the field of machine building and automotive components, medical equipment, to increase localisation of existing production facilities of residents"¹²² . The parties will pragmatically improve the investment environment on a systematic basis,

¹¹⁹ The new resident of "Great Stone" plans to produce X-ray tubes [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyi-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-planiruet-proizvodstvo-rentgenovskih-trubok-560903-2023/>

¹²⁰ Delegation of the Chinese province of Gansu will study the possibility of development of pharmaceutical production in the "Great Stone" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/delegatsija-kitajskoj-provintsii-gansu-izuchit-vozmozhnost-razvitiia-farmproizvodstv-v-velikom-kamne-567520-2023/>

¹²¹ Ministry of Health and Chinese pharmaceutical company "Jifei" intend to write a co-operation agreement [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/minzdrav-i-kitajskaja-farmkompanija-dzhifei-namereny-podpisat-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-569796-2023/>

¹²² Belarus and China will continue to attract anchor investors with large projects to the "Great Stone" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kitaj-prodolzhat-privlekat-v-velikiy-kamen-jakornyh-investorov-s-krupnymi-proektami-569986-2023/>

consistently eliminate emerging development risks and bring the park to a new qualitative level of development, strengthening its position as a central Belarusian-Chinese project and international industrial cluster with an eye on the Eurasian Economic Union market.

At the fifth meeting of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Committee on Cooperation, which was held in July 2023, the parties discussed, among other things, the dynamics of mutual contacts in the field of education in order to strengthen direct inter-university ties and implement a number of large-scale joint educational and scientific projects. Among the promising areas of cooperation, the participants of the meeting noted the following: training of personnel and expansion of the practice of joint educational programmes on innovative specialties implemented by leading higher education institutions of Belarus and China; cooperation on the creation of digital platforms that provide public access to educational resources; joining efforts to develop norms and standards for digitalisation of education; and exploring the possibility of creating an Association of Higher Education Institutions of the two countries.

It should be noted that as of today more than 560 direct cooperation agreements have already been signed between the educational institutions of Belarus and China, which is about 10 per cent of the total number of existing inter-university agreements of Belarusian institutions of higher education. "There are also 9 joint educational and scientific structures (3 laboratories, 4 centres and 2 institutes) functioning on the basis of educational institutions of the two countries, 40 joint educational programmes are being implemented, 10 of which have been developed in the last two years, the implementation of 6 of them started in the 2022/2023 academic year. The possibility of implementing 20 more joint educational programmes and organising joint training of personnel of higher scientific qualification is being worked out"¹²³. In autumn this year, the educational departments of the two countries plan to approve a plan for the development of academic and scientific exchanges for

¹²³ Bakhanovich: education provides intellectual, cultural and linguistic rapprochement between Belarus and China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bahanovich-obrazovanie-obespechivaet-intellektualnoe-kulturnoe-i-jazykovoe-sblizhenie-belarusi-i-kitaja-576391-2023/>

2023-2025, within the framework of which new concrete steps will be taken for constructive interaction between Belarusian universities and Chinese partners.

The Belarusian State Technological University (BSTU) is among the active participants of this co-operation. Back in April 2023, the Belarusian university discussed promising areas of partnership with members of the Guangdong Union for Scientific and Technical Cooperation with the Commonwealth of Independent States. In particular, BSTU signed an agreement on co-operation and establishment of a joint laboratory of applied technologies with Guangdong Vocational College of Light Industry. "The parties agreed to organise academic exchanges, summer schools, discussed the prospect of contacts in the field of polymers, functional coatings, paper production technology and other areas"¹²⁴. They also signed documents on the implementation of joint educational programmes with Guangdong Nanhua Vocational College of Industry and Commerce, Guangdong Vocational College of Communications. And a bilateral agreement on scientific and technical cooperation was concluded with the Ningbos International Research and Innovation Centre to jointly develop modern polymer composite materials, elastomers and plastic masses, and additive technologies.

In May 2023, BSTU signed a cooperation agreement with Kunshan Institute of Industrial Technology to establish joint Belarusian-Chinese transfer centres in the field of high technologies and 3D modelling. The agreement stipulates that "every year the Belarusian side will select at least 10 projects to be financed by the PRC in order to develop co-operation in the field of high technologies"¹²⁵. In addition, the parties agreed to create a joint university "Kunshan-Minsk" on the basis of the Belarusian State Technical University so that students could study part of the time in China and part of the time in Belarus, and eventually receive two diplomas. And one more interesting idea: together with Chinese companies, a biomedicine centre will be

¹²⁴ Educational and scientific potential of BSTU presented in the Chinese province Guangdong [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/obrazovatelnyj-i-nauchnyj-potentsial-bgtu-prezentovan-v-kitajskoj-provintsii-guandun-563887-2023/>

¹²⁵ Investments, creation of a joint university and biomedicine centre. Kunshan delegation visited BSTU [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/investitsii-sozdanie-sovmestnogo-universiteta-i-tsentra-biomeditsiny-delegatsija-kunshanja-posetila-569539-2023/>

created in Minsk City Technopark, where they will develop testing technologies and drugs to treat human and various animal diseases. In short, an agro-industrial complex related to vaccines will be developed.

Another Belarusian university that continues close co-operation with Chinese partners in 2023 is the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics (BSUIR). In July this year, BSUIR opened a Belarusian-Chinese research laboratory of external electromagnetic influences in Minsk together with the North China Research Institute of Electromagnetic Protection. One of the key tasks of the new laboratory is to develop a finished product of practical interest and in demand in the global technology market, "to conduct fundamental and applied research, implement its results, promote training and professional development, internships for engineering staff and researchers of BSUIR and the partner institute"¹²⁶, as well as to strengthen international co-operation of scientists and specialists for joint research within the framework of the implementation of China's initiative.

As for Chinese universities, Liaoning University, which became a partner of Brest Pushkin State University and Brest State Technical University (BrSTU) in July 2023, is highly interested in co-operation with Belarusian partners. In particular, the agreement between BrSTU and Liaoning University "provides for academic exchanges, joint educational programmes, implementation of scientific projects and social and cultural interaction. We plan to fill the agreement with real activities, and in the future to develop a roadmap"¹²⁷. For example, to train Chinese students in the speciality "Smart Transport" on the basis of the Faculties of Mechanical Engineering and Information Technologies.

Returning to the fifth meeting of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Committee on Co-operation, it should be noted that the participants in this discussion

¹²⁶ Belarusian-Chinese research laboratory opened in BSUIR [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belorussko-kitajskaja-nauchno-issledovatel'skaja-laboratorija-otkrilas-v-bguir-576810-2023/>

¹²⁷ Universities of Brest signed co-operation agreements with Liaoning University [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vuzy-bresta-podpisali-soglashenija-o-sotrudnichestve-s-liaoninskim-universitetom-576902-2023/>

proposed to bring scientific and technical co-operation to a new level and considered the possibility of setting up joint high-tech production facilities in a number of areas. "Such directions <...> could be robotics, electric transport, medical equipment and pharmaceuticals, laser technology"¹²⁸. By creating a full innovation cycle - from the idea to the production of high-tech products, the parties will expand promising areas of partnership, interacting on the educational foundation of new ideas, which ensures intellectual rapprochement between Belarus and China. In addition, all these facts show that the new model of strategic, including trade and economic, scientific, technical, and educational, partnership between the two countries formed at the fifth meeting of the IGC on Cooperation is beginning to take concrete innovative shape for the benefit of the two peoples.

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¹²⁸ Shlychkov: the implementation of joint projects with China will allow to reach the creation of new high-tech industries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/shlychkov-realizatsija-sovmestnyh-proektov-s-kitaem-pozvolit-vyjti-na-sozdanie-novyh-576315-2023/>

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