

Export growth is a priority

In 2023, the Republic of Belarus has been consistently increasing the volume of exports of goods and services. In nine months, the Belarusian economy received a record export revenue for the last ten years - \$31 billion. For reference, it should be noted that in 2022, products from Belarus were supplied to 161 countries for almost \$47 billion. The current results have become possible due to many factors and simultaneously operating mechanisms. These are the instruments of state financial and non-financial support. This is also a priority attention to new mechanisms and tools for the development of foreign economic activity, including for increasing exports of goods and services to the countries of the far arc, so that in 2024 the growth of Belarusian exports will increase by almost four billion dollars. Among the measures that will address this task is the organization of exhibitions and expositions Made in Belarus in a wide variety of countries in the Middle East, Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Commonwealth of Independent States. What measures in this regard are implemented by Belarusian exporters at the multi-vector level? This is the subject of this study.



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New opportunities in the conditions of multi-vector foreign economic activity of Belarus

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Table of contents

Joint initiatives build cooperation in innovative areas	4
On a foundation of new ideas	14
Interaction of regions	25
goes to the next level.....	25
Number and quality of transactions	38
with Chinese partners is growing.....	38
Focus - a new qualitative level of education and research	42
A plan for further cooperation has been agreed	47
Partnerships.....	50
forward-looking	50
The key to cooperation is concrete projects	62
From economics to education	72
The exhibits create	82
prerequisites for contact	82
Maximum specific.....	86
trade and economic cooperation	86
The rapprochement will only deepen.....	96
The Commission resumes its work	101
The integrated program forms	105
Electric transport market trends.....	105
Literature.....	109

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Joint initiatives build cooperation in innovative areas

In August 2022, Minsk hosted the ninth meeting of the joint intergovernmental commission on bilateral cooperation between Belarus and Uzbekistan, where participants noted the importance of continuing systematic work for new promising joint initiatives in order to jointly achieve a multiple increase in the volume of mutual trade in the coming years. Recall that "in 2021, trade turnover between Belarus and Uzbekistan amounted to \$301.9 million and increased by 7.8% against the level of 2020, exports - \$245.4 million (3.3% growth). The balance is positive - \$188.9 million"¹. The main items of Belarusian exports in 2021 were meat and meat products, medicines, vinyl chloride polymers, milk powder, diagnostic reagents, vaccines, blood serums, chipboard, cheese and cottage cheese. In the first half of 2022, the Belarusian-Uzbek trade turnover exceeded \$190 million and increased by almost 40 percent. At the same time, the positive balance on the Belarusian side amounted to \$100.7 million. Now the parties see a real opportunity to achieve a mutual trade turnover of \$500 million. In this regard, Belarus is ready to increase supplies of food and agricultural goods, road-building, municipal and special equipment, dump trucks, woodworking products, petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, and medical equipment.

As for industrial cooperation and the creation of joint productions, "a total of 103 organizations with Belarusian investments have already been registered in Uzbekistan, as well as representative offices of Avtopromsnabspedition LLC, Softclub LLC, AmantisMed LLC, Belvitunifarm LLC"². In 2022, a good result of joint work can be

¹ Golovchenko and Aripov discussed building up the trade turnover of Belarus and Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/golovchenko-i-aripov-obsudili-naraschivanie-tovarooborota-belarusi-i-uzbekistana-520574-2022/>

² Zaleskii, B. Result-oriented. Realization of opportunities of international economic relations / B. Zaleskii. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. - C. 23.

considered the release of equipment based on the chassis of the Minsk Automobile Plant. "If until recently only superstructures on ready-made machine kits were carried out, in April this year the first MAZ dump truck assembled in Uzbekistan was presented. There are all possibilities to ensure high localization of this production"³. Work is underway to resume production of Belarusian tractors in Uzbekistan. And "BELAZ is ready to supply Uzbekistan with completely new models of machinery for transportation of rock masses, which are both highly environmentally friendly and efficient"⁴. Belkommunmash enterprise is interested to take part in the development of Uzbek transport infrastructure and jointly implement initiatives to launch environmentally friendly passenger transport. Belarusian specialists are ready to offer a comprehensive solution for the creation of an efficient and safe system of public electric transportation: from the construction of the necessary infrastructure to the supply of the most modern models of vehicles. The implementation of such a project would be a truly landmark event in the development of Belarusian-Uzbek relations.

Indicators between the two countries have also increased in the field of agro-industrial complex. In the first six months of 2022, the turnover of agricultural products increased in both exports and imports. "Meat products, dairy products and baby food are exported to Uzbekistan. Imports are mainly represented by vegetable and melon products, grapes, dried fruits, nuts"⁵. For Uzbekistan's growing livestock industry, Belarus

³ Agro-industrial complex, industrial cooperation, construction. Zayats on the plans of interaction with Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/apk-promkoooperatsija-stroitelstvo-zajats-o-planah-vzaimodejstvija-s-uzbekistanom-520299-2022/>

⁴ Industrial cooperation, machinery supplies, woodworking. Belarus and Uzbekistan discussed mutual cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/promkoooperatsija-postavki-tehniki-derevoobrabotka-belarus-i-uzbekistan-obsudili-vzaimnoe-520492-2022/>

⁵ Belarus and Uzbekistan discussed issues of further cooperation in the sphere of agro-industrial complex [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL:

is ready to organize supplies of high-yield premixes with access to joint production of mixed fodder in this Central Asian country.

Speaking about Belarusian-Uzbek cooperation in the pharmaceutical sector, Belarusian investors in Tashkent are successfully implementing a project to produce broad-spectrum antibiotics. Belarusian holding Belfarmprom and its colleagues in Uzbekistan are working out the possibility of establishing joint production facilities for the production of medical drugs in non-overlapping items. In the construction sector, the parties are interested in jointly designing Uzbekistan's infrastructure facilities, industrial buildings, healthcare facilities, including pharmaceutical industry. The Uzbek side is interested in Belarusian wooden house-building products. Given Uzbekistan's actively developing tourism sector and its need for environmentally friendly residential facilities, cooperation in this area is very promising.

Interesting Belarusian-Uzbek projects are also being implemented in the educational sphere. In particular, Baranavichy State University (BarSU) together with Samarkand State University and Jizzak State Pedagogical Institute are currently implementing "double degree" programs. It is assumed that students and master's students will be trained at BarSU and partner universities on the basis of Belarusian and foreign positive experience. "Recruitment is planned to be carried out in the specialties of "practical psychology", "preschool education", "psychology", "economics""⁶. And Brest State Technical University will cooperate with the Bukhara Institute of Engineering and Technology. In July 2022, the universities signed cooperation agreements to interact in organizing retraining and professional development of teachers from

<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-uzbekistan-obsudili-voprosy-dalneishego-sotrudnichestva-v-sfere-apk-520545-2022/>

⁶ BarSU develops joint educational programs with Uzbek partners [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/bargu-razrabatyvaet-sovmestnye-obrazovatelnye-programmy-s-uzbekskimi-partnerami-520325-2022>

Bukhara in Brest. "We will start with this, further on we can cooperate on the first and second levels of higher education"⁷. The institute in Bukhara is a major educational and scientific center in Uzbekistan. Education is conducted at eight faculties, higher education is received by more than 11 thousand students in 30 bachelor's degree directions.

In January 2023, Belarus and Uzbekistan celebrated 30 years of diplomatic relations. In recent years, the two countries have significantly intensified bilateral dialog at the regional level as well. Suffice it to say that as of April this year, the parties have already signed 15 interregional agreements. "Delegations from the regions of Belarus and Uzbekistan regularly exchange visits. The practice of developing roadmaps for the implementation of interregional agreements has proved effective"⁸. Among the active participants of this interregional interaction are such oblasts as Vitebsk and Kashkadarya, Gomel and Fergana.

In particular, in October 2022, Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee signed a cooperation agreement with the khokimiyat of Kashkadarya region. This document promotes the building up of mutually beneficial "trade and economic ties between enterprises and organizations of the regions. In addition, it will define ways to develop cooperation in scientific and technical, tourist, cultural, sports and health care areas"⁹. In the same October 2022, several important documents were also signed, developing the interaction between the individual participants of this interregional partnership: two agreements and two memorandums of

⁷ BrSTU will cooperate with the Bukhara Institute of Engineering and Technology [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brgtu-budet-sotrudnichat-s-buharskim-inzhenerno-tehnologicheskim-institutom-514381-2022/>

⁸ C. Rachkov: Belarus considers Uzbekistan as an important partner in Central Asia [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <http://sovrep.gov.by/ru/news-ru/view/srachkov-belarus-rassmatrivaet-uzbekistan-kak-vazhnogo-partnera-v-tsentralnoj-azii-22630-2023/>

⁹ Delegation of Vitebsk region in Uzbekistan will sign an agreement with the khokimiyat of Kashkadarya region [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/delegatsija-vitebskoj-oblasti-v-uzbekistane-podpishet-soglasenie-s-hokimijatom-kashkadarjinski-527596-2022/>

cooperation. As for the agreements, these are the interaction between the Eufrosinia Polotskaya Polotsk State University and the Karshi Institute of Engineering and Economics, as well as between the P.M. Masherov Vitebsk State University and the Karshi State University. Memorandums were adopted between the free economic zones of the two regions, the concern "Meat and Dairy Products" and the enterprise for supply and processing of dairy products. In addition, the parties signed contracts worth about three million dollars. It's about food and woodworking products, as well as the supply of electrical equipment for the oil industry and measuring devices. And "Vitebsk region has been working out the issue of supplying its products to the Uzbek market. The Kashkadarya region was very interested in meat and dairy products, electrical appliances, cable products in terms of sharing the experience of enterprises in production within this country"¹⁰.

At the same time, the Belarusian and Uzbek regions planned to cooperate in other areas as well. For example, back in 2021, in the territory of the free economic zone of Kashkadarya region, the Vitsebsk holding Marko established an enterprise where more than two hundred employees sew shoes. Now Uzbek partners are interested in new competencies - in light industry, dairy farms, milk processing enterprises. In May 2023, at the XI International Economic Forum "Innovations. Investments. Prospects", held in Vitebsk, the parties proposed a number of other new areas of cooperation, including the linen industry. "Vitebsk region is ready to assist in providing varieties that can be grown under the conditions of Uzbekistan. This proposal is being prepared by specialists of RUE "Flax Institute". In addition, options for cooperation in woodworking are being actively worked out, in particular for the manufacture of individual

¹⁰ Enterprises of Vitebsk and Kashkadarya regions signed contracts for \$3 million [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/predpriiatija-vitebskoi-i-kashkadarjinskoi-oblastej-podpisali-kontrakty-na-3-mln-529745-2022/>

wooden houses, furniture, including for educational institutions of Kashkadarya region"¹¹ . There are also initiatives in the pharmaceutical industry. For better development of contacts in economic, tourism and other spheres, the parties plan to organize joint information tours. Thus, joint activities of Vitebsk and Kashkadarya regions already create favorable prerequisites for both sides for the implementation of projects that in the future can strengthen new points of contact in mutual cooperation.

As for Gomel region, which is also actively developing cooperation with Uzbek partners, we note that its trade turnover with Uzbekistan has more than tripled over the past three years and amounted to 33 million dollars. And according to the results of 2022 Gomel exports increased almost one and a half times. "The main export positions of Gomel enterprises are paper, cardboard, wallpaper, chipboard boards, wood pulp, cattle meat, timber, paint, polyethylene products, wire, chemical threads, dairy products, agricultural machinery, furniture..."¹² . Among the regions of Uzbekistan interested in joint projects with Gomel partners is Fergana region, which intends to develop cooperation with the Belarusian region in the production of agricultural machinery, woodworking, chemical industry, and tourism. In February 2023, Gomel Oblast Executive Committee and Fergana Oblast Hokimiyat signed a roadmap for 2023, which includes various directions. And there are already concrete developments. In the near future, "it is expected to open a company store in Fergana region, where woodworking products of the Belarusian region will be sold. Some of them will be sent for re-export to the neighboring

¹¹ Vitebsk and Kashkadarya regions plan to organize infotours to intensify cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vitebskaja-i-kashkadarijskaja-oblasti-planirujut-organizovat-infotur-dlja-aktivizatsii-567511-2023/>

¹² Trade turnover of Gomel region with Uzbekistan has increased more than three times in the last three years [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/tovarooborot-gomelskoj-oblasti-s-uzbekistanom-vvros-bolee-chem-v-tri-raz-za-poslednie-tri-goda-549254-2023/>

countries of Uzbekistan"¹³. And in Homel the idea to open a trading house for selling fruits, dried fruits and vegetables from Uzbekistan is being worked out. In addition, Fergana entrepreneurs are interested in joint production of chemical and pulp and paper products with Gomel companies. To all appearances, the roadmap of the two regions - Belarusian and Uzbek - will soon be filled in other areas as well.

Another interesting aspect of the interaction between Belarus and Uzbekistan is the development of Belarusian exports in the Uzbek market using exhibition specifics. Especially since there will be several such projects in 2023. In March 2023, Tashkent already hosted the 22nd international exhibition "Foodstuffs, Ingredients and Production Technologies - UzFood", where Belarus presented a large-scale exposition - The Taste of Nature - with the participation of more than 20 food producers. Concern Belgospishcheprom presented the products of confectionery factories Kommunarka, Spartak, and Krasny Izhevik, which familiarized the guests of the Belarusian pavilion with the best products and production novelties - new types of confectionery products, chocolate and chocolate candies, wafers, cookies, chewy and jelly marmalade.

Meat processing enterprises and dairy producers, which are part of the Grodniasomolprom holding and the Brestmyasomolprom concern, were also well represented at the exhibition. These are Brest, Pinsk, Slonim, Volkovysk, Grodno and Oshmian meat processing plants, which offered high-quality beef in various versions, sausages, meat semi-finished products. In particular, the Grodno meat processing plant demonstrated new products, which brought to Uzbekistan raw smoked

¹³ From combine-building to tourism: Gomel and Fergana regions intend to develop cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/ot-kombajnoostroenija-do-turizma-gomelskaja-i-ferganskaja-oblasti-namerenv-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-549242-2023/>

sausages "Vostochnaya" and "Kavkazskaya", boiled-smoked salami "Favorit" with olives, as well as with cheese.

The dairy segment was represented by Kobrin Butter and Cheese Factory, Minsk Margarine Plant, Luninets Dairy Plant, Lida Dairy Canning Plant, Molochny Mir, Molochny Gostinets and Minsk Dairy Plant No. 1. "Belarusian producers demonstrate a wide range of whole-milk products - milk, cream, kefir, cheese, cottage cheese, creams, yogurts"¹⁴. Oil and fat products and rapeseed oil could also be seen at the exhibition. Bread and bakery products were presented by Berestiysky Baker OJSC, and Bellact Company showed products for baby food. In addition, the products of such enterprises as Maloritsky Canning and Vegetable Washing Plant OJSC and Lidskie Food Concentrates OJSC were demonstrated.

Within the framework of the exhibition, an Uzbek-Belarusian business forum was held, which was attended by more than 50 heads and representatives of government agencies and business circles of the two countries, where cooperation in the field of agriculture and food was discussed, the food potential of Belarus was outlined, and the export potential of Brest and Grodno regions was presented. In addition, the business circles of the two countries held B2B negotiations, which took place separately and at the stands of Belarusian enterprises. As for the specific results of the exhibition, "Grodno Meat Processing Plant signed a contract for the supply of meat products worth \$500 thousand, and Minsk Margarine Plant signed a contract for the supply of its products worth 10 million Russian rubles. During the exhibition Minsk Dairy Plant No. 1 held negotiations on increasing sales volumes to its key partners in Uzbekistan, in particular, on the supply of butter and skim milk powder,

¹⁴ Belarus presented its exposition at the exhibition of food industry in Tashkent [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-predstavila-ekspozitsiju-na-vvstavke-pischevoj-promyshlennosti-v-tashkente-557927-2023/>

and also signed a contract for the supply of dairy products"¹⁵ . Bellakt discussed opportunities to increase sales of products, increase supplies of dried baby food and agreed to supply curd desserts and milk powder, including lactose-free milk, to this Central Asian country, while Molochniy Mir signed an agreement to supply almost two and a half thousand tons of whey powder and more than a thousand tons of milk powder.

Bobruiskagromash Holding is also one of the Belarusian companies that are actively interested in promoting their export products in the Uzbek market. In March 2023, within the framework of the international exhibition "Agriculture - AgroWorld Uzbekistan-2023", specialists of the Belarusian company held negotiations with key Uzbek partners - Metal processing, Planeta Servis and MCHJ Buxoro Agro Texnika Garant, "with whom further volumes of machinery deliveries were agreed, as well as technical design of machines to adapt them to the requirements of the Uzbek market. In addition, during the negotiations the representative of the holding familiarized the partners with the novelties of Bobruiskagromash machinery: cotton cultivator, seeders and heavy-duty trailers"¹⁶ . Partners from Uzbekistan confirmed their interest in annual deliveries of agricultural machinery from Bobruisk. For reference, since 2022, machines for applying solid organic fertilizers and rotary mower-shredders have already been working in Uzbek fields.

In April 2023, Tashkent hosted the international industrial exhibition "Innoprom. Central Asia", which covered six thematic sections: mechanical engineering, metallurgy and materials, energy solutions,

¹⁵ Belarusian enterprises intend to increase supplies to Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-predpriyatija-namereny-narastit-postavki-v-uzbekistan-559267-2023/>

¹⁶ Uzbekistan is interested in supplies of agricultural machinery "Bobruiskagromash" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/uzbekistan-zainteresovan-v-postavkah-selskohoziastvennoj-tehniki-bobrujskagromasha-556555-2023/>

chemical industry technologies, information and telecommunications technologies, and infrastructure development. The exhibition featured an extensive Belarusian exposition Made in Belarus, which demonstrated the best industrial developments and innovative equipment of the country's engineering industry flagships. "7 major enterprises expressed their interest in participation <...>: Belarusian Metallurgical Plant, BELAZ, Minsk Tractor Plant, BATE, Scientific and Technological Park BNTU "Polytechnik", "Gomselmash", "StankoGomel""¹⁷.

Another important reserve of Belarusian-Uzbek economic relations is the intensification of partnerships between free economic zones (FEZs) of Belarus and Uzbekistan, whose residents can build cooperation in various areas. In March 2023, within the framework of the Third Congress of Free Economic Zones held in Gomel, constructive negotiations took place between the administrations of FEZ Gomel-Raton and Navoi, where they discussed the potential for mutually beneficial partnership. In particular, "the first direction is to sell in Uzbekistan the demanded types of products of FEZ "Gomel-Raton" residents. Uzbekistan is quite an interesting market. It has 36 million population. <...> There are a lot of foreign investments, infrastructure projects"¹⁸. Among the most demanded products of Gomel manufacturers the Uzbek side names such topical positions as industrial, boiler, heating, ventilation, cooling equipment, as well as energy-saving and energy-efficient technologies. In short, the Uzbek market is an important area for Belarusian exports in Central Asia. And this is just the beginning.

¹⁷ Belarus will present an exposition at the exhibition "Innoprom. Central Asia" in Tashkent [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavit-ekspozitsiju-na-vyvstavke-innoprom-tsentralnaja-azija-v-tashkente-557617-2023/>

¹⁸ Industrial cooperation and access to new markets. Director General of FEZ "Navoi" about the partnership between Belarus and Uzbekistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/promkoooperatsija-i-vvhod-na-novve-rvynki-gendirektor-sez-navoi-o-partnerstve-belarusi-i-uzbekistana-557030-2023/>

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 entire 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% against the last [2022] year"¹⁹. To be more specific about the most important areas of Belarusian-Chinese economic cooperation, four key issues should be emphasized 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 transportation to deliver Belarusian cargo to China and Chinese equipment to Belarus, ensuring the operation of green railway corridors, and organizing subsidized reverse trains from Belarus to major logistics centers in China and back. Third, "deepening investment cooperation, joint industrial development, technological cooperation in licensed automobile manufacturing, assembly of electric vehicles, machine tool manufacturing, joint production of medical equipment, development of bio- and digital technologies"²⁰. Fourthly, financing of strategic investment projects within the framework of preferential credit lines of China, their effective implementation, building up credit-financial and

¹⁹ 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-novaia-model-strategicheskogo-partnerstva-belarusi-i-kitaja-576417-2023/>

²⁰ Cherviakov singled out important areas of cooperation to strengthen the relations between Belarus and China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/cherviakov-vydelil-vazhnye-napravlenija-sotrudnichestva-dlja-ukreplenija-otnoshenij-belarusi-i-kitaja-576438-2023/>

technical-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 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"²¹ .

At the fifth meeting of the IGC, the parties agreed to focus their efforts on the implementation of major development and cooperation projects, including grant aid from the Chinese government. In this context, it should be emphasized that Belarus has already implemented 15 important socially-oriented projects totaling 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 a total amount of financing of over 900 million Chinese yuan"²² . 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 Ministry of Industry of Belarus 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-tool construction, as well as the implementation of investment projects at

²¹ Snopkov: Belarus and China demonstrates to the whole world an exemplary example of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/snopkov-belarus-i-kitaj-demonstrirujut-vsemu-miru-obraztsovtvi-primer-sotrudnichestva-576412-2023/>

²² Belarus and China 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/>

Belarusian enterprises"²³ and even discussed the creation of individual models of agricultural machinery, opportunities for the organization of

In the same 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 the administrative center of Liaoning Province - in the city of Shenyang. It should be noted that this Chinese company is a major exporter of "Belarusian dairy products (about \$50 million worth of products exported in 2022). It is implementing a project to process colostrum and produce whey protein on the site of the Great Stone Industrial Park"²⁴ . 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 organize joint production of self-propelled mowers, municipal machines, and also discussed issues of supplying components for Bobruiskagromash machinery from China"²⁵ . In the near future the parties will prepare the necessary documents on this project.

²³ The Ministry of Industry of Belarus and the Chinese company Sinomach signed an action plan to develop cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minprom-belarusi-i-kitajskaja-kompanija-sinomach-podpisali-plan-meroprijatij-po-razvitiu-576228-2023/>

²⁴ 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-predpriatie-po-proizvodstvu-molochnoj-produktsii-sozdadut-v-kr-v-etom-godu-576098-2023/>

²⁵ "Bobruiskagromash" and Chinese company YTO Group Corporation discussed the prospects of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bobruiskagromash-i-kitajskaja-kompanija-yto-group-corporation-obsudili-perspektivy-sotrudnichestva-575895-2023/>

A separate conversation in this context is about the Chinese-Belarusian industrial park Great Stone. 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 all over the planet. Among the first participants of this megaproject was the Republic of Belarus, where the Great Stone Park is actively developing. The park 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"²⁶. 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 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"²⁷.

One of the priority areas of Veliky Kamen today is machine building. 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 cargo transport.

²⁶ 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-kamnia-otsenivajutsja-bolee-chem-v-13-mlrd-568784-2023/>

²⁷ Ministry of Economy: for the first quarter in the "Great Stone" registered 11 new companies [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minekonomiki-za-i-kvartal-v-velikom-kamne-zaregistrovano-11-novyh-kompanij-567541-2023/>

Some of the Chinese residents produce construction machinery based on the chassis of Minsk Automobile Plant, while the 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 Velikiy 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, it can be noted that in March 2023 another company was registered in the Velikiy 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"²⁸. 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 "will implement a project to create a modern high-tech production of X-ray tubes in the industrial park. The realization of the products on the Belarusian market will contribute to import substitution"²⁹.

²⁸ The new resident of "Great Stone" will produce computers and components [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/novyi-rezident-velikogo-kamnja-budet-proizvodit-kompjutery-i-komplektujuschie-558151-2023/>

²⁹ 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/>

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 center of traditional Chinese medicine and developing pharmaceutical production on the territory of the park was discussed"³⁰ . 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 in the industrial park "Great Stone" a biotechnological cluster for the production of medicines, vaccines, insulin, CAR-T technologies <...>. Work is underway to determine the prospects for localization of the nomenclature of Jifei's pharmaceuticals"³¹ .

And in June 2023, the Belarusian and Chinese sides stated that they would continue to attract investors with major projects to the Great Stone Industrial Park, with special attention 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 organize new demanded production, in particular in the field of machine building and automotive components, medical equipment, to increase the localization of existing production of residents"³² . The parties will pragmatically

³⁰ 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-razvitiija-farmproizvodstv-v-velikom-kamne-567520-2023/>

³¹ Ministry of Health and Chinese pharmaceutical company "Jifei" intend to write a cooperation agreement [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/minzdrav-i-kitajskaja-farmkompanija-dzhifei-namereny-podpisat-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-569796-2023/>

³² 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-velikij-kamen-jakornyh-investorov-s-krupnymi-proektami-569986-2023/>

improve the investment environment on a systematic basis, 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 an international industrial cluster with an eye on the Eurasian Economic Union market.

At the already called fifth meeting of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Committee on Cooperation, which took place 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 implementation of joint educational programs on innovative specialties by the leading universities 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 of digitalization of education; and elaboration of the possibility of creating an Association of Higher Education Institutions of the two countries.

It should be noted that to date more than 560 direct cooperation agreements have already been signed between the educational institutions of Belarus and China, which is about 10 percent of the total number of existing inter-university agreements of Belarusian institutions of higher education. "On the basis of educational institutions of the two countries there are also 9 joint educational and scientific structures (3 laboratories, 4 centers and 2 institutes), 40 joint educational programs 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 implementation of 20 more joint educational programs and organization of joint training of personnel of higher scientific qualification

is being worked out"³³. In the fall of this year, the educational departments of the two countries plan to approve a plan for the development of academic and scientific exchanges for 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 cooperation. 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 cooperation and establishment of a joint laboratory of applied technologies with Guangdong Vocational College of Light Industry. "The parties agreed to organize academic exchanges, summer schools, discussed the prospect of contacts in the field of polymers, functional coatings, paper production technology and other areas"³⁴. Also signed documents on the implementation of joint educational programs 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 Ningbos International Science and Innovation Center to jointly develop modern polymer composite materials, elastomers and plastic masses, additive technologies.

In May 2023, BSTU signed a cooperation agreement with Kunshan Institute of Industrial Technology to establish joint Belarusian-Chinese transfer centers in the field of high technologies and 3D modeling. The

³³ Bakhnovich: education provides intellectual, cultural and linguistic rapprochement between Belarus and China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bahnovich-obrazovanie-obespechivaet-intellektualnoe-kulturnoe-i-jazykovoe-sblizhenie-belarusi-i-kitajia-576391-2023/>

³⁴ Educational and scientific potential of BSTU presented in the Chinese province Guangdong [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/obrazovatelny-i-nauchny-potencial-bgtu-prezentovan-v-kitajskoj-provintsii-guandun-563887-2023/>

agreement stipulates that "annually the Belarusian side will select at least 10 projects to be financed by the PRC in order to develop cooperation in the field of high technologies"³⁵. 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 another interesting idea: together with Chinese companies, a biomedicine center will be created in Minsk City Technopark, where they will develop testing technologies and drugs aimed at treating human and various animal diseases. In short, an agro-industrial complex related to vaccines will be developed.

Another Belarusian university that continues close cooperation 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, to implement their results, to promote training and professional development, internships for engineering staff and researchers of BSUIR and the partner institute"³⁶, as well as to strengthen international cooperation of scientists and specialists for joint scientific research within the framework of the implementation of the Chinese initiative.

³⁵ Investments, creation of a joint university and biomedicine center. 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/>

³⁶ Belarusian-Chinese research laboratory opened in BSUIR [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belorusko-kitajskaja-nauchno-issledovatel'skaja-laboratorija-otkrilas-v-bguir-576810-2023/>

As for Chinese universities, there is a high interest in cooperation with Belarusian partners in Liaoning University, which became a partner of Brest Pushkin State University and Brest State Technical University (BrSTU) in July 2023. In particular, the agreement between BrSTU and Liaoning University "provides for academic exchanges, joint educational programs, implementation of scientific projects and social and cultural interaction. We plan to fill the agreement with real activities, in the future to develop a roadmap"³⁷. For example, to train Chinese students in the specialty "Smart Transportation" on the basis of the faculties of mechanical engineering and information technology.

Returning to the fifth meeting of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Committee on Cooperation, it should be noted that the participants in this discussion proposed to bring scientific and technical cooperation to a new level and considered the possibility of creating joint high-tech production facilities in a number of areas. "Such directions <...> could be robotics, electric transportation, medical equipment and pharmaceuticals, laser technology"³⁸. 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 indicate that the new model of strategic, including trade and economic, scientific, technical, and educational, partnership between the two countries formed within the framework of the Fifth IGC meeting on cooperation is

³⁷ Universities of Brest signed cooperation agreements with Liaoning University [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vuzy-bresta-podpisali-soglasheniia-o-sotrudnichestve-s-liaoninskim-universitetom-576902-2023/>

³⁸ Shlychkov: the realization 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-sovmestnykh-proektov-s-kitaem-pozvolit-vviti-na-sozdanie-novykh-576315-2023/>

beginning to take concrete innovative shape for the benefit of the two peoples.

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Regional cooperation reaches a new level

In March 2023, in Beijing, the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China adopted at the highest level 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. At the same time the parties signed the plan of the Year of Regions of Belarus and China for 2023. This document "contains more than 80 bilateral agreements and initiatives to attract at least 150 million dollars of direct Chinese investment by each Belarusian region and Minsk by 2026"³⁹. In September 2023, the third meeting of the working group on interregional trade and economic cooperation of the commission on trade and economic cooperation of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee took place in the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park "Great Stone", where they discussed topical issues of interaction between the regions of the two countries and prospects for its development. The parties noted that certain economic indicators of cooperation between Belarus and China have reached a fairly high level. "In the first half of 2023, mutual trade turnover exceeded \$4 billion, with Belarusian exports approaching the landmark mark of \$1 billion."⁴⁰.

Minsk Region is one of the active participants in deepening trade and economic, scientific and technical, and socio-cultural cooperation between the regions of the two countries. In 2022, the trade turnover of the Belarusian capital region with the Chinese side exceeded two billion dollars, with exports of Minsk Region amounting to almost one billion

³⁹ Zaleskii, B. New Realities for Partnership. Chronicle of international cooperation under conditions of economic mobilization / B. Zaleskii. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 13.

⁴⁰ Chebotar: Belarus aims to expand trade and economic cooperation with the regions of the People's Republic of China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chebotar-belarus-natselena-na-rasshirenie-torgovo-ekonomicheskogo-sotrudnichestva-s-regionami-knr-590444-2023/>

dollars. At the beginning of 2023, the list of items of Minsk region products supplied to the Celestial Empire has already exceeded the mark of more than a hundred. "Products of milk processing enterprises and other municipal enterprises of the region are especially in demand. All milk processing enterprises of the holding "Minoblmyasomolprom", as well as Slutsk and Stolbtsy meat processing plants have an export license"⁴¹. And for five months of the current year the capital region has already provided export supplies to China for more than five hundred million dollars.

Among interesting partners of Minskshchina among Chinese regions we should mention **Guangdong province**, which is home to more than 127 million people and is attractive not only as a part of the market for products, but also as a supplier of technologies in the field of mechanical engineering and agriculture. After all, the province is one of the most developed provinces in China, with strong machinery and processing companies. In 2022, the parties celebrated the tenth anniversary of the signing of the cooperation agreement. In May 2023, the Belarusian region and the Chinese province agreed on the prospects of cooperation. And now the roadmap for the development of bilateral relations is already being supplemented and updated. Note that "in the first half of 2023, trade turnover between the regions increased by 20%. Exports reached Br646.2 million. Poultry meat, beef, flax fiber are supplied to China from Minsk region. The main imports are machines for automatic information processing, textile products, auto parts"⁴². In addition, the parties are discussing the issue of attracting investments from Guangdong Province to the economy of Minsk region, as well as options

⁴¹ What production of Minsk region in the near future can appear in the market of China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://mlvn.by/01032023/kakava-produkcziya-minskoi-oblasti-v-blizhaishee-vremya-mozhet-povavitsya-na-rvnke-kitava/>

⁴² Minsk Regional Executive Committee discussed the road map of cooperation with the Chinese province of Guangdong [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-minskom-oblispolkome-obsudili-dorozhnuju-kartu-sotrudnichestva-s-kitajskoj-provintsiej-guandun-583608-2023/>

for cooperation between major companies producing household appliances and cars, including electric cars, at production sites that are located in preferential zones of Minsk region, such as the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park "Great Stone", where in the first nine months of 2023 "12 new residents were added"⁴³ .

As for another partner of Minsk Region in China - **Zhejiang Province**, the parties intend to expand cooperation in the field of traditional Chinese medicine. As is known, a relevant center has been established on the basis of Minsk Regional Clinical Hospital. In June 2023, during the talks between the delegations of the Zhejiang Provincial Health Committee and the Main Health Department of the Minsk Regional Executive Committee, they discussed the directions of development of this center, "supply of medicines from China, the possibility of training doctors of the capital region in new methods. The Belarusian side also proposed to consider the issue of organizing joint production of biologically active additives, herbal medicines"⁴⁴ . In addition, the task is to expand the capabilities of the mentioned Center of Traditional Chinese Medicine, where such procedures as acupuncture, manual therapy, and massage are already performed on its basis.

Finally, one of the promising partners of Minsk Oblast among Chinese regions should be noted the **city of Chongqing** - the only municipality of central subordination of China, which is also the economic center of the upper reaches of the Yangtze River, where more than 32 million people live. This city is the anchor point of China's development

⁴³ The Ministry of Regional Executive Committee told what the Chinese province of Guangdong is interesting for the economy of the region [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/v-minoblispolkome-rasskazali-chem-dlja-ekonomiki-oblasti-interesna-kitaiskaja-provintsija-guandun-593552-2023/>

⁴⁴ Minsk region and Zhejiang province intend to develop cooperation in the field of traditional medicine [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/minskaia-oblast-i-provintsija-chzhetszjan-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sfere-traditsionnoi-574675-2023/>

strategy in the western part of the Middle Kingdom and the hub of the Belt and Road project. Logistics hubs, ports and customs infrastructure are being built here to participate in the logistics development of the China-Europe Express. Chongqing is China's modern manufacturing base, with a full chain of electronic information industry and automobile manufacturing. Suffice it to say that in 2022 the output of automobiles here amounted to more than two million cars, and 284 thousand units were exported.

As for interregional ties, Chongqing and Minsk Region established twinning relations in 2017. With the launch of the regular service of the Chongqing-Minsk China Railway Express, the trade turnover between the two sides has been growing every year. "In 2022, imports and exports between Chongqing and Belarus exceeded 500 million yuan, up 54.8% year-on-year. Belarus is an important supplier of meat products and butter to Chongqing. Belarusian dairy products and confectionery products are highly popular among the city's residents"⁴⁵. In 2023, the parties are taking new concrete steps to further deepen trade and economic cooperation, establish humanitarian and cultural contacts. In particular, within the framework of the Exhibition of Chinese Goods and Services - 2023, which took place in late June - early July this year in the industrial park "Great Stone", where about 180 Chinese companies presented their products, the thematic exposition of the Exhibition Pavilion of export goods of the city of Chongqing was also shown. More than 20 city enterprises on the area of about 300 square meters placed the products of mechanical engineering, including cars, motorcycles and components. In addition, official representatives of Minsk Region and Chongqing

⁴⁵ More than 20 enterprises from Chongqing will take part in the Exhibition of Chinese goods and services in "Great Stone" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bole-20-predpriyatij-iz-chuntsina-primut-uchastie-v-vystavke-kitajskih-tovarov-i-uslug-v-velikom-kamne-573747-2023/>

"discussed cooperation in mechanical engineering, food supplies to the Chinese region, and logistics"⁴⁶ .

Vitebsk Region is also among the active participants in the Belarusian-Chinese interregional cooperation. In 2022, it almost doubled the volume of supplies to China, which amounted to over USD 55 million. And in fact, back in 2006, the basis of exports of the Belarusian region to the Celestial Empire was represented by only 12 consolidated items, of which 97 percent was a bundle of synthetic yarns. "And at the end of 2021, the export basket of Vitebshchina expanded to 28 items, and its basis began to be formed by supplies of agricultural products (meat, milk and dairy products) - about 70 percent"⁴⁷ . Today, these supplies also include dry confectionery, rapeseed oil, polyethylene, acrylic tourniquets, glass fabrics, flax processing and woodworking products, peat, and alcoholic beverages.

But recently the interaction between Vitebsk region and China has gone beyond buying and selling, as the parties are moving "to the next level - exchange of technologies, assistance in their refinement, in their research, in the development of new types of products"⁴⁸ , to enter the plane of attracting investors, investing Vitebsk funds on the Chinese territory and mastering new technologies. Besides, the stake in the development is made on the educational, scientific and cultural segments. It should be reminded that Vitebsk region has signed eight bilateral

⁴⁶ Machine building, medicine, tourism: Minsk region and Chongqing discussed areas of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/mashinostroenie-meditsina-turizm-minskaja-oblast-i-chuntsin-obsudili-napravlenija-sotrudnichestva-574541-2023/>

⁴⁷ Mishin, A. What are the prospects of cooperation between Vitebsk region and the provinces of China? / A. Mishin // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://vitbichi.by/news/ekonomika/analitik-obvasnit-kakovy-perspektivy-sotrudnichestva-vitebskov-oblasti-i-provintsiv-kitava/>

⁴⁸ Subbotin: cooperation with China goes beyond buying and selling, into the plane of investment projects [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/subbotin-sotrudnichestvo-s-kitaem-vyhodit-za-ramki-kupli-prodazhi-v-ploskost-investproektov-598640-2023/>

documents - agreements, protocols, programs - on cooperation, established and maintained regular contacts at the level of executive authorities, organizations and companies with four provinces and one city of China. In addition, 19 bilateral documents on cooperation between cities and districts of Vitebsk region and Chinese partners have been concluded.

The Belarusian northern region has the most intensive interaction with **Heilongjiang Province**, which is located in the north of China, where rice is grown and agriculture is generally very developed. Over the past 18 years, the parties have created a good legal framework of mutual relations: 1) Agreement on cooperation in trade, economic, scientific-technical, humanitarian-cultural and other spheres (2005); 2) Agreement on the establishment of twinning relations (2011); 3) Cooperation Development Program for 2016-2020. "Twinning agreements with the cities of this region of the Celestial Empire were once concluded by Polotsk, Novopolotsk and Vitebsk"⁴⁹. In May 2023 at the XI International Economic Forum "Innovation. Investments. Prospects" in Vitebsk, enterprises from Heilongjiang Province expressed interest in partnership with Vitebsk producers of meat products, as well as "expect to establish mutually beneficial cooperation with Orsha and Dubrovensk flax processors in the near future, to share their experience and discuss the possibility of supplying modern equipment"⁵⁰. And in June this year at the international trade and economic exhibition in Harbin - the administrative center of Heilongjiang - a memorandum of intentions to

⁴⁹ Pushnyakova, A. Food products, MDF boards: Vitebsk region will present in June in Harbin the potential of the region / A. Pushnyakova // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/prodovolstvennye-tovary-mdf-plitv-vitebskaja-oblast-predstavit-v-ijune-v-harbine-potencial-regiona-567209-2023/>

⁵⁰ Pushnyakova, A. Chinese industrialists intend to establish cooperation with the enterprises of Vitebsk region / A. Pushnyakova // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kitajskie-promyshlenniki-namereny-naladit-sotrudnichestvo-s-predpriyatijami-vitebskoj-oblasti-567149-2023/>

establish friendly relations between the Vitebsk concern "Meat and Dairy Products" and an enterprise from the city of Suihua from the same province was already signed. In addition, the Belarusian side is interested in cooperating in the production of electrical equipment and instrumentation, as the Chinese partners have great competence in this area. So, new promising projects in this regional interaction may appear in the near future.

Another - new - partner of Vitebsk region in China is **Jiangxi province**, with which the Belarusian region signed an agreement on cooperation in trade, logistics, investment, economy, education, healthcare, sports and tourism in October 2022. "As another practical step, it was decided to establish direct interaction between FEZ Vitebsk and special economic zones of Jiangxi province and their residents in order to work out the creation of joint production facilities in Belarus and the use of cross-border trade mechanisms by Belarusian exporters to China"⁵¹. They also discussed the expansion of supplies of Belarusian products to China by the reverse container train Orsha-Nanchang and the exchange of practical experience in the investment sphere. After all, the city of Orsha has established cooperation with the administrative center of this province - Nanchang - in the field of innovative and traditional medicine at the level of individual medical institutions. In December 2022, the document of intentions on cooperation was signed by the city hospital No. 2 of Orsha Central Polyclinic and Hongdu Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine, which "provides for the exchange of practical and scientific experience, medical technologies, mutual internships and advanced training of medical workers, as well as the implementation of projects in the field of

⁵¹ FEZ "Vitebsk" and special economic zones of Jiangxi province will establish direct interaction [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/sez-vitebsk-i-osobyie-ekonomicheskie-zony-provintsii-tszjansi-naladziat-prjamoe-vzaimodejstvie-566987-2023/>

traditional Chinese medicine, including physiotherapy, reflexology, electro-acupuncture, acupuncture, qigong on the basis of Orsha Central Polyclinic"⁵² .

As for the third Chinese partner of Vitebskshchyna - **Shandong Province**, back in 2005 the parties signed a memorandum of cooperation, and in October 2019 adopted an Agreement on the establishment of relations of friendship and cooperation, in which they "identified as priorities for the development of partnership ties the development of an effective mechanism of interaction in the field of trade and investment, the development of cooperation ties..."⁵³ . In February 2023, an agreement on establishing friendly ties between Novopolotsk and the city of Liaocheng in Shandong Province was signed. The parties noted the importance of developing interregional ties as one of the key links in bilateral cooperation. They also discussed the implementation of a number of joint projects. It should be noted that in order to strengthen Belarusian-Chinese ties, Vitsebsk voblast and Shandong province regularly hold joint events, as well as conclude bilateral documents. "Earlier agreements on the establishment of friendly relations at the municipal level between the cities of Vitebsk and Jinan, Novopolotsk and Weihai, Orsha and Qingdao, Polotsk and Dezhou, Glubokoe and Jining were signed"⁵⁴ . And in September 2023, three more memoranda on cooperation were signed: in innovation, education and youth policy. "Based on them and on the results

⁵² Orsha and Chinese Nanchang agreed on the exchange of medical experience [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/orsha-i-kitajskij-nanchang-dogovorilis-ob-obmene-meditsinskim-opytom-540364-2022/>

⁵³ Zalessky, B. From Regions to Innovations. Features of the Belarusian-Chinese strategic partnership / B. Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2021. - C. 11.

⁵⁴ Novopolotsk and Chinese Liaocheng established friendly ties [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/novopolotsk-i-kitajskij-liaochen-ustanovili-druzhestvennye-svazi-550863-2023/>

of the negotiations, roadmaps for interaction on specific projects and areas of activity will be developed"⁵⁵ .

Finally, in November 2023, within the framework of the 6th China International Import Expo in Shanghai, where more than 10 enterprises of the Belarusian northern region took part, including - Vitebsk concern "Meat and Dairy Products", Polotsk Dairy Plant, Verkhnedvinsk Creamery, branch "Lepelsk MCC" of Vitebsk Meat Processing Plant, confectionery factory "Vityba", plant "Naftan", The Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee signed a memorandum of cooperation with the company Zonghai Business Management (Jinan) to create the China Industry Park in Vitebsk and the Belarus Industry Park in Shandong Province - on the site of Qingdao, where enterprises will be able to present their products and work out the issues of their sales in different regions of China. This will be one of the leading platforms from where Vitebsk goods will be distributed. It will be a point of growth of export of Vitebsk region, which they want to "maximally utilize, and not only for the sale of goods. <...> This is probably one of the most fresh and promising projects"⁵⁶ . All this in general suggests that in 2024 Vitebsk region intends to develop cooperation with Chinese regions even more actively in a wide range of areas, including economy, trade, science, engineering, technology, education, health care, and sports.

And now let us turn once again to the 6th China International Import Expo 2023 in Shanghai, where the Day of **Brest Region** was held in November this year, where the economic, cultural, tourist, educational,

⁵⁵ Kochetov, S. Vitebsk region and the Chinese province of Shandong intend to develop and expand partnership in innovation, education and youth policy / S. Kochetov // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.vitbichi.by/news/ekonomika/vitebskava_oblast_i_kitavskaya_provintsiya_shan_dun_namerenv_razvivat_i_rasshirvat_partnerstvo_v_inno/

⁵⁶ Subbotin: import exhibition in Shanghai helps enterprises to make themselves known and find partners in China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/subbotin-vvstavka-importa-v-shanhae-pomogaet-predpriyatijam-zajavit-o-sebe-i-najti-partnerov-v-kitae-598641-2023/>

medical potential of the Belarusian region was presented with an emphasis on exporting goods and services to China. It should be noted that this exhibition forum was attended by "more than 150 countries representing the regions of Asia, Africa and Europe"⁵⁷ and featured various thematic sections, including automotive industry, high-tech equipment and information technology, medical equipment and pharmaceuticals, consumer goods, trade in services, food and agricultural products. In this regard, the participation of Belarusian companies at the Import Fair in Shanghai is of strategic importance. After all, China is one of the largest and most dynamically developing markets in the world and "provides an opportunity for Belarusian companies to expand their horizons and establish business ties with potential partners and buyers, including Chinese state corporations"⁵⁸. An important detail: if at the 5th forum China International Import Expo 2022 in Shanghai, 27 organizations from the food industry, logistics, science and education participated in the Belarusian exposition, this time more than 70 representatives from Belarus took part in the exhibition.

As for **Brest Oblast**, it is among the leaders among Belarusian regions in terms of trade and economic relations with China. Suffice it to say that "for eight months of the current [2023] year, the volume of trade turnover [with China] amounted to almost \$280 million and increased almost one and a half times. Thanks to contacts with businesses, Chinese foreign direct investment has already increased by 40%."⁵⁹. At the import

⁵⁷ What will be the national exposition of Belarus at the international import exhibition in Shanghai [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kakoj-budet-natsionalnaja-ekspozitsija-belarusi-na-mezhdunarodnoj-vvstavke-importa-v-shanhae-582374-2023/>

⁵⁸ International import exhibition opened in Shanghai [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mezhdunarodnaja-vvstavka-importa-otkrvas-v-shanhae-597935-2023/>

⁵⁹ Chinese partners are interested in the creation of production and logistics companies in Brest region [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/kitajskim-partneram-interesno-sozdanie-proizvodstv-i-logisticheskikh-kompanij-v-brestskoj-oblasti-598059-2023/>

exhibition in Shanghai Brestchina demonstrated a wide range of goods and services that interested consumers not only from China, but also from other countries. In particular, at the collective stand of "Brestmyasomolprom" concern Brest meat processing plant, Berezovsky meat canning plant, Kobrin butter and cheese factory, Luninetsky dairy plant, Pruzhany dairy plant presented their products with tasting. The educational potential of the region was presented by Brest State Technical University, and the medical potential was presented by Brest Regional Clinical Hospital.

As a result, representatives of the Belarusian region "signed 18 bilateral documents at the exhibition: seven agreements, four memorandums, six commercial contracts, and one action plan. They concern different areas, including trade and economic cooperation, cooperation in education, health care, tourism"⁶⁰. For example, the Brest Regional Executive Committee signed agreements with two corporations involved in the creation of freight forwarding centers and the development of electronic commerce; Brest State Technical University signed agreements with the Hubei Institute of International Business and Economics. As for the memorandums on the development of cooperation, they were concluded by: the free economic zone "Brest" and the Brest branch of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry with the administration of the Coastal Park of the Integrated Bond Zone in the city of Shenyang, which is the administrative center of Liaoning Province; the Department of Sports and Tourism of the Brest Regional Executive Committee with the Belarusian-Chinese Center for Culture and Development of the PRC. Speaking about commercial contracts, they

⁶⁰ Gorodetsky, D. In China concluded commercial contracts and new cooperation agreements / D. Gorodetsky // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/v-kitae-zakljuchili-kommercheskie-kontraktv-i-novve-soglashenija-o-sotrudnichestve-8970/>

primarily concern supplies of Brest foodstuffs, mainly meat and dairy processing products, and are estimated at more than twenty million dollars.

A separate conversation is about the twinning ties between Brest region and its Chinese partners. Brestchina has four twin cities in China - Liaoning, Shanxi, Anhui and Hubei provinces. In November 2023, in addition to the import exhibition in Shanghai, representatives of the Belarusian region held active negotiations in **Anhui province**. The agreement to establish friendly ties with it was signed back in September 2017. This time, the parties adopted an action plan to develop trade, economic, scientific, technical, scientific and cultural cooperation for 2023-2025. In addition, agreements were concluded on the establishment of twinning relations between the cities of Brest and Hefei, Berezovsky district and the city of Benbu, and Brest Regional Clinical Hospital agreed on cooperation with Anhui Medical University. We would like to add that Brest and Hefei already intend to draw up a roadmap for cooperation. The main points to find points of contact are "production sphere, transportation and logistics, educational, medical, cultural..."⁶¹

Speaking about the economic aspect of twinning, the Chinese partners are particularly interested in setting up production and logistics companies in the Belarusian region. In turn, the Belarusian side "is ready to offer services for the conversion of railcars from narrow European gauge to broad gauge, as well as the implementation of a project to create a transport and logistics hub in Brest region"⁶². The fact is that Brest is a nodal point of the Chinese "Silk Road" and an important element of the

⁶¹ Brest and Chinese Hefei intend to draw up a roadmap for cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brest-i-kitajskij-hefei-namereny-sostavit-dorozhnyju-kartu-dlja-sotrudnichestva-599168-2023/>

⁶² Brest and Bereza got twinned in the Chinese province of Anhui [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brest-i-bereza-obzavelis-pobratimami-v-kitajskoj-provintsii-anhoi-598126-2023/>

cross-border corridor to promote the project "Freight trains from China to Europe". In addition, Brest region is ready to provide the Chinese side with a site for the implementation of the project to build an educational center. And this is only the beginning of new joint mutually beneficial projects.

All these facts suggest that Belarusian-Chinese interregional interaction is gradually reaching a new level of cooperation in an all-weather and all-round strategic partnership. So, in the near future, the parties will demonstrate even more innovative approaches to make it much easier and simpler for the regions to work on joint projects and programs.

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The number and quality of deals with Chinese partners is growing

At the end of 2022, the amount of transactions made by Chinese companies at the trading sessions of the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUTB) increased by almost 15% and amounted to about \$53 million. At the beginning of 2023, the number of trading session participants from China also increased significantly, from 67 to 113, two of which have the status of stockbrokers. "Last year, lumber, rapeseed oil, milk powder, vet-blue leather and synthetic fibers were supplied to China through the exchange platform. In turn, Belarusian enterprises purchased Chinese-made ferrous metal products and soybean meal on BUTB"⁶³. The positive dynamics of the Belarusian-Chinese exchange trade volumes was achieved due to the active work on attracting residents of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to the exchange trading, as well as due to the creation of favorable conditions for representatives of Chinese business. In particular, the accreditation procedure at the exchange was simplified, the possibility of settling transactions in Chinese yuan was provided, and consulting support in Chinese was organized. In addition, special export trade sessions focused on the Chinese market were regularly held during 2022, which allowed Chinese importers to buy Belarusian lumber products with delivery to convenient locations in the Middle Kingdom. In 2023, BUTB expects to further increase supplies of a number of domestic products to this country. In particular, lumber, vegetable oils, and meat and dairy products.

For example, in March 2023, the Chinese company **SUMEC International Trading**, which accounts for about three percent of all imports of timber and sawn timber to that country, expressed interest in

⁶³ The amount of transactions of Chinese companies on BUTB increased by 14% [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/summa-sdelok-kitajskih-kompanii-na-butb-vozroslo-na-14-551264-2023/>

cooperating with the BUTB. The parties are considering "two forms of interaction: the company's participation in exchange trading as a visitor with the conclusion of transactions on its own behalf and at its own expense or obtaining the status of an exchange broker, allowing to attract new buyers from China to the Belarusian trading platform"⁶⁴. Now the geography of purchases by SUMEC International Trading is quite diversified. Timber products are imported from Brazil, Canada, Congo, Russia, Finland and other countries, including Belarus, where the company has recently opened a subsidiary. At the same time, the Chinese side is ready to purchase Belarusian sawn timber through BUTB on a regular basis, provided that the price offers of domestic woodworkers are competitive and the rhythm of supply is guaranteed. Recall that in March 2023, at a special session at BUTB, focused on the Chinese market, Belarusian bidders placed bids for the sale of sawn timber in the volume of more than 100 thousand cubic meters.

In April 2023, the Chinese corporation **Xiamen Xiangyu Group Corporation** (XMXYG), which is included in the list of the 500 largest companies in the world according to Fortune magazine, confirmed its readiness to increase the volume of purchases of wood products on the BUTB trading floor, as well as to develop cooperation in other promising commodity areas, and since March 2022 its subsidiary - Xiamen Xiangyu Superchain Supply Chain Development Co. - regularly participates in lumber trading on the Belarusian exchange platform. "During this time, XMXYG has purchased nearly 10,000 cubic meters of sawn timber products worth about \$2 million through BUTB"⁶⁵. Thanks to the

⁶⁴ BUTB agreed to cooperate with one of the largest Chinese importers of forest products [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-dogovorilas-o-sotrudnichestve-s-odnim-iz-krupnejshih-kitajskih-importerov-lesoproduksii-553935-2023/>

⁶⁵ Chinese corporation is ready to increase purchases of Belarusian sawn timber through BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kitajskaia-korporatsija-gotova-naraschivat-zakupki-belorusskih-pilomaterialov-cherez-butb-560768-2023>

exchange, the company has already purchased four trains of sawn timber and is determined to continue cooperation in the same way, progressively increasing the volume of purchases. XMXYG is also interested in expanding the list of goods that the corporation buys on BUTB, and not only in the segment of the timber industry. We are talking about the possibility of bidding for agricultural products and, first of all, rapeseed oil, which is in stable demand in China and was already supplied to the PRC market through BUTB in 2022. At that time it was sold for more than 42 million dollars, including within the framework of import transactions made by Chinese participants. Therefore, given the significant production capacity of Belarusian oil extraction plants, this area may become a new growth point for the Chinese corporation in Belarus.

Another partner of BUTB, which is interested in cooperation with the Belarusian exchange platform, was the Chinese company **Beijing Huibaocheng Technology** in May 2023. This importer buys dairy products and vegetable oils, which are widely used in China's food industry. The company plans to "buy about 10,000 tons of rapeseed oil on the exchange on a monthly basis with the possibility of increasing supplies in the future"⁶⁶. The Chinese importer is interested in Belarusian dried milk, so it will actively participate in the bidding.

In June 2023, another major Chinese importing company announced its intention to increase purchases of lumber products on the BUTB - it is **Taomu (Suzhou) Information Technology**. The fact is that according to the results of five months of this year, the company has already purchased through the exchange about 53 thousand cubic meters of these products, which is almost twice as much as last year's figure for

⁶⁶ BUTB expects to increase supplies to China of sawn timber, vegetable oils, meat and dairy products [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasschityvaet-narastit-postavki-v-kitaj-pilomaterialov-rastitelnvh-masel-mjasa-i-molochki-567273-2023/>

the same period. But this is far from the limit. And by the end of 2023, "it is planned to purchase at least another 20 thousand cubic meters. Thus, Belarus may become one of the three main markets from where Taomu (Suzhou) Information Technology imports woodworking products"⁶⁷ . Interestingly, in 2022, Russia, Canada and Sweden were the strategic partners of this company for the supply of sawn timber, while Belarus ranked only fourth.

To summarize, it should be noted that 119 Chinese companies have already been accredited at BUTB by early summer, two of which have the status of stock brokers. By the end of 2023, the Belarusian exchange platform expects a significant increase in participants from China. After all, "so far Chinese partners mainly act as importers on the exchange, buying Belarusian lumber, rapeseed oil, dairy products, oil products"⁶⁸ . But BUTB already wants to see more exporters from the Celestial Empire, who can supply import-substituting goods that are in high demand in Belarus.

⁶⁷ A large Chinese importer intends to increase purchases of lumber products at BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/krupnvi-kitajskii-importer-nameren-naraschivat-zakupki-piloproduksii-na-butb-571701-2023/>

⁶⁸ BUTB presented the platform of import substitution in Chinese Tianjin [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-prezentovala-ploschadku-importozameshenija-v-kitajskom-tjantszine-567412-2023/>

Focus - a new qualitative level of education and research

In November 2023, at the First Forum of Rectors of Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China in Minsk, an agreement was signed on the establishment of the Sino-Belarusian Association of Universities, which included more than 80 higher education institutions of Belarus and China. It should be reminded that today there are more than 560 direct university agreements between the two countries. And in the near future, a plan for the realization of flagship projects between the universities is being prepared for signing. In July 2023, this plan had 35 positions, and now there are more than 70. They are constantly being added and expanded. This plan will be signed at the next meeting of the intergovernmental commission on education within the framework of the intergovernmental committee, which will be held in China. This fact shows that the new association is really a new qualitative level of Belarusian-Chinese relations in education and scientific research. After all, as a result, the parties come out "to the creation of joint associations of universities with high-tech enterprises of our countries, on whose orders scientific research, experimental and design work and commercialization of our university scientists for the economy will be carried out"⁶⁹.

Speaking in general about humanitarian cooperation between Belarus and China, this association could become a hallmark in such areas as inter-university cooperation, joint training of specialists, and joint scientific work. Besides, "such an association is of great importance for training even more Chinese and Belarusian scholars who know well the languages of our two countries, who understand Chinese and Belarusian

⁶⁹ Belarus and China signed an agreement on the establishment of the association of universities [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kitaj-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sozdanii-assotsiatsii-universitetov-600861-2023/>

culture"⁷⁰ and opens up many opportunities for further development of cooperation between Belarus and China in the field of education. Many Belarusian universities that promote joint educational structures with Chinese partners are among the active participants of the new association. In particular, "seven joint projects are already functioning: three laboratories, two centers, and two institutes. 40 joint educational programs of the first and second levels of higher education are being implemented, 10 of which have been developed over the last two years"⁷¹. In this context, we should mention three Belarusian universities: **Belarusian State University (BSU)**, **Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno (YKSU)**, **Brest State Technical University (BrSTU)**.

Let's start with **BSU**: to date, "more than 80 cooperation agreements have been signed with 55 Chinese educational institutions, 72% of the total number of foreign students at BSU are Chinese citizens"⁷². Since 2007, **Dalian Polytechnic University (DPU)** has become a strategic partner of the Belarusian university. The most significant project recently was the opening of joint institutes DPU-BSU and BSU-DPU. In June 2023, the parties considered the prospects of holding mirror summer schools on the basis of the two universities and opening a new specialty "photonics" on the basis of DPU-BPU in 2024/2025 academic year.

Xi'an University of Foreign Languages became BSU's new partner in China in April 2023. The Memorandum of Understanding considers cooperation "in the field of regional and country studies of the

⁷⁰ Xie Xiaoyun: the Chinese-Belarusian association of universities will become a hallmark of humanitarian cooperation between the two countries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/se-sjaojun-kitajsko-belorusskaja-assotsiatsija-vuzov-stanet-vizitnoj-kartochkoj-gumanitarnogo-600900-2023/>

⁷¹ Zaleskii, B. Hope for the positive future. Dynamics of partnerships under conditions of economic realism / B. Zaleskii. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 103.

⁷² "Photonics" and summer schools. BSU and Dalian Polytechnic University develop cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/fotonika-i-letnie-shkoly-bgu-i-daljanskij-politehnicheskij-universitet-razvivajut-sotrudnichestvo-571808-2023/>

Eurasian continent, history and ethnic issues of the peoples of Central Asia, Russian-Soviet oriental studies"⁷³. The Chinese university began in 1952 as the Northwest College of Russian Language, which was one of the first to teach foreign languages. Now it consists of 23 faculties and educational institutes, where about 20 thousand undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate students from 37 countries study and where 20 foreign languages, including Belarusian, are taught.

In November 2023, BSU signed two more new documents with Chinese partners. First, it is a memorandum of understanding with **Sichuan University of Foreign Languages**, which envisages prospects for cooperation in regional studies, linguistics, and Belarusian studies. After all, this Chinese university has been running the Center for the Study of Belarus since 2019. Secondly, it is an agreement on exchange of students with the **Chinese University of Political Science and Law**, which develops "the partnership within the framework of the memorandum of understanding between the universities in force since March 2023 and concerns the training in legal specialties of graduates of the Chinese university in the master's degree program of BSU, provision of grant support for the implementation of academic mobility programs"⁷⁴. At the same time the issue of joining the Chinese university to the activities of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Research Center, established by BSU together with Qingdao University, was also considered.

Interaction with China in the field of education is one of the strategic directions of international cooperation of another Belarusian

⁷³ BSU and Xi'an University of Foreign Languages signed a memorandum of understanding [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bgu-i-sianskii-universitet-inostrannyh-jazykov-podpisali-memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-563650-2023/>

⁷⁴ BSU expands partnerships with China, two new agreements signed [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bgu-rasshirjaet-partnerskie-svjazi-s-kitaem-podpisany-dva-novyh-soglashenija-598631-2023/>

university - **GrSU**, which signed its first agreement with Chinese partners back in 2001 - with the South Central University of Economics and Law. Today the Grodno university has 14 partners from different provinces of China. The cooperation is carried out in a wide range of areas: joint educational programs, academic exchanges, joint scientific projects. And in October 2023 GrSU signed an agreement on international cooperation with **Shijiazhuang Engineering Professional College**, which implies long-term cooperation in the field of introduction of scientific developments in the educational process, development of scientific potential and ensuring high quality of professional training of specialists in the field of academic mobility, development of training in the network form. It only remains to add that for five years more than 500 Chinese citizens have received bachelor's and master's degrees at GrSU, and two graduate students from China have successfully defended their PhD theses. Today there are more than 100 students from China studying at Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno"⁷⁵. Also, GrSU is the first of the Belarusian regional universities, where Chinese language courses with a three-year training program began. And for five years more than 600 people have been trained.

As for **Brest State Technical University**, in November 2023, it signed a cooperation agreement with **Anhui Wenda Institute of Information Engineering**. This university, located in the Chinese city of Hefei, became the 15th Chinese educational institution to sign a document on cooperation with Brest State Technical University. The partners outlined initial priorities for beneficial interaction. In particular, graduates of the Chinese institute will be able to continue their studies at the master's program of Brest University. In addition, Belarusian and Chinese teachers

⁷⁵ SDSU and Shijiazhuang Engineering College agreed on cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grgu-i-shitszjachzhuanskij-inzhenernyi-kolledzh-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnichestve-595101-2023/>

will conduct joint scientific research and develop teaching materials. A more distant prospect is the creation of joint educational programs. It should be reminded that BrSTU has already concluded 170 cooperation agreements with universities of 35 countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. The Chinese vector of cooperation is one of the priorities. For example, "for more than 15 years there is a joint training of specialists in the field of highway construction, accounting and automation with Huh-Hoto Professional Institute. Last year, a pilot program for training mechanical engineers with Xinxiang University was launched"⁷⁶. And Hebei Institute of International Business and Economics plans to create a joint program with BrSTU to train students in the field of e-business. In addition, the Brest university has taken up a scientific work in the field of information technologies, which is financed by the Belarusian Republican Foundation for Fundamental Research and the National Natural Science Foundation of the People's Republic of China.

All these facts show that the establishment of the Sino-Belarusian Association of Universities will be an important stage in the development of inter-university cooperation, and will also serve for the benefit of the economies of the two countries and the development of the two peoples - Belarus and China.

⁷⁶ Brest Technical University will cooperate with the institute of the Chinese province of Anhui [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brestskij-tehnicheskij-universitet-budet-sotrudnichat-s-institutom-kitajskoj-provintsii-anhoi-602188-2023>

A plan for further cooperation has been agreed

In October 2023, Tehran hosted the 16th meeting of the Joint Belarusian-Iranian Commission on Economic Cooperation, during which the parties discussed trade and economic, industrial, investment, banking, petrochemical cooperation, as well as healthcare and pharmaceuticals, transportation, and air services. Belarus and Iran agreed on a plan for further cooperation in promising areas of partnership, which "includes the implementation by the parties in the near future of activities in the areas of industrial cooperation, agriculture and veterinary medicine, health care and pharmaceuticals, transport and cooperation through chambers of commerce and industry"⁷⁷ . In addition, the Iranian capital hosted meetings of a mixed working group on oil cooperation, a joint Belarusian-Iranian committee on international automobile traffic, as well as the Iran-Belarus business forum, during which "a cooperation agreement was signed between the Minsk branch of the BelCCI and the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture, which will give an additional impetus to the development of Belarusian-Iranian business relations"⁷⁸ .

Recall that at the 15th meeting of the mixed commission in July 2022, discussing successful bilateral projects and joint promising activities, the participants expressed interest in increasing the volume of trade turnover between the two countries. After all, "in the best years, the sides reached 250-300 million dollars. Therefore <...> intend to reach a

⁷⁷ Belarus and Iran have agreed on a plan of cooperation in promising areas of interaction [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-iran-soglasovali-plan-sotrudnichestva-po-perspektivnym-napravlenijam-vzaimodejstviya-592926-2023/>

⁷⁸ Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Minsk and Tehran signed an agreement on cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/torgovo-promyshlennye-palaty-minska-i-tegerana-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-594460-2023/>

trade turnover within \$500 million in a short period of time"⁷⁹. In March 2023, celebrating the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, Minsk and Tehran signed a roadmap for comprehensive cooperation for 2023-2026, which envisioned interaction on a wide range of issues, from politics and economy to media and tourism. This systematic document allowed the parties to work through a list of specific practical measures, many of which are already being successfully implemented. "Intensive work at various levels has led to a significant increase in trade turnover. In 2022, trade turnover tripled to the level of 2021. In the current [2023] year, it added another 25% to the same period last year."⁸⁰.

Among Belarusian exporters that are successfully developing the Iranian market, the enterprises of the **Bellesbumprom Concern** stand out. In eight months of 2023, they increased their exports to Iran by more than 1.6 times. Belarus supplies "cellulose, plywood, wood boards" to this country⁸¹. At the same time, the concern plans to increase exports and expand cooperation with Iranian partners. In particular, **Svetlogorsk Pulp and Paperboard Mill** supplies bleached pulp to Iran. In October 2023, specialists of the enterprise visited the Islamic Republic in order to "reach a qualitatively new level of cooperation. We plan to increase the volume of exports, as well as to expand cooperation on the supply of chemicals from Iran necessary for the production of pulp"⁸².

⁷⁹ Zalessky, B. The Route of Interaction - Asia. Intensification of Belarus' multifaceted ties with the main economic partners on the continent / B. Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 65.

⁸⁰ Industrial cooperation and education. Roman Golovchenko outlined promising areas of cooperation with Iran [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10714>

⁸¹ Enterprises of "Bellesbumprom" increased exports to Iran more than 1.6 times [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriiatija-bellesbumproma-uvlichili-eksport-produktsii-v-iran-bolee-chem-v-16-raza-594471-2023/>

⁸² "Bellesbumprom" plans to increase exports and expand cooperation with Iran [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bellesbumprom-planiruet-uvlichit-objemy-eksporta-i-rasshirit-kooperatsionnye-svizi-s-iranom-594315-2023/>

When it comes to Belarusian regions interested in actively developing trade and economic relations with Iran, **Vitebsk Region** can be mentioned. The fact is that since 2022, Vitebsk Region's trade turnover with this country has multiplied, which is due to the need to build new logistics options for export cargoes. At the same time, "among the new types of products that have not been supplied to Iran before are fiberglass fabrics, wood boards, various types of acids and reagents. Vitebsk region continues to supply lumber to Iran - 49% of the trade turnover. The region buys fresh fruits and vegetables, which account for 98% of all purchases from this country, and medical equipment"⁸³ .

In November 2023, the Belarusian region offered its Iranian partners to create cooperation chains in the pharmaceutical sector. After all, a pharmaceutical cluster has already been created in Vitebsk. In addition, Vitebsk specialists are ready to offer Iran petrochemical products, which occupy almost half of the industrial output of the region, ranging from fiberglass to additives for oils. Vitebsk region can also offer food products, carpets, footwear, linen products. The Iranian side also made interesting proposals for cooperation. In particular, "there are many deposits in Iran and the mining industry is developing, so we would like to cooperate with Vitebsk region in this sphere"⁸⁴ . So the parties hope not only to continue old ties, but also to find new opportunities for increasing economic partnership.

⁸³ Vitebsk region offered Iran to work in cooperation in pharmaceuticals [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vitebskaja-oblast-predlozila-iranu-rabotat-v-kooperatsii-v-farmatsevtike-600855-2023/>

⁸⁴ Machine building, petrochemistry. Ambassador of Iran on the possibilities of cooperation with Vitebsk region [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/mashinostroenie-neftehimija-posol-irana-o-vozmozhnostyah-sotrudnichestva-s-vitebskoi-oblasti-600832-2023/>

Partnerships, focused on the future

In 2023, the Republic of Turkey turned one hundred years old. Today, it is a dynamic, future-focused state with achievements in a number of specific spheres and major logistics and energy projects that link Asia and Europe. Belarus traditionally views Turkey as an important and promising partner and a reliable friend. It should be recalled that it was this country that "became the first foreign state to recognize the state independence of the Republic of Belarus"⁸⁵. In March 2022, Minsk and Ankara celebrated the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations. In 1996, the **Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation** between the two countries was signed during the first visit of the Belarusian head of state to Turkey.

The visit of Turkish President R.T. Erdogan to Belarus in November 2016, the first ever visit of the two countries in the history of bilateral relations, was also a milestone in the Belarusian-Turkish relations. First, it set a goal of reaching one billion dollars in mutual trade turnover. Secondly, the parties decided to focus on the maximum use of the potential of trade and economic interaction with an emphasis on the creation of "joint production of complex technical products in the regions of Belarus and Turkey, including for the purpose of their promotion to the markets of third countries"⁸⁶ and the organization of joint industrial zones.⁸⁷ In April 2019, President of the Republic of Belarus A. Lukashenko paid an official visit to Turkey, during which he identified priority areas of Belarusian-Turkish cooperation in trade and investment, implementation of joint projects in machine-building, agriculture, construction, finance,

⁸⁵ Political relations [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://turkey.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/political/relations/

⁸⁶ Official visit of the President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan [Electronic resource]. - 2016. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/ofitsialnvi-vizit-prezidenta-turtsii-redzhepataiipa-erdogana-14820/

⁸⁷ Official visit to Turkey [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: http://president.gov.by/ru/news_ru/view/ofitsialnvi-vizit-v-turtsiju-20884/

chemical and light industry, as well as outlined concrete steps to build up contacts in the areas of technology, innovation, education, intensification of interaction "in the field of joint scientific developments, academic and scientific research, and joint cooperation in the field of scientific and technological cooperation".

The seriousness of the parties' intentions to actively develop cooperation in **science, technology and humanitarian areas** is evidenced by the fact of signing a number of documents following the April (2019) talks between the leaders of Belarus and Turkey - an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in education, a roadmap for cooperation between the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (NAS) and the Scientific Research Council of Turkey for 2019-2021, a memorandum on scientific and technical cooperation in the Antarctic between the NAS of Belarus and the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Turkey, a memorandum on scientific and technical cooperation in the Antarctic

In particular, the **intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in education** aims to establish and develop direct contacts between higher education institutions and scientific organizations of the two countries so that students and specialists from Belarus and Turkey can participate in events aimed at demonstrating the educational, scientific, technical, and innovative potential of their countries. The parties intend to provide space for higher and postgraduate education in relevant institutions, to inform each other about mutual recognition of documents on training, education and academic degrees, as well as to create all the necessary conditions "to expand and deepen contacts between the countries in the whole range of educational activities, to attract Turkish citizens to study in Belarus"⁸⁸ .

⁸⁸ Belarus and Turkey are interested in the development of contacts between universities and scientific organizations [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsija-zainteresovan-v-razviti-i-kontaktov-mezhdu-vuzami-i-nauchnymi-organizatsijami-344261-2019/>

The cooperation agreements signed by the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus in 2002 with the Turkish Research Council for Science and Technology and in 2009 with the Turkish Academy of Sciences laid the foundation for the interaction between the scientific communities of the two countries. In 2016, the governments of Belarus and Turkey signed an **agreement on cooperation in science and technology**. A year later, there were memoranda of understanding between the National Intellectual Property Center of the Republic of Belarus and the Turkish Patent and Trademark Agency; and memoranda of cooperation between the Belarusian Innovation Fund and the Scientific and Technical Research Council of Turkey. And in November 2018, the **first meeting of the joint Belarusian-Turkish Commission on Cooperation in Science and Technology** was held, during which the parties agreed to "intensify bilateral cooperation in the line of innovation structure entities, in particular between technology parks of Belarus and Turkish science parks"⁸⁹. At the same meeting of the commission it was stated that "scientists of Belarus and Turkey intend to develop cooperation in the field of polar research"⁹⁰.

Adopted in April 2019, the **roadmap** for the **development of cooperation for 2019-2021** is designed to intensify joint activities of Belarusian and Turkish scientists in the most promising areas of scientific and technical cooperation. "These include optics for space observation of the Earth's surface, unmanned aerial vehicles, batteries for electric cars and other vehicles, composite organomineral materials, mineral

⁸⁹ Belarus and Turkey will hold a contest of joint innovation projects [Electronic resource]. - 2018. - URL: http://www.gknt.gov.by/news/2018/belarus_i_turtsiya_provedut_konkurs_sovmestnykh_innovatsionnykh_proektov/

⁹⁰ Belarus and Turkey intend to develop cooperation in the field of polar research [Electronic resource]. - 2018. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsija-namereny-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-oblasti-poliarnyh-issledovanij-324445-2018/>

enrichment, and the use of information technologies for forecasting dangerous natural phenomena"⁹¹ .

In addition, the adopted roadmap provides for the organization of a joint competition of projects in priority areas of science and technology development along the lines identified during the joint seminars: in 2018 - in Gebze; in 2019 - in Minsk. In particular, in March 2019, the State Committee for Science and Technology of Belarus, with the support of the Belarusian Innovation Fund and the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey, announced a **competition for joint innovative scientific and technological projects for 2019-2020** to provide them with "direct financial support at an early stage of development"⁹² in such priority areas of Belarusian-Turkish cooperation as information and communication technologies, optoelectronics, nanomaterials, and drones. As for the road map, the document also contained measures to develop, improve the organization and increase the efficiency of joint scientific and technical activities and joint works of the Belarusian Republican Foundation for Fundamental Research and the Research Council of Turkey.

In early December 2020, the **second meeting of the joint Belarusian-Turkish commission for cooperation in science and technology** was held, during which the parties confirmed their mutual desire to develop scientific and technical cooperation in the fields of energy, information and communication technologies, medicine, chemical technologies, and new materials. It should be noted that these partnerships intensified after the signing of the already mentioned intergovernmental

⁹¹ Belarus and Turkey signed a roadmap of scientific cooperation until 2021 [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsija-podpisali-dorozhnuju-kartu-nauchnogo-sotrudnichestva-do-2021-goda-344282-2019/>

⁹² Belarus and Turkey announced a competition of joint scientific and technical projects [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsija-objavili-konkurs-sovmestnyh-nauchno-tehnicheskikh-proektov-338588-2019/>

agreement on cooperation in science and technology in November 2016. In this document, the parties agreed to provide comprehensive assistance to cooperation between organizations of both countries in such priority areas as "energy; agro-industrial technologies; industrial and construction technologies and production; medicine and medical technologies, pharmacy; chemical technologies; nano- and biotechnologies; information and communication technologies (e-services, cyber security); aerospace technologies; new materials; environmental management; prevention and elimination of consequences of natural disasters; and the development of new technologies."⁹³

⁹⁴At the same second meeting of the joint commission on cooperation in science and technology, it became known that the joint project of the Joint Institute of Informatics Problems of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Turkish company "Novosim Engineering Services" on the development of the warehouse autonomous multi-robotics system, which "will be designed to move goods in automatic mode inside both designed and existing warehouses, logistics centers, taking into account information about their configuration" has already been accepted for funding xml-ph-0000@dee In addition, the Turkish side was considering two more innovative projects of Belarusian scientists, which also received a positive expert evaluation.

Another topical area of Belarusian-Turkish scientific and technical interaction that was discussed at the second meeting of the Joint Commission for Cooperation in Science and Technology was the **interaction between Turkish and Belarusian technoparks**. For the

⁹³ Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Government of the Republic of Turkey on cooperation in science and technology [Electronic resource]. - 2016. – URL: <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=12551&p0=101600046&p1=1>

⁹⁴ Belarus and Turkey plan to develop cooperation in the spheres of energy, ICT and medicine [Electronic resource]. - 202-. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-turtsiia-planirujut-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-sferah-energetiki-ikt-i-meditsiny-418159-2020/>

Belarusian side this topic is relevant because "Belarus has 25 subjects of innovation infrastructure: 16 technoparks (including 3 private ones), 8 technology transfer centers and the Belarusian Innovation Fund. The network of technoparks covers all regional centers"⁹⁵. There were also technoparks in Pinsk, Navapolatsk, Horki and Liakhovichi district. Plans for 2020 included their opening in Baranovichi, Bobruisk, Borisov, Orsha and Molodechno. All this said that Belarus was implementing systematic measures to develop technoparks as regional innovation platforms for the organization of high-tech industries. That is why it was especially important for the Belarusian side to master the best foreign experience in this area. And Turkey, it should be said, had such experience.

Technoparks or technopolises in this country began to be created in 2001. By mid-2019, their number here had increased to 84, of which 63 are operational, and another 21 were undergoing infrastructure works. "Now there are technoparks in 54 provinces of the country, more than 5 thousand companies work on the territories of technological development zones"⁹⁶. The most technoparks were in Istanbul - 11. Next are Ankara - 9, Kocaeli - 5, Izmir - 4. Their aim is to contribute to the development of high-tech production and services, to provide cooperation between entrepreneurs, researchers and scientists. The scale of activities of Turkish technology parks was also very eloquently spoken about by such figures. As of mid-2019, almost 33 thousand projects had been realized in them, and about ten thousand more were under development. And the number of jobs there exceeded 55 thousand. Finally, the export of resident companies of technoparks as of July 2019 amounted to more than four

⁹⁵ Shumilin, A. Forecast to 2040 - about the prospects of science development and international cooperation / A. Shumilin // [Electronic resource]. - 2020. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/interview/view/prognoz-do-2040-goda-o-perspektivah-razvitija-nauki-i-mezhdunarodnom-sotrudnichestve-7168/>

⁹⁶ 84 technology parks have been established in Turkey [Electronic resource]. - 2019. - URL: <https://restproperty.ru/news/v-turtsii-sozdano-84-tehnoparka/>

billion dollars. And all this - in less than twenty years. There is something to be learned from Turkish partners for their Belarusian colleagues.

Let us now turn to the most relevant events on the Belarusian-Turkish agenda of the current year. In November 2023, Ankara hosted the **11th meeting of the Belarusian-Turkish Joint Intergovernmental Commission (JIC) on Economic Cooperation**, which focused on systematizing the entire volume of bilateral trade and activating mechanisms in logistics, transport, partnerships in industrial cooperation, and agriculture, as well as a detailed review of the state of the legal framework and outlined priority areas and concrete steps to expand it. It should be noted that today "interaction with Turkey is carried out in the widest range of directions and is supported by political contacts and dialog at the highest level, at the level of intergovernmental communication, interparliamentary communication and serious interagency cooperation"⁹⁷. As a result, the parties noted that trade and economic cooperation between Minsk and Ankara is developing very effectively. And there have already been significant successes in achieving the strategic goal of increasing mutual trade turnover to one and a half billion dollars and reducing the imbalance in mutual trade. "In the last two years our trade turnover has exceeded \$1 billion, but this year [2023] we expect to reach a historical maximum. According to Turkish statistics, in the first 10 months of this year, trade turnover has already totaled \$1.6 billion."⁹⁸.

A separate conversation is about the participation of the Belarusian side in the work on the **reconstruction of Turkish areas** affected by the February 2023 earthquake. Belarus paid "attention to the restoration of

⁹⁷ On holding a meeting of the Belarusian-Turkish Joint Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/fd86a4d2dbb3f651.html

⁹⁸ Belarus and Turkey will reach the historical maximum in trade turnover at the end of the year [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-turtsija-po-itogam-goda-vvjudut-na-istoricheskij-maksimum-v-tovaroobrote-599138-2023>

infrastructure that was destroyed as a result of the crushing earthquake in 11 provinces of Turkey⁹⁹. In these nine months since the disaster, Belarus has tripled the volume of supplies of construction materials, which are being used to rebuild primarily social infrastructure. The commission confirmed Belarus' readiness to further expand the volume of Belarusian supplies, which are in demand in this country. The Turkish side received a catalog of products, additionally prepared by the ministries, departments and economic entities of Belarus, which will be carefully considered by the Turkish partners. In addition, a project to design and build a plant of reinforced concrete structures in the Turkish town of Kilis is at the initial stage of development, which "will also make a good contribution to the reconstruction of earthquake-affected regions of Turkey"¹⁰⁰.

Strengthening cooperation in the **agricultural** sector is among the main tasks for the development of bilateral interaction. In 2023, Belarusian supplies of dairy products to the Turkish market started moving forward. And there are serious prospects for increasing exports of meat products and beef from Belarus. This year, a number of Turkish firms have already announced their readiness to cooperate with Belarus in the food sector. For example, "Zirhlioglu Corporate Group has expressed interest in establishing direct contacts with Belarusian enterprises on the supply of specific products and further cooperation with the National Marketing Center"¹⁰¹. It is noteworthy that more than 30 Belarusian enterprises - producers and processors of food products - participated in

⁹⁹ Aleynik stated about serious prospects for increasing supplies of dairy products to Turkey [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/alejnik-zajavil-o-serieznyh-perspektivah-dlja-velichenija-postavok-molochnoi-produktsii-v-turtsiju-599135-2023>

¹⁰⁰ Turkish corporation is interested in cooperation with Belarus in the food sector [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/turetskaja-korporatsija-zainteresovana-v-sotrudnichestve-s-belarusiju-v-prodovolstvennom-sektore-587699-2023/>

¹⁰¹ Aleinik: Belarus is interested in supplying goods through Turkey to the countries of the Global South [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/alejnik-belarus-zainteresovana-postavljat-tovary-cherez-turtsiju-v-strany-globalnogo-iuga-598312-2023/>

the videoconference in September 2023 on this topic. Returning to the meeting of the intergovernmental commission, we note that the parties also reached an agreement to "finalize the procedures on the veterinary questionnaire sent by the Belarusian side by the end of 2024, as well as the intention to hold the second meeting of the Working Group on Agriculture, without delay, at the beginning of the next [2024] year"¹⁰² .

In the field of **logistics and transport**, the parties in the format of the Mixed Commission on Road **Transport** determined the quota of permits for Belarusian carriers for 2024 within the framework of the 11th meeting of the IGC, discussing the implementation of urgent new tasks. In addition, they "considered the possibility of creating an alternative certification center for digital tachograph cards in Turkey, as well as extending for 2024 the pilot project on permit-free performance of bilateral and transit traffic on the territory of Belarus and Turkey"¹⁰³ . After all, from January 1, 2023, Belarusian carriers do not need permits for cargo transportation between the two countries, as well as for transit through Turkey. This simplified regime is still operating as an experiment until the end of 2023.

Active and regular interaction with the Turkish-Belarusian Business Cooperation Council under the Foreign Economic Relations Committee of Turkey, the Association of Independent Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, as well as with other associations of Turkish business, including exhibition companies, was named as important elements of the development of **trade and economic** relations between the two countries

¹⁰² Speech by Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Aleinik at the plenary session of the Belarusian-Turkish Joint Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation (November 8, 2023, Ankara) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/d72f4b731323cb1d.html

¹⁰³ Belarus and Turkey discuss the extension of the simplified regime of transport communication [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-turtsija-obsuzhdajut-prodlenie-uproschenogo-rezhima-transportnogo-soobschenija-598317-2023/>

at the IGC meeting. In this regard, the parties "signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the National Center for Marketing and Price Study and the Association of Turkish Businessmen (ASRIAD), their representatives plan to participate in a joint business forum in Belarus in the first quarter of 2024"¹⁰⁴. In February next year, Istanbul will host the International Yarn Fair Istanbul Yarn Fair, which will be of interest to Belarusian light industry, chemical and petrochemical enterprises.

Recall that the high level of Belarusian products could be judged by the participation of exporters from Belarus at this exhibition forum - International Istanbul Yarn Fair, which was held in early June 2023 in Istanbul and where 650 companies from different countries, including China, India, Uzbekistan, Germany, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and the Republic of Korea, were represented. Belarusian petrochemical enterprises participated in the Made in Belarus exposition and demonstrated "a wide range of manufactured products based on the best world technologies, including various types of fibers, yarns and materials used in the textile, knitting and garment industries"¹⁰⁵.

Thus, Naftan OJSC demonstrated at the exhibition acrylic fibers used in the production of yarn and artificial fur, and Polotsk-Steklovolokno OJSC - glass fiber and products based on it. The Belarusian chemical company "Mogilevkhimvolokno" offered a wide range of polyester fibers and yarns used in the production of yarn, fillers and artificial fur, and also presented polyester fabrics indispensable in the production of roofing materials and carpets. The branch "Khimvolokno Plant" of JSC "Grodno Azot" at the exhibition demonstrated cord fabrics

¹⁰⁴ Belarus and Turkey intend to hold a joint business forum in the first quarter of 2024 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-turtsiia-namereny-provesti-sovmestnyj-biznes-forum-v-pervom-kvartale-2024-goda-598314-2023/>

¹⁰⁵ Belarusian enterprises presented their products at the international exhibition in Turkey [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorusskie-predprijatija-predstavili-produktsiju-na-mezhdunarodnoj-vvstavke-v-turtsii-569846-2023/>

for reinforcing pneumatic tires, polyamide yarns for production of ropes and fishing gear and polyamide-6. Also at the stand of the enterprise were presented polymer composite materials, which are widely used at the enterprises of automobile, aviation and oil industries. SvetlogorskKhimvolokno OJSC showed special fabrics, yarns and fibers intended for application in the automotive industry. As a result, Belarusian exporters held very effective negotiations not only with Turkish partners and counterparties, but also with representatives of companies from other countries. So let us hope that the exhibition in Istanbul in February 2024 will be a continuation of new interesting joint projects.

Another important aspect of the partnership ties between Belarus and Turkey, which was noted at the 11th meeting of the IGC, is the further expansion of the **legal framework**. Statistics say that more than 40 intergovernmental, interdepartmental agreements have already been included in this base. A new document in this regard is the protocol of the 11th meeting of the Commission, which contains a list of eight agreements, on which the parties agreed to accelerate joint work. In fact, this final protocol is "a new program of action, a kind of roadmap for the development of bilateral economic relations in the short and medium term and will allow Belarus and Turkey to make fuller use of the available opportunities for cooperation"¹⁰⁶.

And already in November 2023, within the framework of this program, the Belarusian-Turkish Research Center was opened in Minsk on the basis of the Institute of Philosophy of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, which became another step towards the development of relations between the two countries. "Its main tasks are to coordinate and carry out joint research works, individual projects in the field of

¹⁰⁶ Belarus is working out new investment projects with Turkey [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-prorabatvvaet-s-turtsiej-novve-investitsiomve-proekty-598324-2023/>

historical, cultural and philosophical heritage of Belarus and Turkey, to improve the qualification of scientific personnel by studying Turkish, as well as to translate the works of Turkish and Belarusian philosophers and scientists into Belarusian and Turkish¹⁰⁷. At the moment the new center is focused on "Philosophical and spiritual-cultural heritage of Belarus and Turkey: history and modernity". Turkish researchers are preparing a "Review of the main achievements of Turkish philosophy", while their Belarusian colleagues are studying "The influence of the Belarusian-Muslim tradition on the formation of cultural and national identity". In addition, the center is expected to perform educational and popularization functions, as scientists of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus will study the Turkish language on its basis, and various lectures and master classes are planned.

Let us summarize the results. Over the past three decades of diplomatic relations, Minsk and Ankara have not only identified the priority areas of Belarusian-Turkish cooperation, but also clearly built a multilevel system of interstate, intergovernmental and interdepartmental cooperation, which jointly moves towards the realization of new strategic objectives. And in this regard, the decisions of the 11th meeting of the Belarusian-Turkish Joint Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation are yet another weighty confirmation of partnership ties that are focused on the future.

¹⁰⁷ Belarusian-Turkish research center opened at the National Academy of Sciences [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belorussko-turetskij-issledovatel'skij-tsentr-otkrvlsia-v-nan-597558-2023/>

The key to cooperation is concrete projects

In September 2023, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus held a meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on the development of cooperation with African countries, at which the Belarusian government outlined the main areas of focus on this continent: medicine, education, ensuring food security of African countries, supply of agricultural machinery, and industrial cooperation. Assessing the objective foreign trade situation, Belarusian Prime Minister R. Golovchenko emphasized that Africa has a huge development potential and is a driver of international growth, but the accumulated political capital of Belarus has not yet been converted to a proper extent into successful trade and economic projects. "In 2022, exports of Belarusian goods to Africa amounted to just over \$200 million and show some downward trend. The maximum volume of exports - over \$400 million - was reached in pre-Kovy 2019..."¹⁰⁸. Note that this continent is home to more than one and a half billion people. For this reason, the government of Belarus has set a clear task - every effort should be made to find the right tools and formula to reverse the negative dynamics in cooperation with the countries of this continent. The tools include "forming road maps, looking for concrete projects that can be implemented"¹⁰⁹. And then there will be a practical result.

It is important to note that the Belarusian side tries to come to African countries with its own technologies, trains them, and provides service and maintenance of the supplied machinery. In particular, especially large machinery from Belarus extracts various minerals that this

¹⁰⁸ Roman Golovchenko on cooperation with Africa: The potential is huge, we need to ensure significant growth of exports [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10698>

¹⁰⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs: it is necessary to form roadmaps for cooperation with African countries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mid-zuzhno-sformirovat-dorozhnye-kartyv-sotrudnichestva-so-stranami-afriki-591013-2023/>

continent is rich in. For example, Belarusian dump trucks operate in Zimbabwe, the Republic of South Africa, Angola, Algeria, and Morocco. Among the new potential partners is Kenya, where the first agricultural machines were delivered about six months ago. Serious dialog begins and continues with such countries as Nigeria, Egypt, Algeria, Sudan. Even "the distant South African Republic has received our tractors of Minsk Tractor Plant, now they are being tested and there is confidence that the supply of our machinery there will increase dramatically"¹¹⁰ .

The Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Belarus pays special attention to the development of supplies to African countries, as the industry offers "the entire range of machinery of the machine-building complex - tractors, combines, trucks. It is also household appliances - TV sets produced by Gozizont Holding, refrigerators"¹¹¹ . For example, "Gomselmash" plans to supply a large batch of its equipment to these countries. Currently, already 80 units of Gomselmash machinery are working mainly in Zimbabwe and Kenya. And up to 80 more units will be shipped to the African region in the near future. Moreover, "a center of Belarusian machinery has been created in Africa, which accompanies and maintains all the equipment that is supplied to the continent"¹¹² . And on the way out - a contract for delivery to Zimbabwe. Contacts are being worked out in Togo and Malawi.

Another African country that is paying attention to Belarusian trucks is Ethiopia. In August 2023, it became known that Minsk

¹¹⁰ Technique, training, export: Parkhomchik told about cooperation with African countries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tehnika-obuchenie-eksport-parhomchik-rasskazal-o-sotrudnicestve-s-afrikanskimi-stranami-587303-2023/>

¹¹¹ Combines, tractors, TV sets. Rogozhnik told about the range of industrial products for delivery to Africa [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/kombajny-traktory-televizory-rogozhnik-rasskazal-ob-assortimente-promproduktsii-dlja-postavok-v-afriku-586805-2023/>

¹¹² "Gomselmash" plans to supply a large batch of machinery to the African region [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomselmash-planiruet-postavit-krupnuju-partiju-tehniki-v-afrikanskij-region-586884-2023/>

Automobile Plant may set up an assembly plant for trucks in this African country, as "Ethiopia has a high demand for trucks, which is currently not fully satisfied"¹¹³ . And Ethiopian firm Ethio - Engineering Group is interested in organizing the assembly of Belarusian cars from the supplied vehicle components at the company's existing facilities. In the same August this year, Belarusian holding AMKODOR and Ethiopian company Epitychia General Trading discussed the prospects of cooperation and possibilities of joint production in Minsk. During the talks, "it was decided to return to the discussion after a deeper analysis of the construction machinery market, which can most effectively support the needs of projects in Ethiopia"¹¹⁴ .

The African region is one of the promising and quite familiar destinations for food and agricultural exports from Belarus. Suffice it to say that "in January-April of this [2023] year, Belarusian products were supplied to such African countries as Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, and Uganda. The nomenclature of export supplies includes dried dairy products, horned hoof raw materials, offal, beef, poultry meat, alcoholic beverages and other products"¹¹⁵ . This year, Belarus continues to discuss with its African partners promising areas of cooperation in agriculture. The discussion is not only about mutual trade, but also about mechanization, irrigation, fertilizers, cooperation in education and science, including training of students from African countries in Belarus.

¹¹³ MAZ can create assembly production of trucks in Ethiopia [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/maz-mozhet-sozdat-sborochnoe-proizvodstvo-gruzovoi-tehniki-v-efiopii-582045-2023/>

¹¹⁴ "AMKODOR" and representatives of Ethiopia discussed the possibilities of joint production [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/amkodor-i-predstaviteli-efiopii-obsudili-vozmozhnosti-sovmestnogo-proizvodstva-581985-2023/>

¹¹⁵ Export of products, cooperation in education. Ministry of Agriculture and Food on the work with the regions of Africa [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/eksport-produktsii-sotrudnichestvo-v-obrazovanii-minselhozprod-o-rabote-s-regionami-afriki-573991-2023/>

In particular, in June 2023, a communiqué was signed between the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of Belarus and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Investment of Kenya, in which the parties agreed to further cooperation in agriculture. The fact is that in this African country there are no problems with food, but there are problems with its storage. Also, they have a lot of small farmers, but no large farms. In addition, "another problem is the small percentage of cultivated land"¹¹⁶. That is why Kenyan partners are interested in mechanization of agriculture in the country and, accordingly, in increasing its efficiency, as well as in Belarus's experience in agricultural mechanization and personnel training in order to "equip the industry with machine systems, carry out mechanization and provide our [Belarusian] agricultural technologies"¹¹⁷, create enterprises for processing and storage of products. Apparently, representatives of the country's leading regions will soon come from Kenya to further build trade and economic relations.

Zimbabwe has also become a new market for Belarus. In June 2023, at the first meeting of the Belarusian-Zimbabwean working group for cooperation in agriculture in Minsk, the leadership of the Belarusian Ministry of Agriculture and Food said that it looked forward to long-term cooperation with Zimbabwean partners. In particular, "another important area of cooperation is the development of dairy cattle breeding"¹¹⁸ in Zimbabwe, as well as the supply of Belarusian agricultural machinery and

¹¹⁶ The supply of tractors and potash fertilizers from Belarus to Kenya was discussed in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/postavku-tractorov-i-kalijnyh-udobrenij-iz-belarusi-v-keniju-obsudili-v-minselhozprode-570585-2023/>

¹¹⁷ Mechanization of agriculture, processing plants. What Kenya is interested in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mehanizatsiia-selskogo-hoziajstva-pererabatyvajuščie-zavody-chem-v-belarusi-zainteresovalas-kenija-570564-2023/>

¹¹⁸ Brylo: Belarus counts on long-term cooperation with Zimbabwe in the sphere of agro-industrial complex [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/brylo-belarus-rasschitvvaet-na-dolgosrochnoe-sotrudnichestvo-s-zimbabwe-v-sfere-apk-571063-2023/>

equipment, the use of advanced Belarusian experience and technologies in the establishment of agro-industrial enterprises on Zimbabwean soil. In addition, "the Zimbabwean side was particularly interested in grain dump trucks and tractor-trailers with semi-trailers"¹¹⁹.

To expand the geography of supplies from Belarus, domestic exporters continue to work to ensure access of agricultural products, machinery, and equipment to promising markets of the "black" continent. In February 2023, OJSC "Managing Company of Bobruiskagromash Holding" signed a contract with Bemaco from Madagascar for the supply of 24 units of machinery of the Belarusian company - mounted plows, disk harrows, universal pneumatic seeders. And "in the near future it is planned to expand the range of Belarusian machinery supplied to the Republic of Madagascar, including new samples of plows, seeders, trailers and harrows"¹²⁰. At the same time, Bemaco was awarded a certificate to extend the status of the official dealer of Bobruiskagromash for 2023.

Another African country that is interested in expanding trade and economic cooperation with Belarus is Ghana. In June 2023, the two states celebrated the 31st anniversary of the establishment of Belarusian-Ghana diplomatic relations. And the parties expressed their common mood for intensive work to expand contacts at all levels. Recall that Ghana is the largest producer of high-quality fruits and cocoa and is ready to supply the Belarusian market in any volume. As for Belarus, it is "ready to participate in Ghana's agricultural mechanization programs, supply this country with a wide range of municipal and municipal equipment, medicines, introduce

¹¹⁹ Zimbabwe is interested in dump trucks-grain trucks and truck tractors MAZ [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zimbabve-zainteresovano-v-samosvalah-zernovozah-i-sedelnyh-tjagachah-maz-571222-2023/>

¹²⁰ "Bobruiskagromash" will supply more than 20 units of machinery to Madagascar [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bobruiskagromash-postavit-bolee-20-edimits-tehniki-na-madagaskar-549344-2023/>

the latest technologies in the agro-industrial complex, train Ghanaian students in Belarusian universities in various specialties"¹²¹ .

And one more interesting point. At the end of November 2023, an exposition of Belarusian producers Made in Belarus will be organized in West Africa - the city of Accra (Ghana) - as part of the 6th international exhibition Agrofood Ghana, where exporters "in the fields of agriculture, food processing and packaging, ingredients, bakery and confectionery, food and hospitality in West Africa" will be presented¹²² . Last year, 98 exhibitors from 22 countries, namely Belgium, Burkina Faso, Egypt, France, Germany, Ghana, Ghana, Hungary, India, Iran, Italy, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Poland, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and the United States of America participated in the forum. This time in Accra, suppliers from Belarus will also show their "goods face", and hopefully, they will get a good practical result from this exhibition forum.

In short, Belarusian supplies in this direction are growing. It is believed that in the next two or three years, with the help of African countries, it is possible to achieve food exports in general within ten billion dollars. For reference, we note that "based on the results of work for nine months [2023], Belarusian agricultural exports amounted to about \$5 billion"¹²³ .

Finally, another African country that appeared on the map of Belarus's business partners in 2023 was Equatorial Guinea. The fact is that

¹²¹ Pivovar, E. Belarus is ready to participate in the programs of mechanization of agriculture in Ghana / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-gotova-uchastvovat-v-programmah-mehanizatsii-selskogo-hoziajstva-gany-570335-2023/>

¹²² Belarus will present its exposition at the agricultural exhibition in Ghana [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavit-ekspozitsiiu-na-selskohoziastvennoj-vystavke-v-gane-587952-2023/>

¹²³ Here: exports of Belarusian agricultural products amounted to about \$5 billion for nine months [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zajats-eksport-belorusskoi-selhozproduktii-za-deviat-mesiatsev-sostavil-okolo-5-mlrd-597077-2023/>

in June 2023, a very important event took place in the Belarusian-African relations: it was the first ever visit of Belarusian Foreign Minister S. Aleinik to this country. Aleinik's first ever visit to this country. The visit resulted in the signing of a Joint Statement on the development of political dialogue, as well as "cooperation in trade, economy and investment, cooperation in trade, economy and investment, cooperation in cooperation, food security, health care, medicine, maternal and child welfare, education, science and technology, mining and petrochemical sector, security and defense"¹²⁴. The parties outlined practical steps to expand the contractual and legal framework of bilateral relations, where agreements on cooperation in agriculture and agro-industrial complex will also be developed. And in September 2023, President of Equatorial Guinea Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo paid his first visit to Belarus, during which seven documents were signed aimed at developing relations across a wide thematic spectrum, from the economy to the humanitarian sphere, including the establishment of the Joint Permanent Commission between the two states.

At the first meeting of the commission in October 2023, where from the African side "more than 20 representatives of practically all key ministries, agencies, including 8 heads of ministries came"¹²⁵, the participants in the discussion decided to create a number of subcommissions or working groups to achieve results as soon as possible in the main sectors of the Belarusian-Equatoguinean interaction. "These are the spheres of industry, agriculture, science and technology, health care and pharmacology. These four priority areas have been identified and

¹²⁴ About the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus S. Aleinik to Equatorial Guinea. Aleinik's visit to Equatorial Guinea [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/fa2023a57e9ef156.html

¹²⁵ "A good start of cooperation has been given". Aleynik on the first meeting of the intergovernmental commission with Equatorial Guinea [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/dan-horoshii-start-sotrudnichestvu-aleinik-o-pervom-zasedanii-mezhpravkomissii-s-ekvatorialnoj-gvineej-594724-2023/>

highlighted separately"¹²⁶ . The two sides agreed to ensure continuous growth of trade turnover to bring it in line with the potential of the two countries, as well as to promote specific projects in the areas of industry, technological development, agriculture, health, science, technology, education, culture, and construction. Minsk and Malabo identified as priority areas of cooperation "agriculture; healthcare; industry; construction; woodworking and forestry; cooperation in the oil and gas sector; cooperation in banking, finance and taxation; digitalization of the economy; cooperation in the field of culture, including museum, archive, library; cooperation in the field of tourism; cooperation in the field of sports; and environmental protection, among others"¹²⁷ .

In particular, with regard to industry, the Belarusian side is already working on supplies of cargo, passenger, trailer, special-purpose machinery, and dump trucks for the needs of Equatorial Guinea's growing economy, as the country's task is to shift from the raw materials sector to a more technological, knowledge-intensive, and innovative way of development. Belarus is also ready to "supply optoelectronic products, multifunctional unmanned aircraft, robotic systems, create closed-cycle enterprises for the production and processing of meat and dairy products"¹²⁸ .

African partners are interested in the Belarusian experience of efficient livestock breeding, improvement of veterinary services and food quality control, development of crops with the highest resource potential,

¹²⁶ Transcript of the approach to the press by Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Aleinik following the meeting of the Permanent Joint Commission of Belarus and Equatorial Guinea (October 19, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/ed7ba0f461785b44.html

¹²⁷ Joint communiqué on the results of the first meeting of the Permanent Joint Commission for Cooperation between Belarus and Equatorial Guinea (October 19, 2023) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/cba05c3a89729e69.html

¹²⁸ Speech by Minister S. Aleinik at the opening of the meeting of the Joint Commission for Cooperation between Belarus and Equatorial Guinea (October 18, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/c32017cdfb25123b.html

and creation of a high-quality and effective system of personnel training. Especially since "Equatorial Guinea has a great need for dairy and meat products, which we [Belarus] produce in sufficient quantities"¹²⁹. In addition, this country is very promising for the enterprises of Belgospisheprom Concern. For example, in mid-September 2023, "the first batch of products [malt] was shipped to Equatorial Guinea. This is a trial batch, this market is new and interesting for us"¹³⁰.

As for medicine, in accordance with the agreement on cooperation in healthcare signed in Minsk during the first meeting of the commission, it is planned to establish a training center at one of the medical universities of Belarus to train students from Equatorial Guinea and other African countries, as well as to improve the qualifications of doctors. The parties identified cooperation in forestry and environmental protection as one of the new areas of cooperation.

In addition, in this African country "it is planned to create a production and logistics hub of Belarusian products"¹³¹, which will be used, among other things, to supply and promote products from Belarus to the neighboring countries of Central and West Africa. After all, Equatorial Guinea is one of the leading economies in Africa, which ranks third in oil production on the continent and has a developed port infrastructure. Over the past quarter century, its gross domestic product has increased more than 52 times and ranks among the leading per capita economies in Africa. In addition, "Equatorial Guinea is a member of the

¹²⁹ Belarus is ready to help Equatorial Guinea in the development of agro-industrial complex and training of agricultural specialists [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-gotova-pomoch-ekvatorialnoj-gvinee-v-razviti-i-podgotovke-selhozspetsialistov-586755-2023/>

¹³⁰ Zhidkov: African continent is promising for export of Belarusian food products [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/zhidkov-afrikanskij-kontinent-perspektiven-dlja-eksporta-belorusskoj-pischevoj-produksii-588012-2023/>

¹³¹ Aleinik: the issue of creating a hub of Belarusian products in Equatorial Guinea is under consideration [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/aleinik-prorabatvvaetsja-vopros-sozdaniia-v-ekvatorialnoj-gvinee-haba-belorusskoj-produksii-594535-2023/>

African Continental Free Trade Area, which brings together 54 States, as well as the Economic Community of Central African States, which includes 11 States¹³².

In short, the first meeting of the Belarus-Ekwatoguinea Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation showed that the parties intend to expand long-term cooperation and develop and adopt the Roadmap to 2030 by the end of this year. In addition, plans have been outlined to develop the legal framework and sign new bilateral agreements in order to reach the level of trade turnover of at least \$100 million by 2030 in terms of economic activity.

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¹³² Machine building, roadmap, opening of embassies. Minsk and Malabo have defined the prospects of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/mashinostroenie-dorozhnaja-karta-otkrytie-posolstv-minsk-i-malabo-opredelili-perspektivy-594759-2023/>

From economics to education

The Republic of Zimbabwe is an African country with which the Republic of Belarus established diplomatic relations back in April 1992. The new stage of cooperation with this South African state dates back to January 2023, when a Belarusian delegation paid a state visit to Zimbabwe. At that time, "a package of important bilateral documents was signed, which includes basic economic agreements that are designed to ensure the development of industrial cooperation and economic cooperation..."¹³³. The two governments then approved a roadmap for the implementation of the agreements. "The document includes 65 measures in various areas: political-diplomatic, trade and economic, agricultural, military-technical, health care and medical science, investment, energy, supply and maintenance of equipment. In addition, Belarus will continue to participate in the program to modernize and mechanize Zimbabwe's agriculture"¹³⁴.

Speaking about the economic component of this partnership, "the trade turnover between Belarus and Zimbabwe has increased eightfold since 2018"¹³⁵. At the same time, the parties have significantly expanded trade and economic interaction, established humanitarian cooperation and strengthened the contractual and legal framework of bilateral relations. As for the 2022 figures, "Belarus and Zimbabwe traded more than \$39 million, which is almost 57% more than the level of 2021. At the same time, Belarusian exports amounted to almost \$30 million. Belarus

¹³³ Zalessky, B. Export growth strategy. Opportunities and challenges of open economy in modern conditions / B. Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 30.

¹³⁴ Frederick Shava: Zimbabwe has achieved a lot in terms of food security thanks to Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/frederik-shava-zimbabve-mnogogo-dostiglo-v-plane-prodovolstvemoj-bezopasnosti-blagodarja-belarusi-557640-2023/>

¹³⁵ Parkhomchik: the trade turnover between Belarus and Zimbabwe has grown eight times since 2018, it is important to maintain the dynamics [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/parkhomchik-tovarooborot-belarusi-i-zimbabve-s-2018-goda-vvros-v-vosem-raz-vazhno-sohranit-dinamiku-586362-2023/>

supplied Zimbabwe with tractors and tractors, machines and mechanisms for harvesting and threshing of crops, parts and accessories for cars and tractors"¹³⁶. In addition, a single center of Belarusian enterprises has been established on Zimbabwean soil, which provides a whole range of services for all types of machinery supplied from Belarus and where one can get education in the field of vehicle management, necessary recommendations, purchase spare parts, and services for performing routine maintenance on Belarusian machinery.

In March 2023, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of the Republic of Zimbabwe F. Shava visited the Belarusian capital. During his official visit, he said that the Zimbabwean side was interested in identifying additional opportunities for economic cooperation with Belarus. As for official Minsk, it "wants to bring the relations with Zimbabwe to the level of a comprehensive strategic partnership"¹³⁷. Following the talks at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, the parties adopted a joint statement and reviewed the implementation of agreements in the trade and economic sphere, in particular, the progress in the implementation of contracts for the supply of agricultural and firefighting equipment to Zimbabwe, construction and modernization of grain storage facilities, as well as discussed cooperation in industry, agriculture, energy, mining and light industry. In particular, Belarus will continue to make its significant contribution to the achievement by the Government of Zimbabwe of the goals of the long-term development strategy of this southern African country "Vision 2030".

¹³⁶ The meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Belarus and Zimbabwe was held in Minsk [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/vstrecha-ministrov-inostrannv-h-del-belarusi-i-zimbabve-prohodit-v-minske-557558-2023/>

¹³⁷ Belarus wants to bring relations with Zimbabwe to the level of comprehensive strategic partnership [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/belarus-hochet-vvvesti-otnosheniya-s-zimbabve-na-uroven-vseobjemljushchego-strategicheskogo-partnerstva-557622-2023>

In addition, the parties continued to expand the legal framework of the Belarusian-Zimbabwean bilateral relations, which already includes more than twenty intergovernmental and interdepartmental agreements. In March 2023, this list of documents was supplemented by the Memorandum of Understanding between the National Centre for Marketing and Price Study of the Republic of Belarus and the National Organization for the Promotion and Development of Trade in Zimbabwe "Zim Trade", which "will become an additional incentive and support for the intensification of interaction between business circles, enterprises and economic entities of the two countries"¹³⁸ .

Speaking about the nearest plans, more than 130 fire trucks will be delivered by the end of 2023, "they are now at different stages of delivery. Contracts were signed for the delivery of 3,161 tractors, 80 harvesters, by the end of the year we [the Belarusian side] will start to fulfill these contracts, and we will try to solve these issues in 2023-2025. We have also reached agreements on the delivery of grain drying complexes there"¹³⁹ . In the medium term, Belarusian exporters are only ready to increase their supplies to the Zimbabwean market. For example, the Belarusian Automobile Plant is interested in developing fruitful cooperation with mining companies in Zimbabwe, as the mining industry of the country, which has large reserves of minerals, including coal, copper, gold, diamonds, is developing rapidly. After all, 55- and 130-ton dump trucks from Belarus are now involved in mining of coal and diamonds in Zimbabwean quarries, Belarusian special-purpose machinery - bulldozers,

¹³⁸ Transcript of the approach to the press of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus S. Aleinik following the talks with the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Zimbabwe (March 27, 2023). Aleinik following the talks with the Head of the Foreign Ministry of Zimbabwe (March 27, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/fd375850144e9b08.html

¹³⁹ Parkhomchik: exports of Belarusian goods to Zimbabwe increased eightfold [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/parhomchik-eksport-belorusskih-tovarov-v-zimbabwe-uvlichilsia-v-vosem-raz-587300-2023/>

loaders, tractors and irrigation and drainage machines - is also in operation. And "BELAZ is ready to offer for the mining industry of Zimbabwe not only efficient quarry machinery, but also ready-made complex solutions for the supply of machines with all the necessary infrastructure, equipment and software on a turnkey basis"¹⁴⁰.

Belarusian manufacturers of agricultural machinery also have interesting plans to export to this South African country. After all, agricultural mechanization in this region of Africa is now receiving increased attention. Suffice it to say that "last year [2022] Zimbabwe harvested a record wheat crop for the last 25 years thanks to Belarusian-made agricultural machinery"¹⁴¹. And there are plans to promote joint projects to provide agricultural machinery from Belarus, including tillage units, cotton growing machines, and tractor trailers. It should be noted that only Minsk Tractor Plant "in 2023-2024 it is planned to supply 3,575 tractors to Zimbabwe, their shipment has already begun"¹⁴². In addition, this year, the use of improved agricultural machinery from Belarus has made the harvesting season in this country problem-free. The fact is that in Zimbabwe in 2023, a record harvest of cereals is expected, which will exceed 440 thousand tons. As of early November, wheat harvesting is almost complete across the country. "To harvest faster before the rainy season, the government has deployed 249 state-of-the-art Belarusian combine harvesters. The flagship GS12 combine harvester handles at least

¹⁴⁰ BELAZ is interested in developing cooperation with mining companies in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belaz-zainteresovan-v-razviti-i-sotrudnichestva-s-dobvyajuschimi-kompanijami-zimbabve-581975-2023/>

¹⁴¹ "Bobruiskagromash" and the Ambassador of Zimbabwe discussed projects to provide the region with Belarusian agricultural machinery [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bobruiskagromash-i-posol-zimbabve-obsudili-proekty-po-obespecheniju-regiona-belorusskoj-selhoztehnikoj-582296-2023/>

¹⁴² MTZ intends to continue cooperation with partners from Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mtz-nameren-prodolzit-sotrudnichestvo-s-partnerami-iz-zimbabve-581256-2023/>

40 hectares a day"¹⁴³ . So the purchase of machinery from Belarus has been a success.

Another relevant topic of Belarusian-Zimbabwean interaction is the establishment of joint ventures for food production. Back in May 2023, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus discussed with partners from Zimbabwe the issues of organizing supplies of Belarusian foodstuffs, as well as "setting up joint ventures for processing dried milk into whole milk products"¹⁴⁴ . In addition, the issues of beef and poultry meat processing were discussed. And in Grodno region last spring with Zimbabwean partners discussed the issue of cooperation in the field of baby food. "At the first stage it can be the supply of ready-made baby food with the subsequent transfer of part of technological operations to the territory of Zimbabwe with the subsequent possibility of building a full-fledged production and performing the whole list of works"¹⁴⁵ . And taking into account the capacities of the Hrodna plant Bellakt, the geographical location of Zimbabwe and active interaction with its neighbors, it would be possible to consider the possibility of joint production, which would cover not only the needs of Zimbabwe, but also other African countries.

Another example. In June-July 2023, the first deliveries of Zimbabwean cotton fiber arrived in Belarus. The partners from South Africa are ready to cooperate on other issues as well. For example, "Zimbabwe has a school program and about 2 million schoolchildren dress

¹⁴³ Belarusian machinery helps to harvest a record harvest in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belorussskaja-tehnika-pomogaet-ubirat-rekordnyj-urozhaj-v-zimbabve-597984-2023>

¹⁴⁴ The Ministry of Agriculture and Food will discuss with Zimbabwe the creation of joint ventures for the processing of milk powder [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minselhozprod-obsudit-s-zimbabve-sozdanie-sovmestnyh-predpriyatij-po-pererabotke-suhogo-moloka-566042-2023/>

¹⁴⁵ "Bellakt" plans to create the production of dry infant formulae in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bellakt-planiruet-sozdat-proizvodstvo-suhih-detskikh-smesej-na-territorii-zimbabve-560414-2023/>

in business style. Zimbabwe imports fabrics only from China, so we [Belarusian specialists] showed the Zimbabwean representative a number of samples of polyviscose fabric and fabric with a wool content of 20-30%"¹⁴⁶.

Another interesting idea in cooperation between the two countries, which may well materialize in the not-too-distant future, is that "Zimbabwe may become a major hub in South Africa for trade in Belarusian products"¹⁴⁷. For this purpose, the Belarusian-Zimbabwean initiative with the participation of another state in Southeast Africa - Mozambique - could be realized. This is a country that is washed by the Indian Ocean. "The most promising area of Belarusian exports to the markets of Mozambique could be mechanization of the agricultural complex of this country with subsequent servicing of Belarusian machinery"¹⁴⁸. The introduction of knowledge-intensive technologies, electrification and improvement of railroads, creation of the necessary logistics infrastructure, and promotion of renewable energy sources could also be key points on the way to diversifying Belarusian exports to Mozambique. Given the high demand for medicines, niches for the promotion of pharmaceutical products remain in the country. In short, the Southern African market is very promising for Belarusian exports and can further increase activity in various areas.

A special talk is about the interaction between Minsk and Harare in the educational sphere. In May 2023, Belarus and Zimbabwe signed a roadmap for 2023-2025 in the field of higher education and university

¹⁴⁶ The first deliveries of Zimbabwean cotton to Belarus are expected in June-July 2023 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/pervve-postavki-v-belarus-zimbabvijskogo-hlopka-ozhidajutsja-v-ijune-ijule-2023-goda-557867-2023/>

¹⁴⁷ Frederick Shava: Zimbabwe can become a major hub for the supply of Belarusian equipment in South Africa [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/frederik-shava-zimbabwe-mozhet-stat-krupnym-habom-po-postavke-belorusskoi-tehniki-v-juzhnoj-afrike-557809-2023/>

¹⁴⁸ Mozambique [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://export.by/mozambique>

science, which identified the development of joint educational programs and training of Zimbabweans in Belarusian universities in demanded specialties as promising areas of Belarusian-Zimbabwean cooperation. "Also among the promising areas are the organization of resource centers for vocational education and training, expansion of joint scientific, scientific-technical and innovative projects, including in the field of geomechanics, biotechnology, biomechanics"¹⁴⁹.

In addition to the roadmap, the Belarusian and Zimbabwean sides also signed over 40 bilateral agreements in the field of education in May. It should be noted that "this is a very serious legal framework for training specialists for a wide range of specialties in industry, agro-industry, health care, and energy"¹⁵⁰. It is expected that in this connection between the educational institutions of the two countries will be implemented a program of training not only specialists at the level of higher education, but also on the creation of centers of competence in the territory of Zimbabwe to train specialists in working professions. For this purpose, a center for studying Russian as a foreign language is being established, where Zimbabwean citizens will be able to undergo training in order to both work at joint ventures in Zimbabwe and continue their studies in Belarus.

The Belarusian State University (BSU) is an active participant of interaction with Zimbabwean partners. In 2019, it signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education, Science and Technological Development of Zimbabwe. In

¹⁴⁹ Belarus and Zimbabwe signed a road map for 2023-2025 in the field of higher education and science [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-zimbabwe-podpisali-dorozhnyju-kartu-na-2023-2025-gody-v-sfere-vysshego-obrazovanija-i-nauki-565748-2023/>

¹⁵⁰ More than 40 bilateral agreements in the field of education will be signed following the visit of a delegation from Zimbabwe to Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bolee-40-dvustoromih-soglashenij-v-oblasti-obrazovanija-budet-podpisano-po-itogam-vizita-v-belarus-566871-2023/>

February 2023, BSU became a partner of six universities of this country at once. And in May this year it expanded the range of existing agreements. In particular, a Cooperation Agreement with the Harare Institute of Technology and a Memorandum of Understanding with the Midlands State University were signed, which will allow developing academic exchanges, conducting fundamental and applied research, joint scientific conferences, exhibitions, symposiums and seminars. In addition, "initiatives on cooperation in the field of ecology, soil science, biology were voiced. The possibility of developing modern digital technologies, geoinformation systems, soil conservation measures and technologies on lands subject to erosion processes was considered"¹⁵¹ . The opening of a BSU distance learning center in Zimbabwe will also be a serious step towards lasting cooperation.

Also in May 2023, Brest State Technical University (BrSTU) signed cooperation agreements with five Zimbabwean universities, which will develop cooperation with the Harare Institute of Technology, Chinhoyi University of Technology, Lupane State University, Midland State University and the University of Zimbabwe. The Brest university will implement joint educational programs, engage in joint scientific research to be carried out in the field of Industry 4.0, digital industry and agriculture, IT-technology, on issues related to the creation of various engineering systems. In a word, "cooperation can be established in all areas in which Brest residents specialize. Three students from Zimbabwe are currently studying at BrSTU: two guys and a girl"¹⁵² . It should be

¹⁵¹ BSU activates cooperation with universities of Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bgu-aktiviziruet-sotrudnichestvo-s-vuzami-zimbabwe-566857-2023/>

¹⁵² Brest Technical University concluded cooperation agreements with five universities of Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/brestskij-tehnicheskij-universitet-zakljuchil-soglashenija-o-sotrudnichestve-s-pjatju-vuzami-zimbabwe-566589-2023/>

assumed that in the near future Brest will have many more students from this South African country.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Minsk between the Belarusian State Technological University and the Midland State University. This document provides for cooperation in sharing experience in education and facilitating the exchange of students, master's and PhD students, teaching staff, as well as the development of joint research projects in areas of mutual interest. Specifically, "in the fields of forestry, wood processing, industrial ecology, energy efficient technologies, and fertilizer technology"¹⁵³. The Belarusian National Technical University signed several international documents with Zimbabwean partners this spring. First, a cooperation agreement with Harare Polytechnic College. Secondly, with the Midland State University. Thirdly, "a road map between the Belarusian National Technical University and the University of Zimbabwe was signed"¹⁵⁴, and eight joint educational programs with various universities of this country, including those in Harare, Chinhoyi, Lupane, were approved. And in October 2023, the Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno and the Polytechnic College of Harare agreed to cooperate, outlining mutual interests "in the areas of joint scientific, innovative and educational activities, as well as in the monitoring of natural resources"¹⁵⁵. Finally, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Education, Science and Technological Development of Zimbabwe agreed to sign a memorandum

¹⁵³ Discussion of cooperation, signing a memorandum: BSTU will be visited by the delegation of Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/obsuzhdenie-sotrudnichestva-podpisanie-memoranduma-bgtu-posetit-delegatsija-zimbabwe-566182-2023/>

¹⁵⁴ BNTU signed agreements on cooperation and implementation of joint educational programs with universities of Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://times.bntu.by/news/13451-v-bntu-podpisany-soglasheniya-s-universitetami-zimbabwe>

¹⁵⁵ Scientists of SDSU and Harare Polytechnic College agreed on cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/uchenye-grgu-i-politehnicheskogo-kolledzha-harare-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnichestve-592885-2023/>

of intent and "identified a number of promising areas for cooperation: space technologies, new materials, technologies and complexes for processing of mineral raw materials and ores, agro-industrial complex, training of scientific personnel..."¹⁵⁶

Recall that in January 2023, Belarus and Zimbabwe signed a memorandum of understanding between the parties on mutual recognition of educational documents in Harare. "And they see quite great prospects for cooperation in various areas of inter-university interaction. This applies to the training of specialists with higher education in such areas as agro-industrial complex, mechanical engineering, medical technologies"¹⁵⁷. So, with the signing of the roadmap for 2023-2025 in the field of higher education and university science, it seems that the educational services of Belarus in Zimbabwe will be in demand in all areas that develop the economy of this southern African country, and will become the most important element of Belarusian-Zimbabwean relations. As for the prospects of bilateral trade and economic, industrial-cooperative and scientific-educational interaction, they are seen for quite a long time. And not only in these areas, but also in other areas.

¹⁵⁶ Space technologies and new materials: the NAS of Belarus discussed cooperation with Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/kosmicheskie-tehnologii-i-novye-materialy-v-nan-belarusi-obsudili-sotrudnichestvo-s-zimbabwe-566338-2023/>

¹⁵⁷ Zaleskii, B. Window of Opportunity and New Ideas. Realization of the features of economic multifaceted cooperation / B. Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 23.

The expositions create prerequisites for contacts

In 2024, Belarus intends to significantly intensify cooperation with African countries in a number of areas, including exhibition cooperation. After all, this continent has enormous resources and opportunities. Suffice it to say that "half of the 50 fastest growing countries in the world in 2022 are from Africa. The Republic of Belarus has something to offer to the rapidly developing market of this region, which is confirmed by multimillion contracts and agreements reached recently"¹⁵⁸. Moreover, in 2023, a number of Belarusian-African projects were initiated during international exhibitions in various regions of this continent.

For example, Belarus demonstrated its products and services at the **Zimbabwe International Trade Fair in Zimbabwe** in April this year. The Belarusian exposition **Made in Belarus** was presented by such companies as Bellact, Lidakhleboproduct, Smarhon Bread Products Plant, BELAZ - the managing company of BELAZ-HOLDING, Sohra, AMKODOR - the managing company of the holding, Aftertrade, Minskintercaps, Borisov Medical Products Plant, Kamvol, and Mogotex. For example, Bellact showed milk porridge, dry milk formula for children, while Lidakhleboprodukt showed its flour-milling products and semi-finished flour products at the multidisciplinary exhibition. Smorgon Bread Products Combine - oat flour and cereals. The machine-building industry was represented at the exhibition by the Belarusian Automobile Plant and Sohra, a group of companies that maintains Belarusian quarry machinery in various countries of the world. Also at the **Made in Belarus** exposition, the authorized supplier of Belarusian machinery, Aftertrade, demonstrated at a collective stand the machinery of such famous Belarusian brands as

¹⁵⁸ Belinterexpo" told what exhibitions Belarusian exporters will go to in 2024 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/v-belinterekspo-rasskazali-na-kakie-vystavki-otpravjatsia-belorusskie-eksportery-v-2024-godu-598179-2023/>

Minsk Tractor Plant and AMKODOR, in particular, the Belarus-2022.3 energy-intensive tractor, whose deliveries to the Zimbabwean market were launched in 2022. Belarusian light industry enterprises brought a wide range of fabrics to southern Africa. "Kamvol" familiarized the visitors of the exhibition with fabrics of school and women's assortment, and "Mogotex" - with textile fabrics of the highest class, "which can be an excellent alternative to fabrics from China, India, Malaysia." The company also produces both work clothes and clothes for law enforcement agencies"¹⁵⁹ . "Minskintercaps and Borisov Medical Preparations Plant presented new medicines at the exhibition.

And in North Africa - in **Algeria** - in June 2023, the 54th FIA International Exhibition took place, where about a thousand companies from 40 countries participated. The National Exposition of Belarus included 11 enterprises representing various industries. MAZ OJSC, the managing company of BELAVTOMAZ holding company, demonstrated at the exhibition the catalog of its trucks characterized by reliability, efficiency and innovative solutions. JSC "Belarusian Metallurgical Plant - the managing company of the holding company "BMK" (BMZ) presented advanced metallurgical technologies and quality rolled metal products. Slutsk Cheese Factory OJSC and Minsk Dairy Plant No. 1 OJSC showed their high-quality dairy products. And the collective stand of the State Committee for Science and Technology presented the developments of the institutions of the Ministry of Education and organizations of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, which demonstrated "more than 30 scientific, technical and innovative developments"¹⁶⁰ .

¹⁵⁹ Belarus presents its products and services at the exhibition in Zimbabwe [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavljaet-svoi-produkty-i-uslugi-na-vystavke-v-zimbabve-563849-2023/>

¹⁶⁰ FIA exhibition became a platform for negotiations and meetings between Belarusian and Algerian companies [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/vystavka-fia-stala-ploschadkoj-dlja-peregovorov-i-vstrech-mezhdu-belorusskimi-i-alzhirskimi-kompanijami-573076-2023/>

Organizations and institutions were interested in the opportunity to establish business contacts with industrial enterprises of various sectors, educational institutions, and technoparks.

In particular, the exposition of the Belarusian State University included products developed in the laboratories of research institutes and faculties of the university. "This is a multifunctional complex "Alma Mater-2", synthesized carbon materials, heat-resistant composite materials based on solid phosphate binders, nanoscale technology of diamond processing of structural composite materials, non-ferrous metals and alloys..."¹⁶¹. Smart Windows were shown as a natural exhibit. The invention has no analogues in the post-Soviet space. They can be used as an alternative to conventional glass structures. The innovative development protects the room from sunlight, penetration of ultraviolet radiation and partially blocks infrared rays. This allows the user to do away with curtains and blinds. The innovation can also be used as an information board to replace paper price tags in shopping centers. Changing the price and name of goods throughout the retail outlet from a centralized control unit on the computer is done remotely. The visitors of the exhibition were also presented radio-absorbing materials of "KUP" series. They are designed to protect aircraft from electromagnetic radiation, have low density, high elasticity, have thermal resistance up to 400-450 degrees and chemical resistance to acids, alkalis, solvents.

This exhibition showed that Algeria is of interest to Belarus as a proven partner with a huge market. After all, more than 40 million people live in this country. In this regard, "Belarusian producers of dairy products and other foodstuffs have good prospects in Algeria. There are special

¹⁶¹ Scientific and technical developments of BSU will be presented at the 54th International Industrial Exhibition "FIA-2023" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://bsu.by/news/nauchno-tehnicheskije-razrabotki-bgu-predstavvat-na-54-y-mezhdunarodnov-promyshlennov-vvstavke-fia-2-d/>

plans for industrial cooperation. The issues of creating joint production facilities for trucks and agricultural machinery are currently under consideration¹⁶². It only remains to add that in April 2024, an exposition Made in Belarus will be organized for the first time in Algeria at the international exhibition of food industry, agricultural machinery and technologies Djazgro.

As for other Belarusian expositions to be organized at international exhibitions in Africa next year, they will be placed in a number of countries. In July - at the FILDA multi-industry forum in Luanda (**Angola**). In October, at the multi-sectoral SWAiTEX in Swakopmund, **Namibia**, and the East Africa International Trade Exhibition in Dar es Salaam, **Tanzania**. And in December 2024 - in Cairo (**Egypt**) - at the largest in North Africa international food industry exhibition Food Africa Cairo. Let us hope that cooperation between Belarus and its African partners will receive a significant impetus next year, including thanks to the Made in Belarus expositions, which create good prerequisites for the development of trade and economic relations.

¹⁶² Terentyev, S. Milk, technology and scientific developments / S. Terentyev // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/moloko-tehnika-i-nauchnye-razrabotki-posol-belarusi-o-prorvve-belorusskih-tovarov-v-alzhir-8770/>

Maximize specific trade and economic interaction

Latin America is one of the political and economic centers of the emerging multipolar world, home to more than 650 million people. "Many countries of this region are aimed at pursuing an independent foreign policy and seek through accelerated innovative development to move away from the historically raw material character of their economies"¹⁶³. And the Republic of Belarus can provide effective assistance to these states by developing the most concrete trade and economic interaction.

In June 2022, the Belarusian-Latin American Forum was held in Moscow at the Business and Cultural Complex of the Belarusian Embassy in Russia. The Forum gathered representatives of the embassies of Latin American countries in Belarus and Russia from 15 countries. The event was attended by ambassadors, heads of diplomatic missions and diplomats from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela, and El Salvador.

The Latin America and the Caribbean region is interesting for Belarus as an important platform for integration into global trade and economic ties. In 2021, the total imports of the region's countries from Belarus "amounted to \$715.5 million, an increase of 3.5% compared to 2020. The commodity nomenclature of Belarusian exports to the region includes potash fertilizers, means of land transport, ferrous metal products, chemical and petrochemical products, instruments and optical

¹⁶³ Aleinik said that cooperation with Latin American countries is interesting for Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/aleinik-rasskazal-chem-belarusi-interesno-sotrudnichestvo-so-stranami-latinskoj-ameriki-567456-2023/>

devices, and dairy products"¹⁶⁴ . At the end of 2021, Belarus' trade turnover with the Latin American region amounted to about USD 1.5 billion.

Belarus already has positive experience in the region. "This includes participation of Belarusian companies in geological and seismic exploration, mining in Venezuela and Ecuador, construction projects in Venezuela, Ecuador and Peru, supplies of Belarusian agricultural, automotive and passenger equipment to Venezuela, Cuba, Argentina, Colombia, Nicaragua and Bolivia, export of quarry equipment to Venezuela and Chile"¹⁶⁵ . The work in these areas is quite active. The volumes of trade and investment are expected to increase further, first of all, through the implementation of joint cooperation projects. In its cooperation with Latin America, Belarus aims to move from simple trade to the creation of joint ventures and assembly plants.

For example, the dynamically developing agricultural sector in Latin American countries needs appropriate machinery. Reliable and price-competitive tractors, combines, and other Belarusian machinery can occupy a worthy place here. "The range of modern products manufactured in Belarus, primarily agricultural machinery, dump trucks, trucks, road construction equipment, public electric transport, tire products and many others, can be of direct interest to meet the needs of Latin American producers of agricultural products, mining industry and transport sector"¹⁶⁶ .

¹⁶⁴ NCM on the prospects of promoting Belarusian goods and services in Latin America [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/comments/view/ntsm-o-perspektivah-prodvizhenija-belorusskih-tovarov-i-uslug-v-latinskoj-ameriki-8247/>

¹⁶⁵ Shestakov: Belarus is ready to strengthen cooperation with Latin American countries in all areas [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/shestakov-belarus-gotova-k-ukrepljeniju-sotrudnichestva-so-stranami-latinskoj-ameriki-po-vsem-510548-2022/>

¹⁶⁶ Pivovar, E. Belarus in cooperation with Latin America aims at the transition to the creation of JVs and assembly plants / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-v-sotrudnichestve-s-latinskoj-amerikoi-natselena-na-perehod-k-sozdaniiju-sp-i-sborochnyh-510550-2022/>

Belarus is interested not only in trade in goods, but also in exports of services, the basis of which are transportation, computer, construction, and mining services. "At the end of 2021, the volume of trade in services with Latin American countries increased to \$200 million (58.3% by 2020). Belarusian exports reached \$178.9 million (97.9%)"¹⁶⁷. Nevertheless, the dynamics in mutual trade in goods and services, as well as the existing level of trade and economic relations between Belarus and many Latin American countries do not fully correspond to the real capabilities of the parties. Undoubtedly, exporters are maximally interested in promoting Belarusian "sophisticated technical products - products of mechanical engineering, scientific sector, from tomographs to spare parts and engines for existing automobile and tractor equipment"¹⁶⁸. A promising area of cooperation is the expansion of contacts in the field of education. Belarusian universities are ready to accept applicants for training in various specialties in demand in Latin American countries, including training of specialists in industry, agriculture, and health care.

In recent years, Latin American countries have maintained the role of points of growth and foreign trade activity of Belarus. These include Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua.

The Brazilian market is of great interest to the Belarusian machine-building and chemical industries. This is due to Brazil's ever-growing demand for agricultural and other machinery, fertilizers, tires, and other goods produced by Belarusian enterprises. In 2021, bilateral trade amounted to about \$800 million, while exports totaled \$585 million.

¹⁶⁷ Pivovar, E. Foreign Ministry of Belarus: trade with Latin America demonstrates steady growth / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/mid-belarusi-torgovlja-s-latinskoi-amerikoi-demonstriruet-ustoichi-vvj-rost-510549-2022/>

¹⁶⁸ Pivovar, E. Shestakov: Belarus can sell a wide range of products to Latin America / E. Pivovar // [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/shestakov-belarus-mozhet-prodavat-v-latinskuiu-ameriku-shirokij-spektr-produktsii-510577-2022/>

Commodity items such as cord materials (yarns and fabrics) for the production of automobile tires, beer malt, and electric vehicles have a significant potential for increasing supplies to the Brazilian market.

Argentina is an important trade and economic partner for Belarus. In 2021, trade turnover between the countries amounted to USD 136 million. Promising areas of trade and economic cooperation with this country include the organization of supplies of Belarusian complex technical products: agricultural and forestry machinery, forage and grain harvesters, dump trucks, passenger cars and electric vehicles.

In 2021, trade turnover between Belarus and **Colombia** amounted to \$90 million, while Belarusian exports amounted to \$80 million. New commodity items that may be in demand in the Colombian market include agricultural machinery, buses, foodstuffs, and may also be the IT sector.

Belarus also has points of interaction with **Venezuela** to intensify trade and economic relations. In 2021, almost USD 2 million worth of Belarusian goods were supplied to Venezuela, an increase of 82%. Among the most promising commodity items for Belarusian exports to Venezuela are condensed and dried milk and cream, printed books, brochures, pipes, tubes, hoses and plastic fittings, and whey.

Belarus and **Cuba** are also working on new joint projects in the trade and economic sphere. Tractors and tractors, condensed and dried milk and cream, parts for receiving and transmitting equipment, parts and accessories for cars and tractors, devices and appliances used in medicine, and reciprocating internal combustion engines form the bulk of Belarusian supplies to Cuba. Supplies of pharmaceuticals and medical equipment may also become a promising area of Belarusian exports.

In September 2022, a Belarusian-Cuban business forum was held, the participants of which considered promising areas of trade and economic interaction between the two countries and topical issues of

doing business. More than 90 representatives from 65 enterprises in areas of interest to Belarus for promotion to the Cuban market and 18 representatives of Cuban business held talks on the development of "mutually beneficial cooperation and implementation of joint projects in the field of molecular immunology, scientific and technological developments, education, metallurgy, agricultural engineering, trade, coffee, rum production and other areas"¹⁶⁹ .

It should be noted that this is the first meeting of business representatives of the two countries in a long time. In addition, for Belarus, Cuba is a partner in export-import operations, a self-sufficient and independent country, and is also seen as a platform to enter the large market of Latin America - Venezuela, Bolivia and other major countries of this region. "Trade turnover between Belarus and Cuba in 2021 amounted to \$22.9 million, more than \$20 million of which is accounted for by Belarusian exports"¹⁷⁰ . The participants of the business forum showed that the potential of the two countries has not been exhausted yet. Moreover, the establishment of business contacts between representatives of the business communities of Belarus and Cuba will spur further development of trade and economic relations.

The Cuban side is ready to cooperate with partners from Belarus, particularly in machine building. For reference, more than 20,000 Belarusian-made tractors are currently operating in the fields of Cuba. Cooperation can be "not only in the purchase of new models, but also in the purchase of spare parts for the restoration of machinery, which is

¹⁶⁹ Belarus and Cuba will discuss the prospects of trade and economic cooperation at the business forum on September 27 [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-kuba-obsudiat-perspektivy-torgovo-ekonomicheskogo-sotrudnichestva-na-biznes-forume-27-525866-2022>

¹⁷⁰ Business of Belarus and Cuba intends to develop cooperation in medicine, engineering and logistics [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/biznes-belarusi-i-kuby-nameren-razvivat-sotrudnichestvo-v-medsine-mashinostroeni-i-logistike-525975-2022/>

already available in Cuba. We are interested in supplying spare parts for repair and restoration of tractors, MAZ trucks, AMKODOR, buses. We can engage in assembly, as well as create projects to supply this equipment to the Latin American market. Belarus and Cuba also have great potential in the digital economy and tourism"¹⁷¹ .

However, medicine is of the greatest interest to Cuban partners. In particular, in November 2022, the first Belarusian medicines were registered in this Latin American country. "This step became possible thanks to long-term joint work between the Belarusian (Center for Expertise and Testing in Healthcare, Managing Company of Belpharmprom Holding) and Cuban (Center for State Control of Medicines, Equipment and Medical Devices (CECMED)) parties. It concerns medicines produced by the UE "Minskintercaps"¹⁷² . In addition, the Center for Expertise and Testing in Healthcare and CECMED signed an agreement on interlaboratory comparisons, which will contribute to increasing the level of trust between testing laboratories of Belarus and Cuba, qualification of specialists in the field of laboratory research, promote harmonization of requirements for quality control of medicines and, as a result, increase the effectiveness and safety of medicines for patients of the two countries.

The Belarusian Medical Academy of Postgraduate Education (BelMAPO) and the Medical University of Havana also signed a cooperation agreement in November 2022. At the Cuban Center for Immunological Research, Belarusian specialists agreed to cooperate in prenatal diagnostics, neonatal screening, oncology and diabetology, as

¹⁷¹ Medicine, engineering, tourism. The Ambassador of Cuba told about the directions of cooperation with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/meditsina-mashinostroenie-turizm-posol-kubv-rasskazal-o-napravlenijah-sotrudnichestva-s-belarusiju-525993-2022/>

¹⁷² Belarusian medicines are registered in Cuba [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/societv/view/beloruskie-lekarstva-zaregistririvanv-na-kube-536206-2022/>

well as the possibility of using Cuban reagents as an adequate replacement for those currently used in various screening tests. "At the Cuban Center for Molecular Immunology, representatives of BelMAPO agreed to open joint scientific projects in the field of therapy of neurological diseases and in the field of ophthalmology and combustiology with the help of stem cell technologies"¹⁷³ .

¹⁷⁴In November 2022, an intergovernmental agreement on mutual recognition of education documents was added to the legal framework of the Belarusian-Cuban relations, where such promising areas of cooperation as "joint research on the creation of medicines and pharmaceutical substances; development and manufacture of medical devices and devices for the diagnosis and treatment of diseases in cardiac surgery, traumatology and orthopedics, oncology, and dentistry; development of joint ventures in the field of medical science and technology, including in Cuba" were considered as promising areas of cooperation. The parties will cooperate both within the framework of science and technology parks, which are actively developing in Belarus and Cuba, and will consider the possibility of establishing joint ventures, including in Cuba. In addition, other proposals are being discussed: the possibility of participation of higher education institutions of the two countries in competitions of Belarusian-Cuban scientific and technical projects in priority areas of cooperation; implementation of joint educational programs to train bachelors and masters in a number of areas - pharmaceuticals, information technologies, engineering and technical specialties. Now there are 10 direct agreements between the universities

¹⁷³ BelMAPO and the Medical University of Havana signed a cooperation agreement [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belmapo-i-meduniversitet-gavany-podpisali-dogovor-o-sotrudnichestve-536529-2022/>

¹⁷⁴ Belarus and Cuba signed an agreement on the recognition of educational documents [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kuba-podpisali-soglashenie-o-priznanii-dokumentov-ob-obrazovanii-535587-2022/>

of our countries. Thus, a good foundation for further development of the Belarusian-Cuban bilateral relations has already been laid.

Nicaragua should also be mentioned among the important political and economic partners of Belarus in Latin America. Moreover, in May 2024, the two countries will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. And in May 2023, Minsk and Managua said that they aim to seriously intensify trade, economic and humanitarian ties in order to constantly support and promote the bilateral agenda, filling it with new projects and cooperation programs. It should be noted that trade relations between Belarus and Nicaragua are still relatively small. They are based on supplies of Belarusian products. The legal framework is still in the process of formation.

In May 2023, a government delegation from this Latin American country visited Minsk. This visit showed that Belarus and Nicaragua intend to actively develop the legal foundation of bilateral relations. In particular, several important documents were signed in the Belarusian capital. First, the General Agreement between the two governments on the provision of export credits, which will strengthen the position of exporters from Belarus. "The buyers of Belarusian machinery will be the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure of Nicaragua, the Municipal Institute of Transport Regulation of Managua, and the Nicaraguan Institute of Municipal Development. The lending will be carried out with the use of loan funds from the Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus OJSC"¹⁷⁵.

Second, the basic agreement, which opens up opportunities for industrial cooperation and will make it possible to "significantly increase

¹⁷⁵ Ministry of Industry: the agreement with Nicaragua on granting export credits will strengthen the positions of Belarusian exporters [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minprom-soglashenie-s-nikaragua-o-predostavlenii-eksportnyh-kreditov-ukrepit-pozitsii-belorusskih-567470-2023/>

supplies of Belarusian machinery that is in demand in Nicaragua in the future. This will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the increase in joint trade"¹⁷⁶ . Third, an agreement on cooperation in education, which will provide a legal basis for interaction between the parties and establish working contacts between educational institutions of the two countries, "training specialists in the specialties most in demand in Nicaragua"¹⁷⁷ , as well as facilitate the exchange of specialized information and develop scientific and technical cooperation, which is part of this work. In addition, Minsk and Managua are working on draft agreements on trade and economic cooperation, promotion and mutual protection of investments, establishment of a joint committee on trade and economic cooperation, as well as on the abolition of visa regime.

Belarus and Nicaragua also decided to take a comprehensive approach to trade and economic interaction with a focus on industrial cooperation and investment cooperation. The parties focused on the implementation of joint projects in agriculture and the supply of Belarusian passenger, road-building and agricultural machinery to the Nicaraguan market. In particular, "in economic terms, first of all, we are talking about the development of industrial cooperation and the use of Belarusian agricultural technologies in the development of Nicaraguan agriculture..."¹⁷⁸ . Back in June 2022, at the talks in Minsk between the Ministries of Agriculture and Food of Belarus and Agriculture and Livestock of Nicaragua, the parties considered the prospects for

¹⁷⁶ Transcript of the approach to the press of the Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Aleinik on the results of negotiations with the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua (May 19, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://mfa.gov.by/press/smi/b1045153bb04077c.html>

¹⁷⁷ Belarus signed an agreement with Nicaragua on granting export credits [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-podpisala-s-nikaragua-soglashenie-o-predostavlenii-eksportnyh-kreditov-567453-2023/>

¹⁷⁸ Aleinik: Belarus and Nicaragua are aimed at serious intensification of trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/aleinik-belarus-i-nikaragua-natseleny-na-serieznuiu-aktivizatsiju-torgovo-ekonomicheskogo-567428-2023/>

cooperation in agriculture. They agreed to cooperate in livestock breeding, veterinary medicine, agrarian education, and exchange of experience in crop production. Besides, "Belarus is interested in supplies from Nicaragua of raw cane sugar, coffee, cocoa beans and semi-finished fruit products for baby food production"¹⁷⁹.

Another interesting topic that may become promising on the Belarusian-Nicaraguan economic agenda is the possibility of Belarus' participation in the construction of the Nicaraguan Canal. The fact is that back in 2012, the National Assembly of Nicaragua approved the project for the construction of the "Great Transoceanic Canal of Nicaragua," which "if completed, will connect the waters of the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. It is expected, that the new interoceanic canal will be a longer, wider and deeper alternative to the Panama Canal (opened in 1920) and will seriously relieve maritime traffic"¹⁸⁰. So, despite geographical remoteness, distance is not an obstacle to establishing cooperation when partners have respect, trust and friendship.

¹⁷⁹ Belarus and Nicaragua intend to cooperate in animal breeding and agrarian education [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-nikaragua-namereny-sotrudnichat-v-zhivotnovodstve-i-agramom-obrazovanii-506979-2022/>

¹⁸⁰ Foreign Minister of Nicaragua does not rule out the possibility of Belarus' participation in the construction of the Nicaraguan Canal [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/glava-mid-nikaragua-ne-iskljucaet-vozmozhnosti-uchastija-belarusi-v-stroitelstve-nikaraguanskogo-567406-2023/>

The rapprochement will only deepen

The Federative Republic of Brazil is the main partner of the Republic of Belarus in foreign trade with Latin American countries and is among the top ten partners of the Belarusian state in the world. Suffice it to say that "in 2021, the volume of bilateral trade amounted to \$782.9 million. The volume of bilateral trade amounted to \$782.9 million (growth rate of 108.9%). Exports amounted to \$585.1 million. USD 585.1 MILLION (108.3%)"¹⁸¹. At that time, Belarusian supplies were based on petrochemicals and products of the Belarusian Metallurgical Plant. In 2022, due to a number of limiting factors, the figures of the Belarusian-Brazilian trade turnover slightly decreased.

But since January 1, 2023, Brazil has undergone significant changes: a new president of the country has taken office and a new government is already functioning. These changes have to some extent affected the relations between Belarus and Brazil, which were established more than 30 years ago - in February 1992. One can say that today the two states, which are separated by 14 thousand kilometers, "have all grounds for the progressive development of bilateral cooperation both in the political and economic spheres"¹⁸². And the dynamics of 2022-2023 demonstrates the recovery of foreign trade volumes. In particular, "trade turnover for the first nine months of the current [2023] year amounted to almost \$700 million. This is twice as much as last year's figures"¹⁸³.

¹⁸¹ Trade and economic relations [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://brazil.mfa.gov.by/ru/exportby/tev/>

¹⁸² Lukashевич: the volume of trade of Belarus with Brazil is hundreds of times higher than with some neighboring countries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/lukashevich-objem-torgovli-belarusi-s-braziliej-vsotni-raz-vvshe-chem-s-nekotorymi-sosednimi-stranami-555506-2023/>

¹⁸³ Trade turnover between Belarus and Brazil amounted to almost \$700 million for nine months [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/tovarooborot-belarusi-i-brazilii-za-deviat-mesiatsev-sostavil-pochti-700-mln-600698-2023/>

Judging by the available facts, two areas of cooperation stand out in the interaction between the two countries today - **agriculture** and **education**.

With regard to the first area, we recall that "Brazil has about 5 million agricultural enterprises, of which 70% are small businesses. They need equipment, tractors <...>. For example, BELARUS-152 and BELARUS-622 models, which are just suitable for such farms"¹⁸⁴. The Brazilian side believes that the machines of Minsk Tractor Plant (MTZ) are of high quality, easy to operate, and help to increase productivity. This can be judged, for example, by the results of the International Agricultural Exhibition-Fair AgriShow, which was held in May 2023 in the Brazilian city of Ribeirão Preto. This business forum is "the largest agricultural event in South America, which is attended by all representatives of agribusiness of the continent without exception. By its characteristics, the exhibition is more like a district or even regional center: the number of participants and visitors exceeds 200 thousand people, and exhibition areas and pavilions occupy 520 thousand square meters"¹⁸⁵.

In 2023, AgriShow had a record number of participants - from more than 90 countries. And at this agro-industrial summit, Belarus presented MTZ tractors for the first time: not only small but maneuverable models for individual farmers, but also large multifunctional machines for large farms. Specialists of Minsk Tractor Plant, Smorgon Aggregate Plant, Bobruisk Tractor Parts and Aggregates Plant, Borisov Metalist Plant worked at the exhibition. At the same time, "the niche for Belarusian agricultural machinery was defined: low-powered basic tractors with a capacity of up to 20-25 horsepower, which can become an indispensable

¹⁸⁴ Ambassador: Brazil has a high interest in Belarusian machinery [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/posol-brazilii-v-nashei-strane-est-vysokij-interes-k-belorusskoi-tehnike-582274-2023/>

¹⁸⁵ Belarus presented its tractors at the largest agricultural exhibition in South America [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavila-svoi-tractory-na-krupnejshej-agrovstavke-v-juzhnoj-amerike-564485-2023/>

assistant for family farming, which is the basis of agriculture in Brazil"¹⁸⁶

Back in March 2023, Belarus and Brazil agreed to build two factories for the production of MTZ tractors in this country. Consent has already been received from the governors of two Brazilian states - Ceará and Goiás, "project activities are underway. <...> specialists have already started discussing these nuances, there are positive signals"¹⁸⁷. And in July of this year, a roadmap for the project on the creation of joint Belarusian-Brazilian assembly plants, including small tractor machinery oriented at family farms, has already been signed. And this interesting initiative in the field of industrial cooperation may have an impressive result.

Speaking about the development of cooperation between Belarus and Brazil in the field of education, we would like to recall that the Agreement on Cooperation in this area was signed in August 2015. However, even earlier, Belarusian universities started developing ties with Brazilian partners. For example, Belarusian State University (BSU) adopted relevant documents on cooperation with the universities of Brasilia (2012) and Uberlandia (2014). In 2015, the Belarusian State Agricultural Academy signed a Cooperation Agreement with the same University of Uberlandia. In 2020, the Memorandum of Cooperation was adopted by P.M. Masherov Vitebsk State University and the Federal University of the State of Paraná.

In 2023, the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), which was founded in 1927 and today ranks 10th in the rating of the best

¹⁸⁶ Belarus plans to help Brazil create its new tractor [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-pomoch-brazilii-sozdat-svoji-narodnyi-tractor-564487-2023/>

¹⁸⁷ Belarus and Brazil agreed on the construction of two plants for the assembly of MTZ tractors [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-brazilija-dogovorilis-o-stroitelstve-dvuh-zavodov-po-sborke-tractorov-ntz-555498-2023/>

universities in Latin America, joined the partnership with Belarusian universities. More than 40 thousand students study there and more than three thousand teachers work there. The structure of the university includes 20 academic departments and 25 libraries. In September of this year BSU and FUMJ signed a memorandum that envisages educational and scientific interaction, development of academic mobility, as well as "the parties plan to cooperate in the preparation of joint educational programs, publications, implementation of research projects, to hold conferences, seminars, workshops, <...> exchange students and teachers, educational and scientific materials"¹⁸⁸ .

In September 2023, the partners of the Brazilian university also included the Belarusian State Economic University (BSEU) and the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics (BSUIR), which adopted respective memorandums with AHIF, which became the first step towards fruitful Belarusian-Brazilian cooperation in this area. In particular, BSEU and AHIF have already identified specific areas of partnership. First, "the focus is on teaching Portuguese for Belarusian students and Russian for Brazilian students"¹⁸⁹ . Secondly, it is the creation of joint programs in English in the specialty "World Economy". In addition, the Center for Latin American Studies has already been "established and is successfully functioning at the Faculty of International Business Communications of BSEU, where joint projects are conducted by scientists from both universities. A center for the study of the

¹⁸⁸ Memorandum of Understanding signed between BSU and the Federal University of Minas Gerais in Brazil [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-podpisan-mezhdu-bgu-i-federalnym-universitetom-minas-zherajs-v-brazilii-588360-2023/>

¹⁸⁹ Memorandum of Understanding signed between BSEU and Brazilian Federal University of Minas Gerais [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-podpisan-mezhdu-bgeu-i-brazilskim-federalnym-universitetom-minas-zherajs-588101-2023/>

Portuguese language will also be developed¹⁹⁰. All these joint projects, which are interesting for both sides and are already being implemented in the near future, will certainly serve to bring the two peoples - Belarusian and Brazilian - closer together. A rapprochement that will only deepen.

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¹⁹⁰ Rector of the Brazilian university: cooperation in education will serve to bring our countries closer together [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/rektor-brazil'skogo-universiteta-sotrudnichestvo-v-obrazovanii-posluzhit-sblizheniju-nashih-stran-588136-2023/>

The Commission resumes its work

In October 2023, Minsk hosted the third meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, which discussed the current state of interaction between Minsk and Managua and outlined further steps to expand bilateral partnerships. In particular, they considered opportunities and prospects "in the field of housing and industrial construction, building up bilateral trade, cooperation in the spheres of investment, food, light industry, pharmaceuticals, culture, strengthening business contacts between the two countries, establishing ties between the capital authorities of Belarus and Nicaragua"¹⁹¹.

The first two meetings of the commission were held in September 2014 in Minsk and in September 2015 in Managua. During this period, Belarusian exports were based on agricultural machinery and components, "horticultural and forestry equipment, parts for internal combustion engines, and bearings. In the commodity structure of imports, the largest specific weight was occupied by supplies of bananas, coffee and strong alcoholic beverages"¹⁹². And in May 2023, the parties stated that they aimed to seriously intensify trade, economic and humanitarian ties in order to constantly fill them with new projects and cooperation programs. At the same time, a number of important bilateral documents were signed in Minsk: A general agreement between the governments of Belarus and Nicaragua on the provision of export credits; a basic agreement on the supply of Belarusian machinery to the Nicaraguan market; and "an agreement on cooperation in education, which will provide a legal basis

¹⁹¹ About the meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan joint commission on trade and economic cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/b2665dfb1e8ad9b4.html

¹⁹² Trade and economic relations between the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Nicaragua [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://cuba.mfa.gov.by/ru/bilateral_relations/N/trade/

for interaction between the parties and the establishment of working contacts between educational institutions of the two countries"¹⁹³. In June 2023, the parties discussed the possibilities of cooperation in agriculture and agreed to work out the prospects of organizing cooperation in such areas as "exchange of genetic material of agricultural crops, livestock breeding, internships for scientists and specialists, training of Nicaraguan specialists in master's and postgraduate studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus"¹⁹⁴.

In July 2023, a Belarusian delegation headed by Foreign Minister S. Aleinik visited Nicaragua to discuss at the highest and highest levels "investment projects, contracts for the supply of Belarusian machinery, prospects for Belarus' participation in major infrastructure projects in Nicaragua, cooperation in agriculture, logistics and opportunities to use port infrastructure, credit and finance, and options for joint work in the markets of Latin America."¹⁹⁵. Following the visit, Belarus and Nicaragua adopted another package of bilateral agreements and contracts. In particular, they signed intergovernmental agreements on mutual visa abolition and on the resumption of the work of the joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, as well as approved the Roadmap of Cooperation in Agriculture. In addition, MTZ signed a framework contract to supply products of the Belarusian plant to Nicaragua for a two-year period. <...> MAZ and the mayor's office of Managua also signed a contract for the supply of Belarusian machinery. An agreement was

¹⁹³ Zalesky, B.L. When partners have respect, trust and friendship / B.L. Zalesky // Materiały XX Międzynarodowej naukowo-praktycznej konferencji, "Aktualne problemy nowoczesnych nauk - 2023". Volume 1. Przemysł: Nauka i studia. - C. 41.

¹⁹⁴ Belarus and Nicaragua discussed areas of cooperation in agriculture [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-nikaragua-obsudili-napravlenija-sotrudnichestva-v-selskom-hozjaistve-573073-2023/>

¹⁹⁵ The Belarusian delegation held extended negotiations with the economic bloc of the Nicaraguan government [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/beloruskaja-delegatsija-provela-rasshirennye-peregovory-s-ekonomicheskim-blokom-pravitelstva-nikaragua-577785-2023/>

reached to supply 236 units of AMKODOR machinery for the construction industry and municipal services in Nicaragua"¹⁹⁶. In the field of culture, the Bolshoi Theater of Belarus, the Ruben Dario National Theater, and the Nicaraguan cultural foundation Incanto signed a memorandum of cooperation.

During the 3rd meeting of the joint commission, the Belarusian side emphasized that it considers Nicaragua an important political, trade and economic partner in the Latin American region and a reliable ally in the international arena. As for the supply of Belarusian machinery to the Nicaraguan market, further steps have already been outlined. The products of Minsk Automobile Plant, Amkodor, Minsk Tractor Plant and other giants of the national industry will be in demand in the Latin American country "when implementing ambitious infrastructure projects planned by the current government. There are serious developments in the agricultural sector, in particular, the application of Belarusian agricultural technologies in Nicaragua"¹⁹⁷.

Note that Nicaraguan land is very fertile. But only less than half of it is cultivated. "That is, 50% of the fertile land is not cultivated because there is not enough machinery and not enough people. The government of the country <...> is moving in the right direction. They have built 4,000 kilometers of roads"¹⁹⁸. In this regard, the Nicaraguan side expressed interest in organizing the supply of a large batch of machinery of the Ministry of Industry of Belarus for various purposes - road-building,

¹⁹⁶. About the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus S. Aleinik to Nicaragua. Aleinik's visit to Nicaragua [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/a423b01505b9ac36.html

¹⁹⁷ Transcript of the approach to the press of Deputy Minister E. Shestakov following the meeting of the Belarusian-Nicaraguan Joint Commission (October 4, 2023, Minsk) [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: https://www.mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/ab8c63a09ebb1fec.html

¹⁹⁸ Dried milk to Cuba and machinery to Nicaragua. The Ambassador told about the directions of Belarusian exports [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/suhoe-moloko-na-kubu-i-tehnika-v-nicaragua-posol-rasskazal-o-napravlenijah-belorusskogo-eksporta-579482-2023/>

agricultural, passenger - "for municipal needs, as well as for the implementation of large infrastructure, transport and logistics projects"¹⁹⁹. As a result of the negotiations, the parties agreed to form a list of necessary types of equipment for the preparation of commercial offers and delivery terms. On the whole, the successful implementation of the agreements will bring the relations between Belarus and Nicaragua to a new, higher level of development.

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¹⁹⁹ Rogozhnik discussed with the delegation of Nicaragua the issues of intensification of supplies of Belarusian equipment [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/rogozhnik-s-delegatsiej-nikaragua-obsudil-voprosy-intensifikatsii-postavok-belorusskoj-tehniki-591732-2023/>

The comprehensive program shapes electric transport market trends

In June 2023, Minsk hosted the fourth exhibition "Electric Transport Day", which was attended by more than 30 organizations - industrial enterprises, scientific organizations and companies-importers of electric vehicles. This exhibition forum presented passenger and cargo electric transport, the latest models of Belarusian electric buses, components of the element base for electric vehicles. "Among the novelties were the MAZ electric bus, the first Volat electric bus of the Minsk Wheel Tractor Plant, a multifunctional city electric truck of the National Academy of Sciences, a new model of the AMKODOR electric loader"²⁰⁰.

It should be noted that this exhibition overlaps very organically with the global trends and development tendencies of the Belarusian market. After all, according to the International Energy Agency, more than ten million electric cars will be sold in the world in 2022, which is 55 percent more than in 2021. "This was facilitated by the global trend towards decarbonization, the refusal of major car companies to produce cars with internal combustion engines. <...> As a result, the total number of electric vehicles in the world exceeded 26 million units"²⁰¹. In 2023, the positive dynamics will continue. At the same time, the share of new electric vehicles in the market will reach 18 percent (in 2020 there were only 4 percent).

²⁰⁰ More than 30 organizations will take part in the exhibition "Day of electric transport" in Minsk on June 9 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bole-30-organizatsij-primut-uchastie-v-vystavke-den-elektrotransporta-v-minske-9-ijunia-569850-2023/>

²⁰¹ Electricity consumption by charging stations for electric vehicles in Belarus has increased by more than a third [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/elektropotreblenie-zariadnymi-stantsijami-dlja-elektrotransporta-v-belarusi-vvroslo-bole-chem-na-tret-569857-2023/>

As for the Republic of Belarus, our country also has all the conditions for the development of the electric car market today. And this year, this trend is already much stronger on Belarusian roads. "First of all, it is most noticeable for commercial vehicles. A lot of electric cars are appearing in cabs, carsharing and commercial transportation. <...> One of the trends is the growth of deliveries from the leading country of electric vehicle technologies - China"²⁰². It should be reminded that the first Chinese electric cars Geely Geometry C were brought to BELJI two years ago to get experience of use in Belarus and to show the new cars to the buyers. By today, 150 of them have already been sold. "As for the domestic electric car, the work is now being done jointly with the Academy of Sciences. We [BELJI CJSC] handed over a sample of one of the most popular Coolray models to the NAS to work out the possibility of creating an electric car on the basis of another car"²⁰³.

By the way, the capacity of the passenger car market in Belarus is estimated at 50 thousand cars per year. Electric cars could occupy a fourth part of this volume, if their price was below ten thousand dollars. So far, the Geometry C model costs more than 90 thousand Belarusian rubles. So today, it seems that the key directions in electric transportation for the company "BELJI" will be to provide the market with more budget models and the development of service. In particular, in 2023, a new Geely model - Geometry E - will be on sale, which is a car of a more budget segment. On the topic of domestic electric car in June 2023, the Ministry of Industry of Belarus also spoke out, emphasizing that it will be ready to present and

²⁰² By the end of the year about 200 filling stations of Belorusneft will be modified for charging Chinese electric cars [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/do-kontsa-goda-okolo-200-eks-belorusnefti-modifitsirujut-dlja-zarjadki-kitajskih-elektromobilej-569935-2023/>

²⁰³ Svidersky: Belarus has all the conditions for the development of the electric car market [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/sviderskij-v-belarusi-est-vse-uslovija-dlja-razvitiia-rvka-elektromobilej-569868-2023/>

show its own development very soon, so that "the model of domestic electric car will be ready this year"²⁰⁴ .

Continuing the topic of electric cars of Chinese manufacturers in Belarus, we note another interesting fact: by the end of 2023, about 200 charging stations of Belorusneft will be modified for these cars, or almost 30% of all charging stations in the country. Meanwhile, at the beginning of summer, 16 charging stations with the ability to charge Chinese electric cars have already been put into operation. Speaking in general, the power consumption by charging stations for electric vehicles in Belarus has increased by more than a third in 2022. A network of charging stations has already been "formed, there are about 700 of them in total. By this indicator Belarus is a leader in the CIS"²⁰⁵ . In 2024, 105 more stations will be added.

By the way, in May 2023, the charging infrastructure of our country was recognized as a leader at the international environmental competition "Green Eurasia" among the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union, where it was noted that the Belarusian superfast charging complex implemented "all modern trends in electric vehicle technology. This is a system of electric energy storage, a pantograph for electric buses, and there is also a possibility for an electric car to charge in 10 minutes for 300 kilometers"²⁰⁶ . By 2025 these super-fast complexes will appear in Belarusian regional cities and on the highway M1 - Brest - Russian border, and by the end of 2030 they will be installed 85 throughout Belarus. In the

²⁰⁴ Ministry of Industry: soon we will present a prototype of domestic electric car [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/minprom-skoro-predstavim-opvtnvi-obrazets-otechestvennogo-elektromobilija-571013-2023/>

²⁰⁵ Electricity consumption by charging stations for electric vehicles in Belarus has increased by more than a third [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/elektropotreblenie-zariadnyimi-stantsijami-dlja-elektrotransporta-v-belarusi-vvroslo-bolee-chem-na-tret-569857-2023/>

²⁰⁶ 85 superfast charging complexes for electric cars will be installed in Belarus by the end of 2030 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-belarusi-dokontsa-2030-goda-ustanoviat-85-superbystrykh-zariadnykh-kompleksov-dlja-elektrokarov-569933-2023/>

meantime, in 2024 "15 modern superfast charging complexes will be built"²⁰⁷ .

Another interesting issue in the context of this topic concerns the creation of components for electric vehicles. After all, Belarus is already ready to localize these components. These are power motors, which Mogilevliftmash produces in sufficient quantities as needed. These are also control electronics, which are produced by Izmeritel plant in Vitebsk. As for the batteries, "the Academy of Sciences has three enterprises that compose battery systems. <...> Now we see a more promising direction - sodium ion batteries"²⁰⁸ . In Belarus, prototypes are already being made in laboratory conditions. And China expects to produce an electric car with sodium-ion batteries by the end of 2023.

All these facts show that the implementation of a comprehensive program for the development of electric transport already contributes to the creation of a new sector of machine building in Belarus - electric vehicle construction, as well as the formation of a system of scientific support for the whole range of economic, environmental and social issues in this innovative area.

²⁰⁷ There will be more than 700 electric charging stations in Belarus by the end of the year, 105 more will be added in 2024 [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/v-belarusi-k-kontsu-goda-budet-bolee-700-elektrozaryadnyh-stantsij-v-2024-m-dobavitsja-esche-105-571025-2023/>

²⁰⁸ Chizhik: in Belarus they create components for electric transport and are ready for their localization [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/chizhik-v-belarusi-sozdajut-komponenty-dlja-elektrotransporta-i-gotovy-k-ih-lokalizatsii-569937-2023/>

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