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Integration in the framework of the Union State as the strategy for enhancing Russia and Belarus' security



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July 3–5, 2013 the Vologda Oblast hosted the 9th Session of the InterAcademy Council (IAC) of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. A number of roundtable discussions and a research-to-practice conference were held in the framework of the Session, which focused on

integration processes in various spheres of both countries as the basis for maintaining security of the Union State.

The region's guests visited the cities of Vologda and Cherepovets, Kirillovsky District, they also visited industrial enterprises (OAO Severstal, JSC PhosAgro, OAO Cherepovets

Casting and Mechanical Plant, JSC Vologda Optical and Mechanical Plant (VOMZ), LLC Optimech, LLC Aleksandra Plus), social institutions (cultural and recreational centre "Zabota", youth centre "GOR.COM 35"), educational and research institutions (Cherepovets State University, Institute of Socio-Economic Development of Territories of RAS).

In the run-up to the InterAcademy Council's major activities, the session of the young scientists' section was held for the first time with the participation of young researchers from Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan (July 2, 2013). They discussed the issues of trade-economic and innovation cooperation, food security, socio-humanitarian development. According to IAC members, these annual meetings will contribute to the establishment of scientific cooperation between scientists from all the countries participating in integration associations like the Customs Union, Common Economic Space (CES), Eurasian Economic Union. Such meetings will also enhance their science and technology potential in the long term.

In the course of the 9th Session of the InterAcademy Council, its participants expressed their agreement with the position of MAC Co-Chairman, Deputy State Secretary, member of the Permanent Committee of the Union State A.A. Kubrin. He pointed out that under the ongoing reorganization of science in Russia and Belarus it is crucially important to maintain and develop horizontal and interdisciplinary cooperation between research organizations and scientists, to enhance the potential of fundamental science on this basis. An important task consists in the enhancement of innovation component of research by means of direct interaction with economic entities, interaction between regions, also with coordinating support provided by management bodies of the Union State. In this connection, it is advisable to create an information database,

which includes a list of promising projects to be implemented in the Union State and CIS, as well as innovation solutions for interregional cooperation.

The establishment of an international innovation centre with the participation of CES countries, Ukraine, and other CIS countries is another promising project. It requires that all the member states should unanimously agree that the right of ownership of R&D results should belong to the author of the R&D product rather than its customer. Furthermore, it is necessary to adopt legal documents on the property of the Union State, to develop a long-term industrial policy of the Union State and the strategy of its implementation. For enhancing the role of IAC in solving these issues, it is advisable to create working groups within IAC on sectoral basis with the participation of specialists from the two academies.

The InterAcademy Council backed up the decision of the Permanent Committee of the Union State concerning the elaboration and adoption in 2013 of a long-term target programme of the Union State on the development of flax industry of Belarus and Russia, considering this area of cooperation to be the most important issue of integration and economic security.

The InterAcademy Council expressed its solidarity with the opinion of IAC Co-Chairman P.A. Vityaz about the necessity of developing the Union State on the basis of science and technology development process, the elaboration of coordinated industrial policy on its basis, and its implementation by means of joint programmes and projects of the Union State. This will eliminate unnecessary competition within integration associations; it will also enhance the role of scientists in the elaboration of an efficient competition policy of the Union State in the world market. It requires active participation of the legislative bodies of the Union State in the establishment of an efficient legal base for its functioning, in

particular, finding legal solution to such issues as co-financing of joint programmes and projects, securing property rights to objects created in the course of their implementation. Belarusian and Russian scientific community, in turn, should provide legislators with appropriate methodological support.

InterAcademy Council members approved the experience of the Vologda Oblast in attracting young employees to the oblast's government, enterprises (JSC VOMZ) and educational institutions (ISED T RAS Science and Education Centre) and recommended it to be generally used in the regions of Russia and Belarus.

The InterAcademy Council also supported the initiatives concerning the elaboration and implementation of joint programmes on the development of potato and Jerusalem artichoke production, agricultural machinery, and the conclusion of an agreement between the NAS of Belarus and the Department of Science of the Vologda Oblast Government on the scientific support of rape cultivation in the Vologda Oblast.

The InterAcademy Council agreed with Corresponding Member R.S. Grinberg that the Union State is the consolidating core of the post-Soviet states, its most advanced form. Therefore, it is possible and necessary to work out a programme (strategy) for overcoming the "primitivization" of member-states' economies in the framework of the Union State, taking into account the experience of JSC VOMZ, OAO Severstal and other high-tech enterprises of the Vologda Oblast and many Belarusian enterprises.

This problem is especially relevant in the conditions of accession of Russia and other CES countries to the WTO. The InterAcademy Council can serve as an expert platform in the elaboration of the Programme. Related research institutes are able to assist in identifying the competitive advantages of countries, regions

and sectors, to determine the instruments of their realization in the world market.

IAC members backed the proposal of the Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus on Education, Culture and Science, member of the Commission for Social Policy, Science, Culture and Humanitarian Issues of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union State A.I. Segodnik about the necessity of elaborating the Concept of the Union State Development under the formation of new integration associations. IAC should provide a legal basis for funding IAC activities in order to solve this task and support the ongoing organizational and research activities.

IAC members agreed with the standpoint of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and Russia, expressed in the recommendations of the 31st session of the permanent workshop "Scientific potential of Belarus and Russia in the field of fundamental and applied research as an important component of innovation development of the Union State" in general, and with the following proposals in particular:

- introduction of amendments to the development and implementation of the Union State programmes, that envisage a streamlined procedure of their consideration and approval, with IAC participation;
- impetus to the development of a draft list of the Union State programmes taking into account main spheres of fundamental and applied research, and to its adoption in the established order;
- organization of a contest among young scientists of the Union State in the framework of the Union State;
- establishment of the Union State prize for outstanding achievements gained during the implementation of R&D programmes of the Union State, joint integration R&D and innovation projects.

The InterAcademy Council session considered the issues connected with the activity of the Council, determination of its role in the development of the Union State, financing of research projects.

The InterAcademy Council expressed its sincere gratitude to IAC Co-Chairman, Academician A.D. Nekipelov, who has been working for the benefit of its effective operation for many years, promoting inter-academy relations between RAS and the NAS of Belarus, handling topical issues of R&D cooperation between Russia and Belarus, and facilitating the Union State construction.

According to the results of the round table "Innovation development as a factor in enhancing competitiveness of the territory", held at JSC VOMZ on 3 July 2013, inter-Academy Council members noted the expansion of cooperation between Belarus and the Vologda Oblast, including in the framework of the Agreement on trade-economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Vologda Oblast Government (dated 20 September 2006) and the Programme on the development of cooperation for 2011–2013 (dated 8 September 2008).

The Council also highlighted the efficiency of establishing long-term cooperative links between economic entities on the development and adoption of innovation products, such cooperation has been established between the Vologda Optical and Mechanical Plant and JSC Planar (Republic of Belarus). This cooperation resulted in the production of a new range of thermal imaging devices that are in demand in the domestic and world markets. In this regard it is advisable to streamline the development and adoption of "Thermal imager", the joint R&D programme of the Union State.

The roundtable participants pointed out that consolidating the efforts of the Vologda Oblast enterprises, such as LLC Optimech, LLC Aleksandra Plus, and organizations of

the NAS of Belarus in the production of power ultrasonic devices for the decontamination of nuclear power stations' solid waste and in the production of equipment for water and fluids purification could be very profitable in the framework of public-private partnership.

At the round table "Research and educational centre as a component of the region's scientific and technological potential development", held at the Institute of Socio-Economic Development of Territories of RAS on 3 July 2013, the participants of the InterAcademy Council Session got acquainted with the experience of the research and educational centre as a system of multilevel training of academic staff. The Academician of NAS of Belarus P.A. Vityaz and other scientists praised the work of the Institute and noted an important role it performs in the issues concerning the integration of fundamental science and education. This experience will be useful both for Belarus and for the regions of Russia and the Union State as a whole.

The International Research-to-Practice Conference "Integration within the Union State as the main tool for the implementation of Russia and Belarus security strategy" (3–4 July 2013) became a major event. The conference was attended by leading scientists of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, scientists from Kazakhstan, Ukraine, representatives of the Permanent Committee of the Union State, Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and Russia, representatives of research and educational institutions, heads and specialists of federal and regional authorities, representatives of business community and social sphere institutions (about 300 people all in all).

The main purpose of this event consisted in the search and substantiation of opportunities for promoting integration within the Union State. According to the participants of the conference, the task can be solved by developing

the cooperation between Belarus and Russia in trade, economic, scientific-innovation and socio-humanitarian spheres.

Opening the plenary session of the conference, the Director of the Institute of Socio-Economic Development of Territories of RAS, Doctor of Economics, Professor **V.A. Ilyin** noted the importance of the forum and expressed gratitude to the Vologda Oblast Government and Vologda City Administration for their support and assistance in organizing this very important event.

The importance of the conference in finding ways for the sustainable socio-economic development of the Union State countries was emphasized in the introductory reports of the heads of the Russia-Belarus InterAcademy Council: the Academician of NAS of Belarus **P.A. Vityaz**, Deputy Governor of the Vologda Oblast **A.V. Kozhevnikov**, Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus on Education, Culture and Science, Member of the Commission for Social Policy, Science, Culture and Humanitarian Issues of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union State **A.I. Segodnik**, and the Director of RAS Institute of Economics, Member of the IAC Expert Advisory Committee, RAS Corresponding Member **R.S. Grinberg**. It was also noted that Belarusian and Russian scientists will continue their cooperation in the spheres of space research, information technology, and medicine.

The central idea of the conference consisted in the search for and substantiation of opportunities for promoting integration within the Union State through further development of cooperation in trade-economic, scientific-innovation and socio-humanitarian spheres, which will enhance the security of Russia and Belarus.

The Chief of Staff of NAS of Belarus, Co-Chairman of the InterAcademy Council of RAS and NASB, Academician **P.A. Vityaz**

noted in his report that at present, a lot of countries experience adverse processes in their economy, which forces their leadership to take radical measures for the development of different spheres of governmental activities. According to the speaker, these measures should be implemented through competent economic and managerial decisions both in Russia and Belarus.

The speaker highlighted the importance of the Union State development and underlined the necessity of promoting further cooperation between Russia and Belarus, of searching for mutually beneficial spheres, for example, military and energy security, of enhancing science-intensive production.

In addition, **P.A. Vityaz** spoke about the main functions of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and joint research of Belarusian and Russian scientists in the fields of space research, information technology, and medicine. As it has been noted, the drafted Union State programmes were elaborated in these spheres; many of the programmes, which are comprehensive and promising for the economy of both countries, should be continued.

In conclusion **P.A. Vityaz** noted that the next step in the development of the Union State should consist in the integration within the CIS countries, which will promote the further growth of economies of the Commonwealth States and their access to world markets.

The report of the Deputy Governor of the Vologda Oblast **A.V. Kozhevnikov** was focused on the issues of the oblast's socio-economic development in the post-crisis period, and on the key directions of objectives and strategies of its economic modernization. The report also highlighted some spheres of cooperation between the Vologda Oblast and Belarus.

Speaking about the geographic position of the Vologda Oblast and Belarus, **A.V. Kozhevnikov** pointed out that the Republic of Belarus is the oblast's key partner. Among the CIS

countries Belarus is the leader by the volume of trade with the Vologda Oblast: the share of the Republic in the volume of trade turnover with the oblast is 54.2%. The Vologda Oblast-Belarus trade turnover amounted to 570 billion US dollars in 2012. Compared with the 2010 level, it increased by 55%.

A.V. Kozhevnikov spoke about the logistics potential of the Vologda Oblast, the present-day condition of its transport system. He paid special attention to the introduction on 24 December 2013 of the flight Cherepovets-Minsk, which promoted cooperation between the Vologda Oblast and Belarus.

Further on, the report highlighted the main indicators of the Vologda Oblast's economic development, which is based on the large metallurgical and chemical enterprises, located in Cherepovets. A.V. Kozhevnikov noted that the economy of the Vologda Oblast is export-oriented; consequently, the region is susceptible to the influence of external markets. This situation needs to be kept under control and its impact has to be handled through innovation economic development.

According to A.V. Kozhevnikov, cooperation with Belarus is carried out within the framework of trade, agreements between the region's major industrial enterprises, the inter-academy and inter-university cooperation, as well as cooperation within various associations. In conclusion A.V. Kozhevnikov considered the main forms of further cooperation between the Vologda Oblast and Belarus including trade fair and exhibition activity, and the establishment of joint ventures.

The Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus on Education, Culture and Science, Member of the Committee for Social Policy, Science, Culture and Humanitarian Issues of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union State **A.I. Segodnik** delivered the report "Cross-border cooperation as a factor in enhancing

security of Belarus and Russia's regions, located at the outer border of the Union State".

The speaker outlined the essence of cross-border cooperation and named its forms, which include trade and economic cooperation, social, scientific, technological, cultural, educational, humanitarian, ecological cooperation, etc.

A.I. Segodnik noted that, on the one hand, cross-border cooperation potential is formed on the basis of similarity of the economies of border areas and expediency of applying joint efforts to handling common issues of socio-economic development of adjacent countries. On the other hand, this potential implies the differences in the quality of economic structures within the frontier zone, which is also a factor in the development of international economic cooperation.

The speaker pointed out that the development of cross-border cooperation between neighbouring states is a priority sphere in dealing with security issues of border regions of the Union State. However, the potential of such cooperation has not yet been used to the full extent in the interests of intensive development and enhancement of security in the border areas of Russia and Belarus.

Director of RAS Institute of Economics, RAS Corresponding Member, Member of the IAC Expert Advisory Committee **R.S. Grinberg** focused mainly on the issues of world economy globalization, economic and political problems of the post-Soviet space, the role of the government in modern economy.

The speaker noted that at present global processes are volatile; they are full of contradictions that need to be resolved. The 2008–2009 crisis was a result of economy deregulation, and nowadays these processes are continuing. R.S. Grinberg quoted Marx, saying that "all great wealth is being transferred to one – two percent of the world's population. Large-scale poverty is spreading, polarization of income is emerging".

At present, the most significant trends in the world economy are as follows: concentration and centralization of capital, the emergence of economic giants and multinational companies; the return of economic cycles; oligopolization of world economy (development of strong regional units), the return of political economy and government's intervention into economic sphere.

R.S. Grinberg spoke about such threats to global community as international terrorism, based on Radical Islam; global warming; the increase of the gap between the rich and poor; degeneration of democratic procedures and the crisis of multiculturalism.

Speaking about the specific problems of the Union State of Russia and Belarus, R.S. Grinberg highlighted, first of all, the primitivization of economic structure, anti-social nature of economy and the underdevelopment of small business and institutional structures.

The Director of the Institute of Philosophy of NAS of Belarus, Ph.D. in Philosophy **A.A. Lazarevich** spoke on the issues of humanitarian cooperation between Belarus and Russia in the context of Eurasian integration policy.

He noted that a distinctive feature of the modern era consists in the fact that its essence can not be characterized by the conditions and regularities of functioning of various socio-economic and socio-political systems, local cultures, internal features of formation and realization of national interests, the specifics of the mental structures of consciousness and behaviour, since all this has been experiencing serious external influence and acquiring the features of universality and interdependence.

According to A.A. Lazarevich, at present, universality and interdependence are inseparably linked to such phenomenon as globalization, which, undoubtedly, is the dominant sign of the modern era. Globalization is the process that has alternatives and options, or it is an inevitable unidirectional and imperative process.

A.A. Lazarevich emphasized that the 21st century will be the century of humanitarian science. The topic of his report, attempting to find solutions to contemporary problems in view of humanitarian science, is devoted to the interaction of Russian and Belarusian humanitarian science, its connection to the issues that should be solved.

The speaker highlighted several groups of issues that, in his opinion, should be focused on within the framework of Russia-Belarus humanitarian cooperation: humanitarian science (the set of modern means of scientific analysis, which could reveal a complex mechanism of Belarusian and Russian societies development); research into the place and function of the national government in the system of regional integration and global policy; the study of characteristic features of the national culture as a joint activity aimed at the development of educational system, worldview, behaviour of the Belarusian and Russian people; the approbation of methods for enhancing innovation culture.

The Rector of the Cherepovets State University Ph.D. in Social Sciences, Associate Professor **D.V. Afanasyev** spoke about the integration of education and science as a factor in innovation development of the territory. He also outlined the promising directions of cooperation between universities, including CSU, and academic institutions.

The major topic of the report was the synergy of education and science as a factor in innovation development of the territory. D.V. Afanasyev presented certain promising spheres of interaction between universities and academic institutions, the main aspects of cooperation between universities and research institutes. He dwelled on the forms of cooperation between CSU and various research institutions: the Institute of Socio-Economic Development of Territories of RAS; RAS Institute of Metallurgy and Materials Science named after A.A. Baykov; RAS Institute of Archaeology; the

Russian Geographical Society; RAS Institute of Geology of Ore Deposits, Petrography, Mineralogy and Geochemistry.

In conclusion, D.V. Afanasyev noted that CSU is currently working on the creation of the centre for collective use of hardware-software computing complex, which will be involved in the processes of mathematical modeling of complex systems.

The Director of the Centre for Strategic Research and System Analysis of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Ph.D. in Economics, Associate Professor **S.M. Dedkov** spoke on the security strategy in the sphere of science and technology in certain countries.

In his opinion, in modern conditions, national security is provided by increasing the scientific-technological component of all its spheres, development of intellectual capital, and a high level of competitiveness. The maintenance of national security in developed countries is based solely on the use of scientific and technological achievements.

The provision of national security in Russia and Belarus is considered in the following spheres:

- political security (security of a certain political system against external and internal threats that provides the realization of national interests in all the spheres of national security);
- economic security (state of the economy, which guarantees the security of national interests from internal and external threats);
- scientific and technological security (state of domestic scientific and technological and education potential, facilitating the realization of national interests in scientific and technological sphere);
- social security (protection of life, health and welfare of citizens, spiritual and moral values of society from internal and external threats);
- demographic security (state of security of society and state from demographic phenomena and trends, the socio-economic

consequences of which have a negative impact on the country's sustainable development);

- information security (protection of balanced interests of an individual, society and state against external and internal threats in information sphere);
- military security (state of protection of national interests against military threats);
- environmental security (state of protection of the environment, life and health of citizens from threats arising as a result of man-made impacts, as well as the factors, processes and phenomena of natural and anthropogenic character).

The report also dwelled upon the issues of interaction between the state and private sectors, and the forms of international cooperation on ensuring security in science and technology sphere.

The Deputy Director of RAS Institute of State and Law, Doctor of Juridical Science, Professor **N.I. Mikhailov** in his report presented the ways to harmonize the legal base of Russia and Belarus in the trade and economic sphere.

At present, there is a need for scientific substantiation and definition of perspective guidelines for the further development of Russia-Belarus interstate economic cooperation, primarily in three main areas – foreign trade, investment and monetary and financial cooperation. The following issues remain most relevant: the completion of the formation of the Russia-Belarus single customs space, handling the issues of cooperation in the spheres of transport, tariff, price and tax policy, the ambiguity of the role of political factors in current economic relations between Russia and Belarus.

N.I. Mikhailov spoke in detail about the positive and problem aspects of Russia-Belarus economic cooperation, he considered the peculiarities of national legislation of the two countries in connection with the establishment of the Customs Union and Russia's accession to the WTO.

The reports were delivered at four sections in the framework of the conference. The sections were attended by about 115 people, and 67 participants made their presentations there.

The participants of *Section 1 “Integration of Russia and Belarus as a basic condition for enhancing economic security”* dwelled upon the following subjects: threats to economic security and ways to overcome them; integration and its importance in enhancing economic security; socio-economic processes in the regions of Russia and Belarus; spheres and forms of trade and economic cooperation between the regions of Russia and Belarus; political and legal aspects of international and interregional relations in trade and economic sphere; opportunities and prospects for facilitating trade and economic cooperation and enhancing its efficiency.

The reports delivered at *Section 2 “Innovation development as a factor in enhancing security and competitiveness of the territories of Russia and Belarus”* disclosed the state and development problems of scientific and innovation potential of the regions; the demand of the government and business in the results of R&D and innovation activities in the regions; the prospects of integration of the regions’ scientific and innovation space; the possibilities and prospects of consolidating the regions’ efforts for the development of knowledge economy infrastructure; the promotion and development of international and interregional academic mobility for improving the regions’ scientific potential.

The topics discussed at *Section 3 “Ways of promoting the security of Russian and Belarusian territories in the socio-demographic sphere”* included socio-demographic processes in Russia and Belarus, threats to the socio-demographic security of the territories; the experience of Russia and Belarus’ regions in enhancing public health and maintaining socio-demographic security; labour potential and safety in the labour sphere of Russia and Belarus.

In the framework of *Section 4 “Humanitarian cooperation for ensuring the security of Russia and Belarus in the sphere of culture and education”* the following issues were discussed: development of social sphere in the regions of Russia and Belarus (education, health and social protection, culture); opportunities and prospects for cooperation on the development of social sphere; the possibilities and prospects for cooperation on the preservation of cultural heritage and development of tourism potential of the regions; the development of information relations between Russia and Belarus.

Following the conference, its participants adopted a resolution. In order to develop harmonized and adequate measures for preventing and handling challenges and threats to the national interests of the member-states, several proposals were submitted to the Union State management bodies. These proposals and recommendations concern the following issues: elaboration of the draft strategy for ensuring the security of the Union State for the period up to 2025–2030; further development of interdepartmental cooperation of Belarus and Russia, consolidation of efforts for ensuring the Union State security in the trade-economic, R&D, socio-demographic, educational, cultural spheres.

The participants of the conference and the InterAcademy Council members agreed that it would be useful to organize annual research-to-practice workshops on the issues of Russia-Belarus integration in trade and economic, research and innovation socio-humanitarian and other spheres, including with the support of the Belarusian Republican Foundation for Fundamental Research, Russian Humanitarian Science Foundation and Russian Foundation for Basic Research.

The round table “Enhancement of competitiveness and security of municipalities” was held in Kirillovsky Municipal District of the Vologda Oblast on 5 July 2013. The participants met with the leadership of

the district administration, discussed the development of the district's tourism potential, expressed a number of suggestions for enhancing the sustainability of the territory's socio-economic development.

During the round table discussion "*Innovation development as a factor in enhancing the competitiveness of the industrial city*", held in the Cherepovets State University on 5 July 2013, the InterAcademy Council members, representatives of the Mayor's Office of Cherepovets, OAO Cherepovets Casting and Mechanical Plant, OAO Severstal, JSC PhosAgro-Cherepovets, Cherepovets State University agreed on a number of joint decisions:

- the usefulness of organizing the InterAcademy Council sessions and research-to-practice conferences in the regions of Russia and Belarus possessing unique resources, experience and initiatives;

- the necessity of further promotion and expansion of cooperation between the academic community, enterprises and regions, the enhancement of practical orientation of conducted R&D on the basis of the orders of the real sector of the economy;

- creation of a joint foresight centre of the Institute of Economics of NAS of Belarus, Grodno State University, Regional Technology Transfer Centre, Cherepovets State University and ISED T RAS.

The InterAcademy Council session on the issues of development of the Union State and the events within its framework showed that the interest of Russia and Belarus in the process of integration, despite all the difficulties, facilitates the efficiency of economic cooperation between the regions, expands their cooperation in research and innovation sphere, creates conditions for enhancing the quality of life and human potential development.