

Protocol
From the XIII meeting of the Norwegian-Russian Governmental Commission on Economic, Industrial and Scientific-Technical Cooperation

The 13th meeting of the Norwegian-Russian Governmental Commission on Economic, Industrial and Scientific-Technical Cooperation was held in Moscow on 8 April 2010.

The Norwegian delegation was headed by Minister of Trade and Industry of Norway Trond Giske.

The Russian delegation was headed by First Deputy Chairman of the Government of The Russian Federation Viktor A. Zubkov.

The Commission meeting took place in a constructive and friendly atmosphere.

The Commission discussed the following issues.

1. Information on the economic situation in Norway and Russia. Status and perspectives for bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

The sides exchanged information on the economic situation in Norway and Russia and anti-recessionary measures undertaken in our countries.

The sides agreed to consider establishing a partnership on modernizing the Russian economy and direct it towards an innovative path of development, for instance in sectors such as technology for development, transportation and processing of petroleum resources, energy efficiency and the use of renewable sources of energy, information technology, telecommunication, fisheries and processing of fish products.

The sides agreed that, despite the negative effects of the global economic and financial crises and on the common trade between the countries in 2009, there has been a further development in the economic and trade cooperation between Norway and Russia.

The sides are confident that the forthcoming state visit of President of The Russian Federation Dmitriy A. Medvedev to Norway 26-27 April 2010, will further strengthen and widen the bilateral relations between Norway and Russia.

The sides agreed to the importance of an approaching conclusion regarding the negotiations on the accession of The Russian Federation to the WTO.

The sides welcomed the results of the consultations on preparing for negotiations on a free trade agreement between Russia and EFTA, and agreed that it is essential that the consultations continue.

The sides agreed to continue the cooperation on border crossing and visa facilitation.

The sides emphasised the importance of developing common rules and standards for health, safety and the environment in the Barents Sea in the framework of Barents 2020 project.

The sides emphasised the importance to resume the regular meetings between experts from the Directorate of Customs and Excise of Norway and the Federal Customs Service of Russia

to discuss matters of mutual interest. The Russian side confirmed its interest in establishing preliminary exchange of customs information between customs authorities of Norway and Russia. The Norwegian side referred to the fact that this issue should be discussed by the customs authorities of the two countries.

The sides stressed the importance to further develop and intensify the cooperation between the Norwegian National Authority for Investigation and Prosecution of Economic and Environmental Crime and the Federal Service for Financial Control of The Russian Federation through the implementation of the existing agreement.

The sides noted with satisfaction the successful development of the mutual activities between the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Police and the Federal Drug Control Service of The Russian Federation within the agreement on the fight against illegal trafficking of drugs, psychotropic drugs and drug precursors.

The sides noted the necessity to further develop the cooperation in the banking sector in order to establish additional prerequisites to increase the bilateral turnover and expand investment cooperation between Norway and Russia.

The Russian OAO Bank VTB confirms its interest in further developing the cooperation with Norwegian financial institutions in the field of conversion transactions and joint activities on international markets of loan capital when the latter is stabilized; in Norwegian banks opening Rouble accounts in OAO Bank VTB to carry out client transactions, and conversion transactions; Norwegian banks taking part in syndicate and obligation loans, attracted by OAO Bank VTB on the international capital markets.

The sides noted the interest of the Russian State Corporation Bank of Development and International Trade (Vneshekonombank) to consider proposals for participation in joint investment and export projects.

On issues concerning the atmospheric emissions from the OAO "Kolskaya GMK", the sides noted that the loan agreement between the Nordic Investment Bank and OAO "Kolskaya GMK" had been cancelled. The modernization project of the "Kolskaya GMK" is being carried out by the plant itself.

The Norwegian side expressed concern for the high level of emissions from the Pechenganikel enterprise. Notwithstanding a reduction of emissions over the last years, Norwegian authorities consider the environmental situation in the border region to be harmful to the environment and health of the population. The Norwegian side pointed to the need for active participation of Russian authorities in solving the issue of emission reduction.

The sides noted with satisfaction the further development of contacts between business societies of Norway and Russia, including the regional level and the enhanced cooperation between the Norwegian-Russian Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of The Russian Federation.

2. Development of the legal foundation for cooperation

In the intersession period the sides have continued working on fulfilling the legal foundation of the bilateral cooperation. The sides note with satisfaction the substantial progress in preparing several bilateral agreements.

The sides intend to sign the following documents during the state visit of President of The Russian Federation, Dmitry A. Medvedev to the Kingdom of Norway April 26-27 April 2010:

- a joint declaration by Prime Minister of Norway and President of The Russian Federation;
- an agreement on cooperation in the field of higher education between the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Education and Research of The Russian Federation;
- a cooperation agreement between the Norwegian meteorological institute and the Ministry of Natural Resources of The Russian Federation on cooperation in the field of hydrometeorology;
- a Memorandum of Understanding on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources between the Norwegian Ministry of Petroleum and Energy and the Ministry of Energy of The Russian Federation;
- an agreement on cooperation between the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Police and the Prosecutor General of The Russian Federation;
- an agreement on cooperation between the Prosecutors General of the Kingdom of Norway and The Russian Federation.

The sides intend to do their utmost to prepare the following documents in the near future:

- an agreement between the governments of Norway and The Russian Federation on simplification the mutual border crossing procedures for Norwegian and Russian citizens living in the border area (the Local Border Traffic Regime);
- an agreement between the governments of Norway and The Russian Federation on the border station Borisoglebsk-Storskog on the Norwegian-Russian border;
- a Memorandum between the Norwegian government and the government of The Russian Federation on educating business managers for The Norwegian and the Russian economies.

The sides confirmed their intention to continue working on the drafts of the intergovernmental agreements on scientific and technical cooperation, non-visa travels for holders of service (official) passports, an intergovernmental agreement on the implementation of projects in accordance with article 6 of the Kyoto Protocol in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change of 11 December 1997 and the additional protocol to the agreement between the Norwegian government and the government of The Russian Federation of on readmission.

The sides noted the starting of the dialogue between the Norwegian Space Agency and RosCosmos on, among other things, the possibility for preparing a bilateral document on cooperation.

3. Sector cooperation

3.1 Energy

The sides noted the importance and confirmed their interest to continue the further development of the strategic partnership in the development of hydrocarbons in the Arctic shelf.

Taking into consideration the interest of the sides of the development of a mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation in the field of electrical power, the Russian side expressed the interest of the company OAO "Inter RAO EES" in exporting electrical power across the Norwegian-Russian border.

The sides think it is of great importance to meet regularly to discuss issues of mutual interest in the oil and gas sector (investment conditions, stimulating factors, business structure, expansion of the common activities, technology development).

The sides note with satisfaction the joint work that has been done in preparing the Memorandum of Understanding on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources between the Norwegian Ministry of Petroleum and Energy and the Ministry of Energy of The Russian Federation, expressing their hope that it would be ready for signing in the near future.

In order to implement the Memorandum of Understanding, the sides will establish a joint Working Group with the participation of representatives from interested institutions and organisations to work out and implement a joint long term program for cooperation and an annual working plan with detailed and concrete information about the activities.

The Russian side expressed the interest of FGUP State Trust Arktikugol in studying the possibilities of participation of Norwegian coal mining companies in developing the Grumant coal deposits on the Svalbard Archipelago.

3.2 Transport

The sides positively assessed the cooperation between the maritime administrations within the framework of the International Maritime Organisation and the Helsinki Commission, as well as on a bilateral basis in securing safe navigation, establishing a Norwegian-Russian information system for ship traffic monitoring and control, search and rescue of people suffering accidents at sea, prevention and cleaning of oil spills in the Norwegian and Barents Seas, and expressed their interest in developing the cooperation.

The Russian side proposed to carry out information exchange on the development of passenger and goods traffic across the Norwegian-Russian Border.

The Russian side proposed the participation of Norwegian financial institutions in state-private partnership for financing building and upgrading of roads in The Russian Federation. The Norwegian side agreed to study the proposal and requested further details about the proposals.

The Russian side again expressed its continued interest in obtaining a permit for the use of helicopters of the Russian State Trust Arktikugol in the Svalbard Archipelago in accordance

with the application submitted to the Norwegian Aviation Authorities, without limitations, which, as the Russian side believes, are not in accordance with the Svalbard Treaty of 1920. The Norwegian side made reference to the meeting 10 February 2010 between the legal departments of the two countries' Ministries of Foreign Affairs, in which the Norwegian side made a thorough explanation of the regulations concerning the use of helicopters on the Svalbard Archipelago. There is nothing in these regulations, or in the way they are practiced, that are in contradiction with the Treaty of 1920.

The Russian believes that this issue needs to be discussed further.

The Norwegian side expressed its continued interest in obtaining a permit for North Atlantic Cargo for flights to Japan and China over the Trans-Siberian route. The sides agreed to continue discussions on this topic during consultations between aviation authorities of Norway and Russia, in accordance with the agreement on air transport between Norway and the Soviet Union of 31 March 1956.

The sides positively assessed the realisation of joint projects within the transport routes "Northern Maritime Corridor" and "Northern Sea Route".

Noting an increasing interest in and the widening of access to the Arctic oceans, the sides underlined the importance of taking actions in protecting the Arctic Sea Region from damage to the ecosystem, and securing a sustainable use of marine resources.

The sides are satisfied to observe the high level of cooperation between the Norwegian Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs and the Ministry of Industry and Trade of The Russian Federation on radio-navigation issues, including matters of setting up a joint radio navigation service in the Barents Sea using the Russian station "Chayka" and the Norwegian system "Loran-C", which is stated in the bilateral agreement of 1995.

3.3 Fisheries

The sides noted the successful joint activities in the field of fisheries within the framework of the Joint Norwegian-Russian Fisheries Commission.

The sides emphasised the importance of continuing the cooperation on estimating the volume of cod and haddock caught in the Barents and Norwegian Seas using the approved methodology of analyzing information from satellite tracking and information on the transportation and unloading of fish products from cod and haddock, and the comparison of information on violation of the regulations for the fisheries by certain ships in order to find the reasons for the violations and avoid it to happen again in the future.

Having assessed the decision on settling the minimum mesh width of demersal trawls as positive, the sides focused on the importance of as soon as possible adopt unified measures to regulate Norway's and Russia's joint resources in the entire area of their habitat, including decisions on unified minimum catch size and transparency in the criteria on the opening and closing of fishing areas.

The sides agreed to continue making efforts in expanding the investment cooperation within the fish industries, and agreed to encourage such cooperation between Norwegian and Russian companies.

The sides noted that it is necessary to pursue the relationship between the Norwegian Food Safety Authority and the Federal Veterinary and Phytosanitary Authority of Russia on the control of seafood products within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding regarding food safety of imported and exported fishery and aquaculture products.

The sides agreed to continue the trade in fish and fish products based on stable and predictable conditions.

3.4. Cooperation in the field of Information Technology and Innovation

The sides with satisfaction noted the constructive nature of the activities of the Norwegian-Russian Working Group on Information Technology and Innovation, and the intension to organize a bilateral seminar on related issues during the first six months of 2010.

The sides highly assess the cooperation on innovation, in particular the positive practice of the innovation centres in Murmansk and Arkhangelsk.

3.5. Shipbuilding cooperation

The sides emphasize the significance of the cooperation in the field of shipbuilding and in this connection note with particular satisfaction the start-up of the work in the Working Group on Shipbuilding which focuses its activity towards issues like design and the building of ships, including fishing vessels, and maritime equipment for northern latitude, education of specialists for the shipbuilding and other industries and innovation in the shipbuilding industry.

The sides welcome the agreement on having the next meeting in the Working Group in April 2010, in Norway.

3.6 Tourism

For further strengthening of cooperation in the tourist sphere between Norway and Russia the sides agreed to continue the joint activities to promote tourist products, among other within the framework of the Working Group on Tourism.

The sides agreed that the participation in tourist fairs will contribute to the active promotion for the possibilities of the Norwegian and Russian tourism sector on the tourist market of the two countries, and to the making of closer contacts with leading representatives of the tourist community.

4. Interregional cooperation

The sides noted the positive dynamics in the development of Norwegian-Russian interregional cooperation and in this connection welcome the resuming of the activities of the Working Group on interregional and border cooperation.

The sides informed about the necessity that the authorities of the two countries actively coordinate contacts between organisations, representing the interest of the indigenous peoples of the Northern regions.

The sides confirmed their interest in taking part in the implementation of the Programme for border cooperation "Kolarctic" in order to activate cross-border cooperation between the

participating countries, and increase their socioeconomic potential. The sides agreed to continue the cooperation on these issues.

The Norwegian side informed about the establishing of a Centre of High North Logistics in Kirkenes. The centre is a knowledge hub for developing business activity in the north and cooperates with Norwegian and Russian business and academic environments.

5. Time and place for the 14th meeting of the Commission

The sides agreed to continue the existing practice of holding bilateral meetings and consultations in the period between sessions.

The sides agreed to hold the 14th meeting of the Norwegian-Russian Governmental Commission on Economic, Industrial and Scientific-Technical cooperation in Norway in 2011. The agenda and time for the meeting will be agreed through diplomatic channels.

Signed on 8 April 2010 in Moscow in two copies, in the English and Russian languages. Both copies are equally valid.

Chairman of the Norwegian side of the
Norwegian-Russian Governmental
Commission



Trond Giske

Chairman of the Russian side of the Russian-
Norwegian Governmental Commission



Viktor Zubkov