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REVIEW: IMPORTING GOODS TO RUSSIA

Having developed considerably over the last few years, Russian customs legislation currently consists of the Customs Code (which came into force on Jan. 1, 2004), the Russian Law "On Customs Tariff," other federal laws, resolutions of the Russian government and many other regulations. Changes in Russian customs legislation are aimed at bringing the system into conformity with international principals and standards and making customs regulation transparent and predictable for importers/exporters.



Nevertheless, implementation of customs rules in practice may be connected with the difficulties which may arise for companies beginning foreign trade activities as well as with companies having sufficient experience in import/export operations. It should be also noted that customs risks connected with non-compliance with the Russian customs legislation are quite broad – both direct (e.g. collection of customs duties and taxes payable, including penalties for late payment, administrative fines and/or confiscation of goods with the subsequent possibility of sale by administrative order, etc.) and indirect (e.g. additional transportation expenses due to delayed customs clearance, breach of

contractual terms, reputation risks, etc.).

Considering the above, a company which will be involved in regular import operations, for risk management purposes, should track changes in the customs sphere constantly. This requires much effort and not only legal but also specific knowledge of customs regulations and practical experience in applying customs' rules.

Below are some general issues on customs clearance of goods imported to Russia, particularly:

1. General issues on customs clearance of imported goods
2. Main customs regimes
3. Overview of customs payments

1. GENERAL ISSUES ON CUSTOMS CLEARANCE OF IMPORTED GOODS

All goods transferred through the Russian customs border are subject to customs clearance with their declaration under one of the customs

regimes envisaged by the Russian customs legislation.

The customs clearance of goods shall be supported by preparing and filing a relevant customs declaration. The declaration of goods may be performed by the declarant acting alone or by using the services of a Russian customs broker. The declarant of the imported goods is responsible for making customs payments and meeting other necessary requirements. The RF Customs Code establishes special requirements regarding the entities that may act as a declarant.

Generally only a Russian entity, which concluded the transaction under which the goods are imported into Russia, may be the declarant. At the same time, in theory a foreign legal entity (i.e. its representative office or branch duly registered in Russia) is entitled to declare the goods only if the goods are imported into Russia under a transaction which does not envisage the participation of a Russian entity. However, the following issues may be critical

under this scenario:

- Different approaches applied by local customs authorities to the import of goods via Russian representative offices (RO) or branches of a foreign legal entity (FLE)
- Determination of the customs value
- Obtaining relevant permissions/licenses (if required) in the name of the Russian RO/branches of FLE
- Technical issues related to completion of the customs declaration (e.g. OKPO, INN numbers)

Following the provisions of the Russian customs legislation, the importer (declarant) does not have the statutory obligation to be registered with the customs authorities before importation. However, from the practical perspective and based on our experience, the local customs authorities may require from importers submitting, in particular, founding documents and documents confirming their state and tax registration before the importation.

2. MAIN CUSTOMS REGIMES

Considering the purposes of importation of the goods into Russia, goods may be placed under one of the following main customs regimes:

- Release for domestic consumption
- Customs warehouse
- Temporary importation
- Inward processing

Release for Domestic Consumption

This customs regime provides for payment of customs duties and taxes in full as well as observance of all other requirements upon importation of goods (e.g. certification, licensing, etc.). The imported goods acquire the status of being in free circulation in Russia, i.e. exempt

from restrictions imposed by the customs authorities if all the latter payments and requirements are made and observed.



Customs Warehouse

In contrast to release for domestic consumption, the customs regime of customs warehouse does not provide payment of customs duties and taxes. Therefore, in practice this customs regime is beneficial for business scenarios where the customer of goods is not identified at the moment when the goods are delivered to the Russian territory, allowing, in particular, to defer payment of customs duties and taxes.

We believe that the following information on critical issues of application of the customs regime of the customs warehouse might be useful for the purposes of further analysis:

In accordance with the provisions of the Russian Customs Code, the imported goods may be placed under the customs regime of the customs warehouse upon obtaining the permission of the customs authorities. When the goods are placed at the customs warehouse, under general circumstances no security of the customs payments will be required by the Russian customs authorities in relation to such goods

The maximum period of the storage of the goods at the customs warehouse is three years

The goods, stored at the customs warehouse, may be released for free circulation by the Russian customer upon obtaining the status of decla-

rant

There may be a scenario where due to commercial reasons after the goods are sold to the Russian customer, they will continue to be stored at the customs warehouse. Should this be the case, the goods may be sold to the Russian customer upon the submission of preliminary notification to the customs authorities in written form. The Russian customer that obtains the title on the goods should acquire all rights and responsibilities applicable under the provisions of the Customs Code with respect to the customs warehouse regime. This Russian customer may further release goods for free circulation, pay customs payments due and take the goods from the warehouse on the basis of the customs declaration that will be required in order to release the goods.

The owner of the customs warehouse can be a Russian legal entity with a special license.

The Russian government issued a list of goods the placement of which at a customs warehouse is prohibited. This list generally includes such goods as weapons, drugs, and certain chemical substances that might be used for making weapons.

Temporary Importation

A temporary importation regime provides for the use of foreign goods in the Russian customs territory for a certain period of time with full or partial exemption from customs duties and taxes. The list of goods fully exempt from customs clearance is determined by the RF government. With respect to other goods partial exemption should be applied.

Partial exemption involves periodic payments for each full or incomplete month of the goods' stay in Russian customs territory. The rate of periodic payments is 3 percent from the customs payments (customs duty and VAT) which

would be payable if the goods were released in free circulation at the time of placement under the temporary importation regime.

Declaring the goods under a temporary importation regime means its conditional release, and therefore the customs authorities have the right to demand security deposits for the payment of customs duties and VAT upon declaration. The periodic payments are due regardless of the provision of this security. Security may be effected in the form of a bank guarantee, surety/guarantee agreement, cash deposit, pledge of goods or other property of the declarant. Bank guarantees provided as security may be issued only by the banks, credit or insurance organizations included in the Register maintained by the Federal Customs Service of Russia.



Provision of any of the above types of security creates an additional financial burden for the declarant. However, in particular, this requirement does not apply in all cases, and if the customs authorities have grounds to believe that the obligations to comply with the customs regime will be fulfilled, they may waive it.

Temporary importation regime may generally last for two years. At the end of the temporary importation period goods should be taken out of the Russian territory or declared under a different customs regime, for example, release for domestic consumption. Under the latter scenario the importer, besides the outstanding customs payments,

should pay interest on the deferred payment.

Inward Processing

The inward processing customs regime provides for full exemption from import customs duties and taxes levied on the imported goods, provided that the goods produced from previously imported goods (processed products) are exported from the Russian customs territory within a certain period of time, that should not exceed two years from the date of importation of the goods imported for processing. Please note that when the goods are imported under inward processing customs regime, customs fees should be paid and respective permissions/licenses/certificates should be submitted to the customs authorities.

The general conditions for applying the inward processing customs regime are the following:

- the particular operations with the goods fall within the list of processing operations
- the permission for processing is obtained from the customs authorities beforehand. The permission may be obtained by a Russian legal entity. It should be noted, however, that the permission may be provided to any RLE concerned and not only to the entity performing processing operations
- the identification of the imported goods within processed products is possible
- the guarantee covering for the amount of customs duties and taxes levied on the imported goods is provided (if required)

Please note that the Russian Government may prohibit application of the inward processing customs regime with respect to certain imported goods. In this regard, we strongly recommend investigating this issue beforehand.

The inward processing customs regime should be generally finalized by exportation of the processed products without payment of export customs duties. Please, however, note that the processed products may be subject to export restrictions (e.g. permissions of state authorities on export control, license on export, etc.).

3. OVERVIEW OF CUSTOMS PAYMENTS.

According to the current Russian customs legislation importation of goods into Russia entails obligation to pay the following customs payments:

- Customs duty
- VAT
- Excise tax
- Customs clearance fees

Import Duty

The duty rate depends on the classification code of the goods. Goods are classified according to one of 97 groups listed in the Trade Nomenclature of Foreign Economic Activity of the RF (Russian Harmonized System). The classification code of the goods under the Russian Harmonized System should generally match the classification code of the commodity under the International Harmonized System on the level of the first six digits.

Duties are normally expressed as a percentage of the customs value of goods imported, known as "ad valorem" duties. However, they may also be expressed as a set amount per unit or kilogram, i.e. so called "specific duties." Finally, they may be expressed by the greater of any of the two, known as "combined" duties.

Generally five types of "ad valorem" rates of import duties are currently applicable in Russia, such as 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 percent. Cer-

tain imported goods are duty free. In particular, it is important to note that recently the Russian government cancelled import duty rate for about 800 types of technological equipment.

Basic rates of duties are not constant and may vary depending on the country of origin of the goods. Countries are classified into five groups for the purposes of charging import duties:

- Group Duty
 - Favored nations Basic rates of duty apply
 - Developing nations 75 percent of basic rates apply
 - Least developed nations Exempt from import duties
 - CIS countries Exempt from import duties
 - Non-preferred trading nations Double the basic rates
- Goods imported as a contribution

to the charter capital of a Russian company may be exempt from customs duties and import VAT (subject to some conditions). This exemption from customs duties applies to non-excisable fixed assets only.

Excise Duties

Excise duties are levied on a range of imported goods, including wine, beer, spirits, tobacco, light cars and diesel fuel. Imported goods are generally subject to excise at the moment of importation. These duties are generally expressed at a fixed ruble amounts and measured per unit of measurement.

Import VAT

VAT is generally due when goods are imported into Russia. It is calculated on the customs value of goods plus any customs and excise duties.

The rate of VAT depends on the nature of the imported goods. The standard rate of VAT is 18 percent. Certain goods, however, may be subject to VAT at a lower rate, currently 10 percent, or a zero rate.

In addition, certain goods are exempt from import VAT as discussed above. These include technological equipment imported as a contribution to the charter capital of a Russian company.

Customs Clearance Fees

The amount of customs clearance fees of the goods also depends on its customs value. However, the maximum amount of the customs clearance fees shall not exceed RUR 100,000 (approximately \$3,700). ■

CUSTOMS CODE OF RUSSIA: THE RECENT CHANGES

The existing Customs Code of the Russian Federation is a certain achievement in Russian foreign trade activity practice. The Code was worked over by experts of foreign countries, appointed by European Economic Community, aiming at unification of the document in connection with upcoming entry of Russia into World Trade Organization.

So, by the 1st of January 2004, when this law was adopted, the following concepts were considered and implemented for the first time:

Questions, connected with calculation of customs duty, its' payment order and return (customs duty definition is stated in Law on Customs Tariff). The law also stated the definition of internal tax and determined that customs competent authorities have to collect VAT and excise-duty as well as customs duty.

There is no such definition as licensing of nearby customs activity – it is replaced by filling in registry of members of nearby customs activity.

The procedure of filling in Registry is described by the Customs Code and is made by notification. Therefore, all nearby customs institutes (cargo carriers, customs warehouses, brokers, banks, credit and insurance companies, etc.) are protected by customs authorities. Disadvantage of this rule is that customs authorities may exclude members from Registry – with a right to restore only through court.

Customs brokers are allowed to conclude service contracts and act as financial guarantor when paying customs duty in all regions of the Russian Federation.

The law determines documents

and the information necessary for customs registration of goods. In our opinion there are few improper aspects - quality assurance certificates for imported goods do not contain confirmation on validity of certificates approved by International Standards Bureau, where Russia is also a member. In this connection, it's quite illogical to ask for Russian Quality Assurance Certificate on foreign goods before they were placed at the disposal of importer.

Speaking about information on goods - the Customs Code contains its wording with ambiguous interpretation. For instance, paragraph 1 of article 72 and paragraph 1 of article 102

states that missing information on goods should be provided by member of foreign-economic activity with help of other confirming documents which is considered to be quite illogical because of documents and necessary information.



Customs authorities are entitled to seize and arrest goods and documents when conducting special customs inspections. These regulations do not comply with other fields of Russian Law, particularly with the Tax Code. According to article 77 of the last Code seizure and arrest of goods are not allowed without preparation of documents on administrative law violation or initiating proceedings on criminal case. Moreover, article 77 of the Tax Code states that arrest of goods is allowed only on the basis of prosecutor's approval.

In 2 years more than 200 amendments into the Customs Code were elaborated – the majority of them was connected with correction of inaccuracy and deficiencies in Law and also with changes in other fields of Russian Law (Tax Code, Law on Customs Tariff, Law on Currency Regulation).

Starting from 1st of January 2007 the Customs Code includes the following basic and most important regulations:

New forms of customs, transit and customs fees declarations (Order № 724 of Federal Customs Service dated August 3, 2006 «On approval of new form of freight customs and transit declarations») were introduced. The main change is that it became possible to use the unified set of the above stated forms, instead of forms, which existed earlier for transit and declaration procedures. Changes were also introduced into the order of filling in columns for prices and goods description.

Customs fees for import of some vehicles became equal for legal entities and natural persons. These vehicles include special ones used for freight transportation; vehicles used for special purposes, excluding those

for passengers and freight transportation; vehicles used for industrial purposes.

Advance payment, customs fees and deposits to customs authorities should be made only in Russian rubles. The regulations, which allowed choosing currency for customs payment, are suspended.

The description of some kinds of goods in the commodity nomenclature of foreign-economic activity is specified and, according to it, group and position codes were changed.

Besides the aforesaid, the quantity of regions allowing electronic declaring and electronic transfer of confirming data has increased and as a result it expedited the customs registration and goods issue.

In conclusion, it is to be noted that the drawback of the Customs Code is not in its wording, but in overall economic and legislative situation in Russia and it would be expedient to decrease customs. High import duties are the reasons for violation of the procedure established for declaring when specifying prices and quantity of goods. ■

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Aug 16: Russian President Vladimir Putin to attend Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan
- Aug 21-26: MAKS-2007 air show to be held in city of Zhukovsky in Moscow Region
- Aug 23: Nizhny Novgorod to host 8th Russian Banking Forum, until August 24
- Sep 4: EBRD to consider investing 1.042 billion euros in Volkswagen's Russian assembly plant
- Sep 18: EBRD to consider providing 12-year 500 million euro loan to Severstal
- Sep 19: Moscow Arbitration Court to hear Federal Tax Service's suit seeking to transfer RussNeft shares to government
- Dec 2: Elections to State Duma



EU-RUSSIA RELATIONS: OPINIONS AND ANALYSES

EU-RUSSIA RELATIONS AFTER 2007: THE RUSSIAN DEBATE

The absence of strategic objectives is the main issue affecting EU-Russia relations, argues Nadejda Arbatova in a paper for the Institut Français des Relations Internationales (IFRI). Russia has not yet defined its position, neither in the EU strategy on enlargement nor in NATO, she says.

The Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA) that establishes an institutional framework for bilateral contact between the EU and Russia will end in November 2007, and will be automatically extended unless either side withdraws. Both the EU and Russia acknowledge that the agreement is obsolete - the democratic future of Russia and EU stability will depend partly on the new legal basis that will oversee the relationship, the author notes.

While Brussels has criticised Putin's external and internal policies for not respecting the values and principles of the EU-Russia partnership, Russia is concerned about the EU's institutional crisis and the difficulties facing new member states over integrating the European market. EU-Russia relations are characterised by a mutual distrust, the paper suggests. Moreover, both the EU and Russia are currently more involved in their own mutation process than in the future of their relationship.

The paper examines the proposition of the committee 'Russia in the United Europe', a Russian non-governmental organisation that considers three possible scenarios:

The extension of the PCA until either side decides to replace it with a new agreement;

the introduction of amendments that would take into account the current advanced co-operation, ie

current bilateral relations that are not included in the PCA's framework, and the perspectives of UE-Russia relations for the next ten to 15 years until the establishment of an association agreement, and;

the drawing-up of a new agreement to replace the PCA.

The first scenario supposes that both the EU and Russia are not ready to build new relationships, while the third would be the best solution but would be difficult to implement, considering the crisis in relations between Russia and the new member states. Moreover, the second scenario is generally considered as too ambitious, the author argues.

Moscow acknowledges the necessity of a new agreement that would go beyond the PCA - a co-operation partnership represents more than an economic agreement that would benefit both the EU and Russia, the paper concludes. ■



EU-RUSSIA: COLD PEACE?

The EU's relations with Russia should be analysed with regards to the EU's role as a global actor, writes Quentin Perret, from the Robert Shuman Foundation. He points to the US as a key factor in maintaining good relations.

The author explains the causes of the deterioration of the relationship between Russia and the Occident by observing the three global power's external policies and diplomacies. Russian diplomacy is described as

brusque and calculative, American diplomacy as autistic while Europe is characterised as a weak and inflexible diplomacy.

According to the paper, despite the fact that the Cold War is definitively over, the struggle for power between Moscow and the West still exists. American diplomacy towards the Russian government is unchanged - an example of this conflicting relationship is the recent crisis caused by the reciprocal threats between Moscow and Washington concerning the installation of a missile shield in Europe.

Concerning the difficulties that affect EU-Russia relations, the EU itself constitutes a major blockage factor, the author claims. The opacity and complexity of the EU decision-making process, combined with the fact that the EU is not able to speak with one voice, hampers the EU-Russia partnership, according to Perret. Moreover, the EU's internal disputes can only strengthen American policy pre-eminence on security issues in Europe, the paper states.

However, EU-Russia relations are also characterised by positive outcomes in terms of economic partnership, while improvements have been made in the field of free movement of persons and police and judicial co-operation, the author notes.

Therefore, he recommends that institutional dialogue, which is currently hindered both by the lack of dialogue between the EU and the United States and the dispersal of the numerous existing EU-Russia forum, be renewed. The author also asks to "separate the different issues" in order to avoid a reconsideration of the successful areas of co-operation between the EU and Russia. ■



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According to Russian Law, more than 60% of all products to be sold and/or used in the country require mandatory certification/licensing, i.e. they should be approved by relevant Russian authorities in terms of compliance to national standards. This concerns both locally produced and imported goods. Moreover, prior to construction of an industrial or civil site in the Russian territory, a number of approvals are required to undertake engineering, construction and other technical activities.

Below you will find the list of product and activity categories subject to mandatory Russian approval:

- Products, services and tools assuring safety for life and health of consumers (e.g. foodstuff, drugs, textiles, electrical appliances, related equipment etc);
- Alcoholic products and equipment for their production;
- Production sites;
- Technical installations at dangerous production sites (e.g. pressure vessels, lifting and hoisting machines, pumps, equipment for mining, petrochemical, oil & gas, metallurgical and other industries);
- Fire-related products;
- Livestock;
- Products assuring safety for life and health of animals (feed, vaccines etc);
- Pesticides and agrochemicals;
- Products and services containing results of genetic engineering activity;
- Energy-consuming products and energy resources;
- Telecommunication equipment, tools and services;
- Information systems, databases and tools to protect them;
- Transportation units, products and services;
- Aerospace machinery;
- Geodesic, cartographical and topographical products;
- Forestry raw materials;
- Gas and coal;
- Nuclear industry products and technologies;
- Arms.



Russian Standard will help you to obtain on of the following certificates:

- **Sanitary-Epidemiological Conclusion Certificate** (formerly known as Hygienic Certificate) for products in contact with human body;
- **GOST R Declaration of Conformity** for some consumer goods and industrial instrumentation;
- **Certificate of State Product Registration** for new foodstuff and some other goods presenting a potential danger for human beings;



- **GOST R Pattern Approval Certificate** for measuring instruments;
- **GOST R Ex-Proof Certificate** for explosion-proof equipment and materials;
- **Fire Safety Certificate** for flammable or fire extinguishing products;
- **Design Registration at Rostekhnadzor** for hazardous industrial sites
- **VNIIS Exemption Letter** for products that are not subject to mandatory GOST R certification. **Telecom Type Approval Certificate** for telecommunications equipment.

Registration and Certification of medical equipment, devices and materials

As in most countries, in Russia a medical product can be admitted to the domestic market only when and if it has been found in conformity with technical and medical safety regulations pertaining to this particular product.

Assessment of conformity of medical equipment and products to existing safety standards is carried out by the Russian Health Ministry and Federal State Scientific Certification Center for Medical Products. If found in conformity, the product gets entered in the Federal Registry, and the applicant receives the "Registration" license.

Russian Standard Ltd. handles all interaction with the Russian authorities on behalf of the exporter/manufacturer of medical products, makes sure that the submitted dossiers are complete, and the processing is done without delays.

For medical devices and materials, along with the registration, Russian regulations require both GOST-R and Hygienic certification.

We also will help you with NUTRACEUTICALS, when in accordance with the Russian legislation, all food (nutritional, dietary) supplements, also known as biologically active supplements, are subject to mandatory State Registration by the Russian Ministry of Health.

We invite you visit our web site www.rosstandard-europe.com for more information or contact us directly:

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We also invite you to attend IADSA workshop targets supplement market in Russia on 2007-08-10 organized International Alliance of Dietary Supplement-Food Associations (IADSA), where Gregory Temkin, President of Russian Standard Ltd. will explain how to master the regulatory process and avoid pitfalls. For more information about the workshop or to register for the event visit www.iadsa.org or email secretariat@iadsa.be

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CERTIFICATION F.A.Q.:

What is Hygienic Certificate?

Hygienic Certificate is given by specialized Laboratories, accredited in Ministry of Health of , after checking products for poisons, chemical contents and so on. Products, where Hygienic Certificate is necessary, are listed in GOST, - including food, hygienic products, cosmetics and cloths. To get Certificate of Conformity for such products, you will need to get Hygienic Certificate firstly.

For more information please visit www.rosstandard-europe.com

Business News Ticker

Russia's natural gas monopoly Gazprom plans to expand its operations on the French, Dutch, Belgian, Irish and German electric power markets, Gazprom Deputy Chief Executive Alexander Ananenko said at a shareholder meeting. Gazprom started selling power in the U.K. in 2006 and in Germany and France earlier this year. The gas giant also said last year and earlier this year that it was considering buying British power utility Scottish Power and stakes in European power plants.

...

The Russian government plans to draft a blacklist of airlines which do not meet safety standards, Gennady Loshchyonov, deputy director of Russia's Federal Air Transportation Agency, said. The blacklist will include both Russian and foreign air carriers, he added. Russian experts are currently inspecting foreign airlines, and have already found some violations, Loshchyonov said. The government also needs to draft legislation to prepare the blacklist, he said. The legislation might be drafted within one or two months, he added. Last week, the European Commission (E.C.) added 10 Russian air carriers to its airlines blacklist for safety reasons. Of those, the E.C. ruled to prohibit four Russian air carriers from operating in countries of the European Union, and to restrict the operations of six others.

...

Data from June reflected a robust improvement of operating conditions in the Russian service sector, according to London-based VTB Bank Europe's survey of the Russian service sector released. The seasonally adjusted headline Russian Services Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) index rose to 56.9 in June from 56.4 in May, VTB Bank Europe said.

Readings above 50.0 signal an increase on the previous month while readings below 50.0 signal a contraction. Business confidence boosted as the majority of respondents expect robust market demand in the next 12 months. However, the indicator of backlogs slid for the sixth consecutive month showing the sharpest reduction in the survey history. The increase of staff pay and renting prices were among the major reasons for growth of input prices. A further expansion of workforce levels in the Russian service sector was recorded in June, VTB Bank Europe said. Staff recruitment reflected efforts by firms to meet the demands of higher levels of new business at their units and the launch of new projects, the bank said. Average input costs rose at a sharp and accelerated pace in June, which firms generally attributed to increased staff pay, the bank said.

The strongest rate of input cost inflation was recorded in the transport and storage sector, the bank said.

...

Embattled oil firm Russneft looks close to being taken over by a state-friendly company as it faces Kremlin ire over its unsanctioned involvement in the Yukos affair, analysts said. Russneft, headed by billionaire Mikhail Gutseriyev, is due to sell to Kremlin-friendly oligarch Oleg Deripaska for around \$6.5 billion. Analysts were split on whether Deripaska would hold the company for himself or sell it on to a state-run energy firm like Rosneft. Yet all agreed that Russneft, a midsized oil company, would soon fold into another firm. Both the company and Gutseriyev have been targeted with a series of tax claims.

...

A stable political situation following

the September general elections is what it will take to bring Ukraine swiftly into the WTO and finalise an 'enhanced agreement' with the EU, said External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner after a meeting with Foreign Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk in Brussels. The EU on several occasions has urged Ukraine to overcome its internal political crisis, which broke out in April when President Yushchenko called for early elections, which Prime Minister Yanukovich has refused up to now. The two political leaders have been rivals since the 2004 Orange Revolution. Negotiations on a new "enhanced agreement", which would include a free-trade area and increased energy co-operation, were launched on 5 March 2007.

...

Italy, Turkey, and Greece have signed an agreement to build a pipeline to bring natural gas from the Caspian and the Middle East to European markets. The agreement comes after months of negotiations on shipping natural gas from the Caucasus to Western Europe through Turkey and Greece. The pipeline will include a 212-kilometer undersea connector from Greece to Italy, worth an estimated 300 million euros, and should carry some 11 billion cubic meters of gas a year to Greece.



BALTICBUILD EXHIBITION

Russia, St. Petersburg
12-15 September 2007



BalticBuild exhibition, famous earlier as Baltic Building Week and Batimat St.Petersburg, - is the second largest building & construction exhibition in Russia. The new title provides consistency with the other building exhibitions of the ITE Group in Moscow and CIS (MosBuild, KazBuild, Ba-kuBuild etc.).

The event has attracted much praise in recent years: it was twice the winner of the "Best International Project of the Year" (2001, 2002) contest as "The Best St. Petersburg Exhibition with most effective foreign participation".

In 2005 the exhibition was

granted the RUEF (Russian Union of Exhibitions and Fairs) and UFI logos, which are the signs of an exhibition high quality.

BalticBuild is the only exhibition in Russia to promote innovations within the field of building and construction. The 10th edition of the show was marked by a change in focus. Emphasis was placed firmly on the promotion of innovations amongst exhibitors. This new concept not only allows exhibitors to demonstrate recent developments within the field, monitor and analyse the market, but also encourages further development by stimulating companies to discover new creative solutions.

"This large forum has become a great tradition. We are aiming at

making this specialized construction exhibition reflect the development of new technologies, facilitate the establishment and maintenance of the international cooperation and support the advance of the professional level of the construction field workers. The BalticBuild is the great mean to present the trends named."

V.I.Matvienko, the Governor of St.Petersburg:

Dates: 12-15 September 2007

The venue: Exhibition Center Lenexpo, St.Petersburg, Russia
(V.O. Bolshoy pr., 103, metro Primorskaya)

Pavilions: 3, 4, 6, 7 and Outdoor space

GLOBAL BIOMETRICS SUMMIT 2007

Sheraton, Brussels, 18-19 September 2007



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Russian–European Chamber of Commerce serves as a center for assistance and information, keeps members apprised of rapidly evolving government laws and regulations, and organizes meetings for representatives of member businesses.

RusCham is an information center that gives much-needed information and contacts to visiting delegations, fosters co-operation between potential investors and established businesses, and encourages businesses to take advantage of business opportunities in the Russian Federation or Europe.

Also RusCham is enabling business representatives to air their grievances and create a common agenda of needs and concerns, to act as one voice in presenting that agenda to the governments and local business communities enable member businesses to collectively lobby for legislative and regulatory changes.

The Chamber's most important assets are its members. They are our clients, our workforce and our strength. Our mission is to promote the development of commercial relations between the Russian Federation, EU and the international community.

RusCham membership is made up of enterprises and entrepreneurs from the member states of the European Union (EU) and the Russian Federation, which have business activities with and in the Russian Federation, NIS and Europe. These members determine the overall strategy and policies of the organization.

To become a member of RusCham please send an e-mail to membership@ruscham.com or contact us at +421 0907 167 714

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