



Post release

**Moscow**  
**7 April 2017**

### **The VIII Northern Dimension Forum has been held**

The VIII Northern Dimension Forum was held on **6 April 2017** in Saint-Petersburg. More than 200 delegates attended the event. It was chaired by Alexey Mordashov, Chairman of the Board of Directors PAO "Severstal"; Co-Chairman of the Northern Dimension Business Council and Tapio Kuula, Member of the Board, Fortum Corporation; Co-Chairman of the Northern Dimension Business Council.

The aim of the forum was to boost cooperation between the authorities, business and civil society in the participating countries of the Northern Dimension. This year the Northern Dimension Business Council (NDBC) and the Association of European Businesses (AEB), who organised the forum, chose the theme of new technologies and how they shape the life. During the forum, participants discussed the opportunities that can help to economic development of Northern Dimension regions.

At the forum presentations were made by senior representatives of European and Russian ministries and departments, and company executives. They included: Anastasia Kuznetsova, Deputy Plenipotentiary Presidential Envoy in the Northwest Federal District; Andrey Kelin, Director for European Cooperation, Member of the Collegium, Ministry of foreign affairs in Russia; Vygaudas Usackas, EU Ambassador for the Russian Federation; Rolf Böisinger, State Secretary, Ministry of Economy, Transport and Innovation, Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Germany; Johan Vanderplaetse, Senior Vice-President, Schneider Electric; President for Russia and the CIS Schneider Electric; Alexander Borisov, General Director, OJSC Scientific and Technical Pharmaceutical Company "Polysan"; Petri Kujala, Managing Director, Fazer Bakery; Executive Vice President, Fazer Group and others.

The forum was also attended by representatives of regional authorities, for example Sergey Movchan, Vice - Governor of St.Petersburg; Oleg Kuvshinnikov, Governor of Vologda Oblast; Veronika Minina, Deputy Governor of the Novgorod region; Maxim Kiselnikov, First Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Economic Development and Investment Activity of Leningrad region.

At the forum roundtable meetings were held regarding: energy, machine building and engineering, ecology and cleantech, transport and logistics, medicine and pharmaceuticals, creative industries - digital solutions for businesses.

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**Alexey Mordashov, Chairman of PAO Severstal, Co-chairman of Northern Dimension Business Council:**

«New technology will drive significant change and opportunities for the Northern Dimension and for the global community. New tools that have recently been developed have made it possible to improve production processes even further. For the metals industry, this has had an economic impact of at least 300 billion dollars. But with this huge potential come serious risks. For instance, we have to keep in mind the possible social implications. In my personal view it is a free market economy that will help us to mitigate this risk. Alongside this, we should not forget the impact of new technology on our ecology. Forums like the Northern Dimension enable us to find practical solutions that will let us take advantage of Industry 4.0 whilst mitigating these risks».

**Tapio Kuula, Member of the Board, Fortum Corporation; Co-Chairman of the Northern Dimension Business Council (NDBC);**

«I see the energy sector as a tool for future co-operation and integration in the Northern Dimension area. The EU is the most important client for the Russian energy sector – and Russia is the most important supplier for the EU. There are further development prospects also in the electricity sector. Well-functioning, pragmatic and good EU-Russia co-operation in the energy sector could increase wealth and global competitiveness in the whole Northern Dimension area».

**Thomas Staertzel, Chairman of the AEB Board:**

“We are confident that the cooperation between government bodies, NGOs, business organizations and the business community in general from the Russian North-Western region and Northern European countries can contribute to the economic development of the region. This Forum remains one of the very few platforms for the dialogue between the European Union, Norway, Iceland and Russia on an equal footing and we are glad that this channel of communication remains open. The Northern Dimension initiative shall stand as an example of cross-border cooperation and I am confident that this example could pave the way to the development of other regional initiatives”.

**Frank Schauff, AEB CEO:**

“The Northern Dimension Forum was organised for the eighth time in order to raise the most essential issues for the entire business environment. The Russian North-Western District remains for the AEB a key region as it plays a strategic role in the EU-Russia relations being the main gateway from Russia to Europe.

The development of modern technologies in all industries can contribute to the prosperity and security not only in the Baltic Sea regions, but also in other regions of Russia”.

The forum organizers have set the date of the VIII Northern Dimension Forum: it will be on April 5, 2018 in St. Petersburg.

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## **About the Northern Dimension Business Council (NDBC)**

At a meeting of Northern Dimension senior officials and politicians on 12 November 2009 in Stockholm, the initiative to establish and determine the concept of the NDBC was approved. Since it was founded, the NDBC has been co-chaired by Tapio Kuula, Member of the Board, Fortum Corporation, and Alexey Mordashov, Chairman of the Board of Directors PAO "Severstal."

The aim of the initiative is to involve companies in the policies of the Northern Dimension, so that these companies gain a competitive advantage from their active participation in the NDBC.

The NDBC aims to facilitate partnerships to enable modernisation (EU-Russia), to encourage investment in priority sectors such as medicine and biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, energy, nanotechnology, IT and microelectronics, mechanical engineering, shipbuilding, mining and mineral resources transportation technology, etc., and to develop bilateral dialogue with a view to improving trade policy and advice on planning and implementing joint ventures.

The bulk of the practical work of the NDBC is carried out within the working groups headed by the co-chairs.

## **About the Association of European Businesses (AEB)**

The Association of European Businesses (established in 1995) is the main representation of foreign investors in Russia. It is an independent non-commercial organisation that represents and promotes the interests of European companies conducting business in and with the Russian Federation. The AEB members are multinational corporations and small and medium-sized businesses. They all share a commitment to strengthening economic ties between the EU and Russia, as well as the desire to improve the investment climate of the Russian Federation.

The AEB includes 65 committees and subcommittees and working groups that are engaged in lobbying on a wide range of issues in various business areas including energy, transport and customs, air travel, legislation, taxation, banking, real estate, the production of crop protection products and many others. These committees work closely with the European and Russian authorities, and provide comments and suggested changes to the draft laws of the Russian Federation.

The AEB provides information support for its members through its website, printed publications, media campaigns, and distributes reviews and releases about the current events in the legal and business fields.

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