



Post-release on the Briefing by Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, for the AEB members

21.02.2019

Moscow

On February 21, 2019, the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met with the members of the Association of European Businesses (AEB) at the Foreign Ministry's Press Centre.

Johan Vanderplaetse, Chairman of the AEB Board, opened the meeting. He noted that European businesses in Russia face a lot of challenges due to the complicated geopolitical context and that has a serious impact on the business climate:

"Some foreign investors are worried because of the sanctions and the uncertainty about what might follow next. We at the AEB believe that, on the contrary, stronger economic, cultural and scientific ties are what we should aim for. We are therefore hoping that, in 2019, we see a gradual restoration of the political dialogue and therefore business confidence."

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov delivered a speech in which he touched the issues of sanctions, energy policy and economic relations between Russia and the European Union. The Minister noted that despite the increase of sanction pressure on Russia, the government is open to a dialogue with foreign investors:

"Despite the difficulties, and they exist, no one tries to hide them, there is a feeling that the business community has been tired of – sanctions, confrontation and now it is interested in resuming full-fledged cooperation."

The Minister emphasized the need to intensify contacts between the European Union and the Eurasian Economic Commission, marking out the high potential of already established technical cooperation.

The briefing by Mr. Lavrov was followed by a Q&A session moderated by AEB CEO Dr. Frank Schauff. He noted that one of the main tasks for the AEB is to maintain an active dialogue between foreign investors and government officials. So the communication with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia is now particularly relevant:

"AEB has been working in Russia for more than 20 years, and we have stayed in close cooperation with the Russian authorities in all difficult times. We hope that our constructive dialogue will continue with regards to the most controversial issues, as the Baring Vostok case. Therefore we ask for the full support from the Russian Government to ensure the country remains open to FDIs and that all necessary measures in favor of an open, stable market and an even level playing field for all economic actors are guaranteed".

AEB member company representatives received answers to their most pressing and important questions directly from the source.

For more information, contact Ekaterina Mukhina, Communications Manager/Press Secretary by e-mail: ekaterina.mukhina@aebrus.ru or by phone: +7 (495) 234 27 64

AEB SPONSORS 2019 – СПОНСОРЫ АЕБ 2019

• Allianz IC OJSC • Atos • Bank Credit Suisse (Moscow) • BP • BSH Bytowyje Pribyro OOO • Cargill Enterprises Inc. • CHEP Rus LLC • Clifford Chance • Continental Tires RUS LLC • Creon Capital S.a.r.l. • Deloitte CIS • DuPont Science & Technologies • Enel Russia • ENGIE • Eni S.p.A • Equinor Russia AS • EY • FAURECIA Automotive Development LLC • GE (General Electric International (Benelux) B.V.) • HeidelbergCement • ING Wholesale Banking in Russia • John Deere Rus, LLC • KPMG • ManpowerGroup • Mercedes-Benz Russia • Merck LLC • Messe Frankfurt Rus Ltd • MetLife • METRO AG • Michelin • Novartis Group Russia • OBI Russia • Oriflame • Porsche Russland • Procter & Gamble • PwC • Raiffeisenbank AO • ROCA • Shell Exploration & Production Services (RF) B.V. • Signify • SOGAZ Insurance Group • Total E&P Russie • Unipro PJSC • VimpelCom PJSC (Beeline) • YIT