



Post release

Moscow
5 April 2018

The IX Northern Dimension Forum has been held in Saint-Petersburg

The IX Northern Dimension Forum was held on **5 April 2018** 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 Rolf Jansson, President and CEO, VR Group; Co-Chairman of the Northern Dimension Business Council (NDBC).

Alexey Mordashov on behalf of the members of the Northern Dimension Business Council, expressed profound grief and sorrow at the passing of Mr. Tapio Kuula, former Member of the Board, Fortum Corporation; former Co-Chairman of the Northern Dimension Business Council, and participants observed a minute of silence in tribute to his memory.

This year's focus of the forum was on the new economical mindset: innovative management models and business processes.

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

"The constant evolution of technology is transforming all aspects of our life, including economics and business. We are already witnessing shifts in the structure of labour demand and recognise that traditional approaches to business problem solving are inefficient. In order to adapt, we must reconsider traditional business management models. Furthermore, we need to develop a new economic mindset focused on stimulating business development without causing social upheaval.

The countries of the "Northern Dimension" should unite in devising practical steps to support regional businesses in seizing new opportunities and surviving continuous change. We are convinced that, despite the tense geopolitical situation, fostering dialogue between business representatives from North-West Russia and the countries of Northern Europe will encourage positive economic development within the region".

Rolf Jansson, President and CEO, VR Group; Co-Chairman of the Northern Dimension Business Council (NDBC):

"At Finnish Railways, VR-Group, we have in recent years been very focused productivity and efficiency. In order to be successful in the future, we need to continue on this path.

By interacting actively and openly over traditional geographical and industrial barriers we create the best opportunities to succeed also in the new economy. The Northern Dimension Business Council creates a solid and at the same time flexible network for European-Russian co-operation in the Northern Dimension area".

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At the forum presentations were made by senior representatives of European and Russian ministries and departments, and company executives. They included: Andrey Kelin, Director for European Cooperation, Member of the Collegium, Ministry of foreign affairs in Russia; Markku Keinänen, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland; Sven-Olov Carlsson, Deputy Head, EU Delegation to the RF; Andrey Sharonov, President, Moscow Skolkovo Management School; Taras Demura, CEO, TUI Russia; Paolo Falcioni, Director General, APPLIA Home Appliance Europe and others.

The forum was also attended by representatives of regional authorities, such as Dmitry Yalov, Deputy Chair of the Leningrad Oblast Government on economics and investments and Evgeniy Bogdanov, Deputy Chairman of the Government of the Novgorod Region.

Russian and international experts and executives from large companies were exchanging their proposals on development prospects in the Northern Dimension countries, along with ideas to increase the efficiency of their economies.

Thomas Staertzel, Chairman of the AEB Board:

"The Northern Dimension initiative remains one of the important official platforms where Russia and the EU together with Norway and Iceland are cooperating on common challenges faced by the region such as transport connections, border security, energy, climate change and the preservation of the Baltic Sea environment. It is especially important in the currently tense times of the EU-Russian relationship".

Frank Schauff, AEB CEO:

"This year, the Northern Dimension Forum is held for the ninth time, and we are very glad that it remains one of the few venues for free and constructive dialogue between participants from different countries. A large number of delegates proves that representatives of business communities are genuinely interested in the successful implementation of their joint projects and further economic cooperation, despite some external policy difficulties.

In this regard, The Russian North-Western District remains for the AEB a key region as it plays a strategic role in the EU-Russian relations being the main gateway from Russia to Europe".

After the general plenary session, a number of sectoral round-tables were held. The subjects included the energy industry, machine industry, ecology and environmental preservation, transport, logistics, medicine, pharmaceuticals, creative industries, and more.

The forum organizers have set the date of the X Northern Dimension Forum: it will be on April 4, 2019 in St. Petersburg.

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. The NDBC is co-chaired by Rolf Jansson, President and CEO, VR Group, and Alexey Mordashov, Chairman of the Board of Directors PAO "Severstal."

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Association of European Businesses
Butyrsky Val str. 68/70, bld. 1
127055 Moscow, Russia

Phone: +7 (495) 234 27 64
Fax: +7 (495) 234 28 07

E-mail: info@aebrus.ru
www.aebrus.ru

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 more than 60 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.

For more information, please contact press secretary Ekaterina Mukhina by email: em@aebrus.ru or by phone: +7 (495) 234 27 64 ext. 136.

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