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## Belorussian Railway as a Reliable Link that Ensures Cargo Transit Between Europe and Asia

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*Steady and effective functioning of Pan-European transport system is one of the necessary conditions for the development of the states economies. Belarus Republic, being a key transit country has a transportation system connecting Russia with countries of Asian-Pacific Ocean region and countries of the European Union, pays increased attention to questions of international collaboration in the area of cargo and passenger transport organization.*

Belorussian railway is a modern and well developed transport system having length of 5.5 thousand kilometers and carrying about 75% of all republic cargo transportation and more than 50% passenger transportation. It is the most effective, reliable and popular means of transport and, furthermore, it possesses necessary infrastructure that has sufficient reserves of spacing and carrying ability. Belorussian railway is located at joint of railroads of different track width and is a unique transport bridge, which connects Europe and Asia.

We see Latvia with its railroad and ports as one of the most important partners in the international cargo transportation market.

The percentage of Latvian foreign trade loads in total volume of international cargo transportation of Belorussian railway is: in transit - 39%, in export - 24%, in import - 3%.

Today the primary task of Belorussian and Latvian railways is adjusting precise interaction and strategic partnership for the attraction of additional goods traffic and, first of all, transit. For this purpose it is necessary to conduct effective and flexible tariff policy, develop near border infrastructure, improve customs legislation, implement modern technologies and broaden international collaboration. In

Belarus these measures are supported by a number of the state programs, accepted by the government of our republic within last days. These are, first of all: "State program of the development of the transit potential of Belarus Republic during the years 2011-2015" and "The program of development of the railroad checkpoints on the state border of Belarus Republic during the years 2007-2015".

As a successful example of coordinated interaction of railroads of our countries one can mention an alternate railroad path on the route Bigosovo-Indra built in 2010. Thus, capacity of railroad section Polotsk -Bigosovo-Indra increased to 35 pairs of trains in a 24 hour period. Subsequently it is planned to continue works on building alternate paths on routes: Borkowicz - Svolno, Verhnedvinsk - Bigosovo, Polotsk - Ropnyanskaya. Building two-way railroad paths on the route Polotsk - Latvian state border is planned to be completed in 2016. This will ensure free passage of forecasted transit and increase export flows additionally to a level of 45 pairs of freight trains in a 24 hour period or of 13 mln. tons per year.

A number of the stable railroad routes for transit of goods is developed in Belarus during last decade taking into consideration the acting plan of train development and foreign trade economic connections. These routes help to transport Russian and Kazakhstan foreign trade loads to the ports of Latvia on the route Zaolsha - Bigosovo (38%), and also to the ports of Kaliningrad region and Lithuania by the routes Osinovka - Gudogay and Zakopyte - Gudogay (total volume comprises 39% of entire transit). Transportation to and from countries of Central and Western Europe is also very important for the East-West route that crosses border with

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