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Meeting with President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko

6-8 minutes



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With President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko.

Beginning of Russian-Belarusian talks

President of Russia Vladimir Putin: Mr Lukashenko, we met quite recently in Samarkand and planned to discuss bilateral issues there, first of all in the economy, as well as in the security sphere. But our work in Samarkand was very intense, and there was a lot of meetings with our colleagues. We have a large enough number of issues to discuss, so we agreed to meet again here in Sochi. Therefore, I am very glad that you found the time to come and talk about all the issues that we planned to discuss back in Samarkand.

Many of these issues, I repeat, have to do with the situation in the region, but equally important are economic matters, including in a number of areas we discussed earlier, and the work on building the Union State, issues related to our plans in the chemical industry, food and fertilisers. Unfortunately, deliveries of Belarusian fertilisers to global markets are still being blocked. It is very strange, because world markets, especially developing countries, urgently need these products. But nonetheless, it is still happening.

We have specific plans in some areas, in some major projects. You and I have already talked about this before. In general, the Government has prepared these projects for implementation. We will discuss all of this.

I am very glad to see you. Welcome.

President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko: Mr President, no need to deny it, thank you for inviting me. The weather forecast is good at least for the next couple of days; indeed, this is

an autumn season. But, we have no time to admire the weather. We talk a lot about our future and our prospects.

This morning, I analysed all the instructions which you have given to your Government, and I have given in Belarus, about our agreements. We are facing virtually no setbacks.

The development of our economies and the very existence of our states have changed drastically in the past three months. They predicted that we would come crashing down, and that we would be ruined, and so on.

We have planned it this way before, and we have repeatedly noted here that life is diverse, that there are those who need us, and those whom we need. And we have found partners who are working successfully with us; we are working with them and moving our economies forward. And people also understand. For our part, we should especially thank our people for understanding the situation. Actually, this is a complicated period, the world has pretty much turned upside down, and the people understand this.

There are different kinds of people. There are many of them both here and there, and thank God, we see them. There is a certain fault line and a criterion. We faced a similar situation in 2020, and Russia is facing it today. This fault line shows who is who. There is nothing bad about this. I see that in our country they are scaring people with mobilisation, here some people are fleeing the country. Look, Russia can mobilise 25 million reservists. All right, 30,000 to 50,000 people have fled. Would they side with us if they chose to stay? Let them flee.

I do not know what you think about this. I was not very upset when several thousand people left Belarus in 2020. Most of them are now asking for permission to come back. These

people will also come back; however, we will need to decide what to do – either let them come here or let them freelance there. Sorry for openly saying this. People should not act like this. In any event, it is possible to reach an agreement here and not run away to Europe or America as was the case during the Bolshevik revolution and afterwards, the situation now is different.

That's why we have changed considerably in the past three months, we have found out that we can live and exist normally. You were right to repeat these aspects of our agreements. The import substitution process is proceeding normally, and we will be flying our own military and civilian aircraft (we are already flying military aircraft), and we will be driving our own cars. There is no fear.

If Europe has gone crazy (I am not talking about those overseas), let them think. I have already told them three times that their future is with us, together with Russia, where there is everything they need. And they have things we can buy from them, such as technology and other items. What else do they need? They just have to make a responsible decision. If they don't want to, they don't need to. We will arrange things step by step.

Vladimir Putin: And treat us with respect.

Alexander Lukashenko: Without this, we will not talk to them at all. We are Slavs. No one will tolerate humiliation. Russia is a gigantic country, not to mention Belarus. How can there be humiliation?

We remember what it was like in America, starting with the previous president: "We are an exception," he put a crown on his head, "We will rule the world." We remember, we have

discussed this topic. This continues even now. You cannot treat people like that.

This is why we discussed that topic with you many times and made a decision, outlined a course and are moving along it. We are open to whomever wants to live in peace with us and respect us, and so are you, all the more so, you constantly talk about it.

We are ready for this, but no one will tolerate humiliation. The Russian people never did, and no one, not a single Russian will allow any president, including President Putin, to stray from this course. That is the economy and politics. But we have already talked about this many times and will continue to talk and persistently promote this policy.

And about food, fertilisers – come on, they will buy it, they are buying it now. It has become more difficult, of course, as they are blocking. Not us but the people who want to buy, who are ready to pay. They are blocking them, not us. Why would we block? But we do find ways to sell.

They have sent prices up. It was not us who did this, you are right. Who needs this? I have just watched the morning news: the whole of Europe is raging, everyone in Germany, the richest country, poured into the streets, everyone is protesting. But someday they will hear it. I think they will. Therefore, our course is correct, our cause is just. We will win, we have no other choice.

So, thank you for inviting me. I am glad that at least there is someone to talk to and discuss the issues that we need to discuss. We will find all the solutions which we have not yet found.

Vladimir Putin: Thank you.

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