

21.04.10The Russian-Italian Forum-Dialogue's Co-Chairs Meet

In the course of the Russian-Italian Forum-Dialogue within the framework of civil societies, a meeting between the Forum-Dialogue's Co-Chairs – Vnesheconombank Chairman Vladimir Dmitriev and Todini Costruzioni Generali S.p.A. President Luisa Todini was held at Vnesheconombank.

The meeting's participants discussed topical issues of Russian-Italian cooperation, approved the Forum-Dialogue's action plan for the year 2010 and determined its main lines of activity in the field of economy, science, education, culture, mass communications, religious and interconfessional cooperation. The Forum-Dialogue's Co-Chairs stated that the plan reflects an updated concept of the Forum-Dialogue and was aimed at giving it a new substance that is clearly expressed in the Forum-Dialogue's new motto: "Russia and Italy – Move Forward to a Common European Space". The plan also calls for balancing the number of events taking place in Russia and Italy through stepping up contacts on the Russian territory.

The two sides agreed to hold a number of major events: a roundtable discussion as part of the Saint-Petersburg International Economic Forum "Business-Dialogue Russia-Italy", a conference on the experience of supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, a roundtable discussion "The History of the Civil Society Development in Russia and Italy", a workshop with the participation of nongovernmental Russian and Italian youth organizations devoted to discussing Russian President Dmitry's Medvedev's initiative to sign a European Security Treaty; a roundtable discussion on free speech in mass media and the protection of rights to information in Russia and Italy, a Festival of Russian Arts "The Summer Garden of Arts" in the city of Bari.

The Forum-Dialogue's meeting between its Co-Chairs is a preparatory stage for holding a meeting of the Forum-Dialogue timed to take place during the next round of intergovernmental summit consultations to be held at the end of 2010 in Russia.

The Russian-Italian Forum-Dialogue within the framework of civil societies was established in 2004 on Vladimir Putin's and Silvio Berlusconi's initiative. The Forum aims to form new promising lines of cooperation, develop an infrastructure of bilateral relations at a nongovernmental level in economy, science and education, cultural and humanitarian ties within the framework of nongovernmental and voluntary organizations. Since 2004, more than 100 business and cultural events were organized within the Forum-Dialogue in various Russian and Italian cities.

In late 2009, with the consent of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, Vnesheconombank Chairman Vladimir Dmitriev became Co-Chair of the Forum-Dialogue from the Russian side. From then on, a new stage started in the Forum-Dialogue's activity. In December of 2009, the Forum-Dialogue's meeting "Russia and Italy in the Post-Crisis Period" became a major event of this new stage.

