



**Russian-African Forum (RAF) 2017**  
**Ghana and Nigeria, 24-27 April 2017**

**Venue: Accra, Ghana and Lagos, Nigeria**

**Number of participants: 40**

## Summary

The 2017 Russian-African Forum (RAF) in Ghana and Nigeria highlighted Russia's production and export potential. The forum laid the groundwork for a future bilateral dialogue between Russia and West African countries on trade and economic cooperation as well as the strengthening of business contacts and links. It also promoted Russia as an industrial centre manufacturing cutting-edge competitive products. This is the 6th time that B2B-EXPORT.COM, the online Russian business-to-business trading platform, has organized the Forum.

Soviet leaders used to regard the nations of Africa as forming a valuable export market for the Soviet Union's industrial products. After the USSR collapsed, Russian enterprises lost their positions in the African markets, ceding ground to China, India, Turkey and Western countries. Today, Russia has a real chance to re-establish itself in Africa by increasing its business presence in the African markets, supporting bilateral dialogue at a national level, and through the use of online trade tools.

'We are gradually regaining the degree of trust and mutual understanding that was created largely by the sincere commitment shown by the USSR and Russia (its successor) to the ideals of ensuring the freedom and sovereign rights of African nations,' said Denis Manturov, Minister of Trade and Industry of the Russian Federation, during the 2016 Russian-African Forum held in Tanzania. 'Africa is becoming ever more important to Russian foreign policy strategy,' he added.

Trade turnover between Russia and Africa currently amounts to \$12.5 bn. African countries mainly export agricultural products to Russia, for example, tobacco, cocoa beans, coffee and tea.

In recent years, African countries have ranked in the top 20 fastest-growing economies in the world. Investments are being made in infrastructure and African countries are net importers of industrial products.

As a result of the Russian-African Forum, the parties agreed to expand trade and economic cooperation between Russia and West Africa. Delegates from Ghana and Nigeria are expected to pay a return visit, attending the Russian section of the Forum in Yekaterinburg on 9-12 July 2017.

## **Program of events for the Russian-African Forum in Ghana**

### **Monday, 24 April 2017**

*Venue: Ghana Investment Promotion Center (GIPC, Ministries)*

**Welcome speech by Dr. Carl Nelson, Chief Operating Officer of the Ghana Investment Promotion Center (Ministry of Finance, Ghana)**

#### **Round table 'Russia and Ghana: Moving Together'**

Moderators: Ekaterina Dyachenko, founder of B2B-Export Group  
Edward Ashong-Lartey, Director of Ghana Investment Promotion Center  
(Ministry of Finance, Ghana)

- Edward Ashong-Lartey, Director of Ghana Investment Promotion Center (Ministry of Finance, Ghana) Particularities of doing business in Ghana. Presentation, questions and answers
- Collins Anim-Sackey, Ghana Minerals Commission Overview of the mining industry in Ghana. Presentation, questions and answers
- Welcome speech by Tsonam Akpeloo, Chief Executive Officer, Association of Ghana Industries
- Welcome speech by Frederick Adu Amoako, Head of Marketing, Ghana Chamber of Commerce and Industry

**Meeting with Dr. Nurah Gyeile, Minister of Agriculture, Ghana.** *Russian participants: Belagro, b2b-export.com*

**Meeting with Suleman Koni, Head of Ghana Chamber of Mines.** *Russian participants: Belagro, NPGM Advanced Mining Equipment, Eurotech Machinery, b2b-export.com*

Business Dinner with the members of Ghana's business community, SKYBAR25

### **Tuesday, 25 April 2017**

**Visit to an electricity substation in TEMA managed by GridCo, Ghana's state electricity grid company.**

*Russian participants: Mikrosetevaya Kompaniya*

**Visit to Ghana Railways Limited, Ghana's national railway company.**

*Russian participants: United Wagon Company Research and Production Corporation PJSC*

**Meeting with Dr. Joseph Ghartey, Minister of Railways and Development**

*Russian participants: United Wagon Company Research and Production Corporation PJSC*

**Meeting with members of Ghana bank sector, Hotel Kempinski**

Moderator: Michael Obeng, Head of Corporate Business, Zenith Bank, Ghana

Russian participants: all present

**Meeting of the Russian delegation with members of Ghana's business community, Hotel Kempinski**

Evans Danio, CEO, Construction Company  
Eddy Kwarteng, CEO, SGL Construction Company  
Alhaji Salamu Amadou, Chairman of Afro Arab Group of Companies  
Marcia Ashong, CEO, Brace Energy Group  
Ibrahim Wuntah, CEO, Wi Tech Group  
Bernard Blewu, CEO, Centroid Logistic  
Obodai Sai, McDann Shipping

At the working meetings with the members of Ghana's business community, construction company representatives provided information about housing and commercial property construction projects in which Russian exporters of construction machinery and materials were invited to participate. Representatives of Brace Energy and Wi Tech made presentations on their oil and infrastructure projects, and also spoke about the need for export financing from the Russian Federation with the support of EXIAR, the Russian Agency for Export Credit and Investment Insurance.

## **Program of events for the Russian-African Forum in Nigeria**

### **Wednesday, 26 April 2017**

*Venue: Southern Sun Hotel*

**Welcome speech by Emeka Ofor, Director of the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (Federal Government Agency)**

#### **Round table 'Russia and Nigeria: Moving Together'**

Moderators: Jennet Omisore, Dep. Director of the Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry

Ekaterina Dyachenko, founder of B2B-Export Group

Jennet Omisore, Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry Business in Nigeria: questions and answers

- Welcome speech by Anita Nana Okuribido, President of the Council for Renewable Energy, representing the Association of Women Entrepreneurs

- Welcome speech by Muhammad Amin Kabir Bayero, Kano Chamber of Commerce

**Meeting with Eric Ani from the president's administration** *Russian participants: UWC, Belagro, NPGM Advanced Mining Equipment, Eurotech Machinery, b2b-export.com*

**Meeting with Tony Carr, founder of MonuRent, FMCB Leasing, and StarSight** . *Russian participants: Belagro, NPGM Advanced Mining Equipment, Eurotech Machinery, b2b-export.com*

**Meeting with Dr. Joseph Ghartey, Minister of Railways and Development**

*Russian participants: United Wagon Company Research and Production Corporation PJSC*

Business Dinner with members of Nigeria's business community, EKO Hotel

### **Thursday, 25 April 2017**

**Meeting with officials from Nigeria's Ministry of Agriculture and Akerodolu Olayinka and Emmanuel Opaleye, members of Nigeria's agribusiness community**

*Russian participants: Belagro, b2b-export.com*

**Meeting with Dangote Industries, Nigeria's largest manufacturing conglomerate: open-pit mining of coal and limestone quarrying, mechanization of agriculture**

*Russian participants: Belagro, NPGM Advanced Mining Equipment, Eurotech Machinery, b2b-export.com*

**Meeting with Tariye Gbadegesin, Investment Director of African Financial Corporation (AFC). Recommendations on production localization in the region**

*Russian participants: Belagro, United Wagon Company Research and Production Corporation PJSC*

**Working meetings of the Russian delegation with members of Nigeria's business community**

Kudzai Gumunyu, Head of Agribusiness, FMCB Bank Leasing Company  
Aderemi Sijuwade, Abuja-Kaduna Railway Concession  
Columbus Takom, CEO, Kiriti Limited  
Anil Philips, CEO, Sciencetech International  
Anita Nana Okuribido, Association of Women Entrepreneurs

At the working meetings with members of the Nigerian business community, major landowners (such as Dangote Industries) and modest-sized agricultural export companies provided information about their projects to mechanize and develop agriculture. They invited Russian exporters of tractors and equipment for the storage and processing of agricultural products to participate in their plans. Representatives of Dangote presented their limestone and coal-mining projects, including production fields outside Nigeria (in Tanzania). They also spoke of the need to localize the production of small farm machinery using export financing from the Russian Federation.

## **Plenary session**

The official opening of the Russian-African Forum took place on 24 April 2017. Dr. Carl Nelson, Chief Operating Officer of Ghana Investment Promotion Center, addressed his welcome speech to the Forum participants. As Mr. Nelson stated, one of the Forum's main objectives was to enhance economic ties between Russia and Africa. He also noted that while trade and investment interactions between the two countries are growing steadily, their full potential is still far from being realized.

The head of the GIPC also mentioned that there are seven ongoing projects involving Russian capital in which local scientific and technical capabilities are being put to use, mainly in the construction and mining services industries. Ghana has one of the most favorable business environments in Africa. The country has a stable, democratic government and its economy has doubled in size in the last 10 years. Main industries: mining and enrichment, processing of agricultural produce, construction.

The head of b2b-export.com, an online business-to-business trading platform, led the Russian delegation in Ghana and Nigeria. She addressed her welcome speech to the participants of the round table 'Russia and Africa: Moving Together'. Underlining that dialogue is extremely important in overcoming stereotypes on both sides, she said: 'In 2017, we see a rejuvenated Africa – one that is free, growing, business-friendly, and

young. This is a continent not asking for charity, but searching for partners with knowledge and technology.'

Ekaterina Dyachenko also invited Ghanaian and Nigerian businessmen to join the Russian-African Forum being held during the Innoprom-2017 industrial trade fair which will take place in Yekaterinburg between July 10th and 13th. This year, Innoprom will host the 7th Russian-African Forum and will focus on permanent cooperation between Russian and African companies. 'We would like to see more buyers of Russian products from the African continent,' commented Ms Dyachenko. 'We have the resources to facilitate cooperation in a number of fields: from aviation, shipbuilding and automobile construction, to rolling stock manufacture, mining technology, and the mechanization of agriculture.'

Innoprom is Russia's largest industrial trade fair. It has been held in Yekaterinburg since 2010 with the aim of putting on display the latest hi-tech, industrial products manufactured by Russian and foreign companies in various fields from construction, medicine and environmental protection to communications, education, transport, urban infrastructure and security.

At the meeting, the parties noted that measures should be taken to stimulate demand for products manufactured as part of common initiatives as well as to encourage Russian and West African companies and organizations to work together.

### **Power Industry**

A representative of Mikrosetevaya Kompaniya visited the headquarters of GRIDCO (Ghana's state electrical grid company) and met graduates of the Moscow Power Engineering Institute who had studied in Russia under a quota system established by the Russian government. As a result of the meeting, the participants agreed in principle that Mikrosetevaya, the Russian company, would take part in GRIDCO's upcoming tenders for projects to provide electricity to the country's remote regions, as well as to conduct market research on the feasibility of selling gas on a Pay-As-You-Go basis. The feasibility using of Russian technologies in the centralized power industry was also discussed, including the construction of gas and hydroelectric power stations.

In Nigeria, the possibility of providing gas on a Pay-As-You-Go basis in partnership with Access Bank and Women Entrepreneurs was discussed.

### **Mining Industry**

During the Forum, **NPGM Advanced Mining Equipment** gave a presentation on its new modular plants for manufacturing mining explosives. It also presented a service provision model for when the company is ready to launch production in West Africa, offering its services to countries such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea, Ghana, and Nigeria. Nigeria was identified as the preferred location for the establishment of future offices, with potential clients displaying serious interest in Russian mining technologies.

Cheboksary Tractor Plant (CheTra) aims to enter the African market for quarry machinery (bulldozers) and is considering options to localize production on the continent.

**Eurotech Machinery** is seeking involvement in new mining projects for minerals, metals and construction materials (such as coal, gold, and limestone). Its aim is to supply mining

machinery to Nigeria, Ghana and Tanzania.

## **Agriculture**

The agricultural sector accounts for 60 % (\$86 bn) of West Africa's economy. It also provides employment for about 60 % of population. Considering that the Earth's population is rapidly growing and Africa is home to 60 % of the world's uncultivated croplands, in the future a large part of the world's agricultural produce will come from Africa.

**Belagro** Holding, one of the largest suppliers of tractors and agricultural accessories (sold under the Belarus brand), is interested in the development of the African agricultural machinery market. Meetings were held during the Forum with officials from the Ghanaian and Nigerian Ministries of Agriculture as well as farmers and leasing companies that purchase tractors to lease to small farms.

Russian participants showed an interest in receiving supplies of cassava (manioc) in exchange for tractors and other equipment to increase the mechanization of agriculture.

## **Transport**

Concerning transport-related manufacturing, there are prerequisites for localizing production and opening service centers in West Africa for ECOWAS markets. Ghana is actively developing its port infrastructure for importation and distribution of goods to landlocked African countries (such as Burkina Faso and Niger) as well as the exportation of agricultural produce.

During the Forum, representatives of United Wagon Company Research and Production Corporation PJSC visited the offices of Ghana Railways Limited and also met Ghana's Minister of Railways. The Railway Corporation and the minister presented three investment projects to construct new railway corridors (150, 180 and 300 km) and to procure rolling stock.

The head of b2b-export.com also confirmed its interest in continuing a dialogue with Nigerian transport operators to discuss the development of bilateral ties and expand the scope of their cooperation in river and maritime transport through the supply and possibly production of innovative high-speed vessels, the design and creation of prototypes (including R&D) being carried out by both parties using Russian and African expertise.

There is also potential to localize the manufacture of Russian agricultural machinery in Nigeria and Ghana as well as to upgrade the existing production of passenger buses and minibuses by signing special investment contracts with the support of government authorities.

## **Participant feedback from the 2017 RAF in Ghana & Nigeria**

Andrey Orzhebovsky, Deputy Director of UWC RPC PJSC:

*'The tightly-packed agenda made it possible to meet top officials from Ghana and Nigeria railways to discuss future plans and possibilities for collaboration within just three days. The meetings took place at an interesting time for West African railways: after a long period of stagnation and decline national and international development programs are finally being agreed and contracts are being signed to modernize the current railways and construct new ones. The RAF managers were keenly aware of the positive trends in the industry in both countries and provided us with the opportunity to receive firsthand information of plans to attract foreign and private investment to the sector, to construct new railways and upgrade the existing rolling stock, and to change the rules regulating the relationship between the government and private sector. Managers from the Ghana and Nigeria railway companies have a high regard for the credibility and experience of Russian railways and confirmed their willingness to cooperate with Russian companies to improve efficiency in their sectors.'*

*Meetings with railway authorities and top investment fund managers highlighted the recent positive changes that have occurred in West African countries, a positive sign for fruitful cooperation in the next ten years. Aside from the political, economic, and financial sectors, there have also been positive changes in the business culture. Both countries have created the necessary infrastructure for an efficient, modern business environment, and it is improving all the time.*

*The success of the trade mission was due in large part to the relationship of mutual trust between the RAF leadership and local authorities, CCIs and industry associations. As a result, the meetings provided a multifaceted overview of the potential in the region as well as the issues it faces, improving our understanding of what we are working towards.'*

Vladimir Firulev, Export Management, NIPi Gormash:

*'The meetings and the business tour went well. We succeeded in conducting negotiations with the companies present and gained a general overview. Now we must develop a strategy, draw a project road map and monitor the market situation. We gained an understanding of the factors that we must focus on in future.'*

Alexander Petrovsky, CEO, Belagro:

*'It was an interesting journey. Of course, we will only be able to judge the effectiveness of the meetings and the business programme several months from now, when the first results become known. We gained an understanding of the nature of the local market, what its volumes are and possible income sources. I was very surprised to learn about the amount of agricultural produce that is wasted in some of countries after it is processed due to a lack of technology and proper conditions for processing and storage. Some countries lose about 40 % of their produce. We might be able to help improve the situation.*

*It was interesting to meet officials from the Ministry of Agriculture as well as with representatives of the African Women's Union. This organization has a vast membership and they generate many ideas. I believe that even if only a few of their ideas are implemented, major progress will be made. We were able to hear from our consumers in*



*these countries and we will give more thought to how we can help and collaborate.'*