Obviously, Belarus has reserves for decreasing import and increasing export. The growth of competitiveness of our products will at the same time decrease import and increase export. We should reform the import structure, lowering the amount of intermediate import and import for consumption, and enlarging investment one. The shift towards the export of services, where the proportion of added value is high, is also of a great significance.

REGIONAL COOPERATION AS THE BEST LOGISTIC APPROACH

The processes of the world economy globalization get inevitable, the rates and volumes of international trade are fast increasing. That causes serious challenges for transnational transport services and existing logistic patterns.

A new approach towards transport routes construction and infrastructural enhancements is needed. The one that could become one of the most important tools for establishing more efficient transport links contributing to the rapid growth of international trade. Regional cooperation and international partnerships in the sphere could provide one of the best suitable solutions.

The main obstacles for improving foreign trade according to the market demands are not harmonized tariffs, freight documentation and customs procedures; bureaucracy; cultural differences; language barriers.

Some specific conditions for a regional partnership to be successful could be defined. First of all partners should introduce the necessary improvements in infrastructure. Then it’s important to harmonize custom procedures and regulations. Once done with that it becomes possible to simplify and unify the transport documentation used within the partnership countries. It is also necessary to reach an agreement on harmonizing tariffs and goods classification.

I’d like to illustrate how that concept works on the example of the innovative logistic project called East-West Transport Corridor, running in the Baltic Sea Region. It’s a regional integration project aimed at strengthening the transport development through infrastructure improvements, developing new solutions to business, logistics and cooperation between researchers. One of the outstanding features of the project is its “greenness” – intention to develop environmentally friendly ways of transportation, which is one of the crucial issues the 21st century logistics has to address.

The project started in September 2009 and will run until September 2012. Around 70 participants from Sweden, Lithuania, Denmark, Germany, Belarus, Italy, China and Russia have joined the project. This corridor has, due to its geographic location and the possibilities for clustering traffic volumes, a great potential for developing cost-efficient services.

The project focuses on three main aspects:
1) Making EWTC a positive example of a Green Transport Corridor corresponding with EU's latest transport policies and satisfying market demands for more efficient and environmental friendly ways of transportation;

2) Developing an innovative testing ground for modern technologies and information systems able to contribute to increasing efficiency, traffic safety and security at the same time reducing environment impact in the corridor;

3) Supporting economic growth within the corridor and maintaining the growing rate of international trade by stimulating new business models.

The EWTC project is crucially important for Belarus as it gives an opportunity for effective regional integration in the sphere of economy and logistics, involves the country into intensive international trade processes, gives a potential for developing local infrastructure and adopting the newest technologies and business practices.

EWTC already having Corridor Organization and structure, as well as the development vision, strategy and action plan up to 2013, could play a role of one of the main co-modal transport corridors within the Baltic Sea Region, serve as an efficient connective link between East and West economies, provide methodological basis and infrastructural example for organizing green transport corridors all over the world. It would contribute to the regional development as well as to individual economic growth in all the participating countries.

The example of the EWTC project could serve as a perfect proof of the headnote that with flexible regional partnership cooperation, joint efforts, mutual support and consultancy it is possible to address all the challenges of the ever growing transports flows and goods deliveries.