

managing the new strategy. Various international reports reflect the situation by taking ever more cautious positions towards promoting GVC participation to the new-comers.

Thus, despite all the ado about GVCs, developing and transition economies need to carefully weigh both the costs and benefits when considering a strategy of joining international production networks. The strategy is not impeccable and it still awaits for some alternatives to be challenged by. Regional value chains — to suggest one.

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ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN BELARUS AND THE CONTINENT OF AFRICA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКОЕ ВЗАИМОДЕЙСТВИЕ БЕЛАРУСИ И СТРАН АФРИКИ: ВЫЗОВЫ И ВОЗМОЖНОСТИ

Экономическое взаимодействие Беларуси с африканским континентом на современном этапе характеризуется высоким нереализованным потенциалом. Богатые ресурсами страны Африки, стремящиеся к поиску новых партнеров, заинтересованных не только в закупках сырья, но и в ответных поставках промышленной продукции, недостающей на континенте, открывают новые возможности для Беларуси, заинтересованной в расширении своего присутствия на мировом рынке вопреки вызовам современного этапа глобализации.

Trade and economic relations among nation states in recent times have become increasingly important in the development of modern societies and economies. Nation states have faced the need to intensify trade with each other due to the benefits that trade brings along. This has led to the creation of many trade agreements and economic arrangements between and among nation states at different levels.

International trade is an engine for economic growth and development. Empirical literature supports this fact with strong evidence. Increased participation in international trade can propel economic growth, which happens to be a key condition for a wider range of development outcomes.

Trade between Belarus and the continent of Africa is not an exception irrespective of the fact that there is not much trade currently going on between Belarus and countries within the African continent. This situation creates a perfect situation for Belarus to trade more with the African continent and also vice versa in view of the fact that both Belarus and the African continent stand to benefit significantly from such a relationship.

Africa is known for its abundance and opportunity. As the world's second largest continent, it is richly endowed with a variety of natural resources. The location of Belarus with regards to its proximity to some of the world's major markets puts the country in the pole position to act as a middle man for many of African raw materials to enter regional markets. It is important to note that Belarus with its level of technology can also position itself to add value to natural resources been produced from Africa for onwards trade to the rest of the world where these products are needed.

Unfortunately as reiterated earlier, the level of trade and economic activities between Belarus and countries from the African continent is not extensive. In view of this it is important for Belarus and African countries to intensify trade for the development of their economies and societies as well. Trade to a very large extent generates economic conditions that are favorable for achieving development goals and it could be very advantageous to both Belarus and its trading partners from the African continent if efforts are made to intensify the amount of trade between and among them.

The wealth of African continent with regards to natural resources like metals and minerals is in strong demand. The global economy needs raw materials from Africa to feed its voracious appetite, with the burgeoning economies of China and India seemingly insatiable. Belarus could also gain significantly if it positions itself to do business with Africa.

When properly harnessed the opportunity brought by international trade for Belarus and countries from the African continent can be a powerful force for creating jobs, enabling efficient use of natural resources, providing incentives for entrepreneurs from both sides, industrial and agricultural development, flow of capital goods and technical know-how and ultimately improving the standard of living. It is also worthwhile to note that international trade promotes peace in the entire world because in the presence of international trade people of different countries come close together and they become interdependent.

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ОСОБЕННОСТИ МИРОВОГО РЫНКА ЭНЕРГИИ НА БАЗЕ ДРЕВЕСИНЫ

Энергоносители на базе древесины являются основным возобновляемым источником энергии в последние годы. Крупнейшим потребителем энергии на базе древесины является лесная промышленность (46,8 %), за которой следуют жилищно-коммунальный сектор (32,6 %) и теплоэлектростанции (18,3 %). Существуют две основные категории источников древесины, используемой в целях получения энергии: кос-