



The time period for which the SPIC is valid is taken to be five years from the time the investment project reaches the level where it has an operating profit. But as of today the maximum period for an SPIC cannot exceed 10 years. However, on instructions from the Russian Federation President amendments to existing regulation have been drawn up that are intended to increase this validity period to no less than 20 years...

Смп. 13 >>>

Alexander Katasov: «*WE ARE ALWAYS HERE, IN STOCKHOLM AND READY TO ACT*»



In 2017, the Russian Trade Representation in the Kingdom of Sweden celebrates its 90th anniversary. This year on November 23 the annual Russian-Swedish Economic Forum will be held in the Trade Representation. On the eve of this event, the Trade representative of the Russian Federation in Sweden Alexander Valentinovich Katasov told the newspaper «ezh-YURIST» about the upcoming forum, the current activities of the Trade Representation as well as about the two countries' cooperation in the field of entrepreneurship.

Ed.: Alexander Valentinovich, 90 years of the Russian Trade Representation operating in Sweden is a long time. Mention the most significant, in your opinion, results achieved during this period.

A.V.: I would like to begin by saying that next year we will celebrate the centenary from the moment when the Russian Federation restored trade and economic relations with Sweden. On May 27, 1918 Plenipotentiary representative of the RSFSR V. Vorovsky signed a contract with the Swedish company Jensen & Co. for the sale of thousands of tons of hemp. Sweden was the first western country that resumed trade with our country, and the share of imports from Sweden in 1920 amounted to 26% of the total imports.

In October 1927, the Convention between the USSR and Sweden «On the Legal Status of the Trade Representation of the USSR in Sweden» was signed. This Soviet-Swedish foreign trade legal basis gave impetus to the development of mutual trade.

The development of economic ties during the Second World War was one of the significant stages in

bilateral economic relations. During this period, an agreement on trade and payments between the USSR and Sweden was signed, as well as an agreement on granting the USSR a loan to pay for Soviet orders placed in Sweden. The Trade representation obtained the right to issue bills for payment of goods supplied during the war from Sweden to the USSR. Subsequently, the Soviet and Swedish governments signed a number of agreements on granting loans to the Soviet Union.

In the postwar years, there was a further development of bilateral trade relations. In 1970, a new Long-Term Trade Agreement for the period 1971-1975 was signed between the USSR and Sweden. This fundamental document reflected the desire of the parties to develop bilateral trade.

The stagnation of the 1990s was replaced by a rise in bilateral trade, which we observed before the European sanctions were introduced.

It is simply impossible to limit the description of our work by several significant results, as we have such a long and interesting history. It should be noted that in any historical period, regardless of

external circumstances, the Trade Representation acted proceeding from the tasks of the current moment - during the war we solved one type of tasks, during the period of sanctions - another. But we are always here, in Stockholm and ready to act.

Ed.: Alexander Valentinovich, tell us, in what areas has the Trade Representation concentrated its efforts now?

A.V.: The main mission of the Trade Representation throughout the whole period of its existence is the promotion of Russia's interests in the global economy. This is a complex mission. It includes searching for partners, initialization and support of new projects in the field of economic cooperation, the attraction of Swedish investments and high-tech industries to Russian regions and much more.

Ed.: How often do Russian participants in foreign economic activity receive offers to supply their goods and services to the Swedish market? In what areas of entrepreneurship is it possible to promote and implement such proposals? Give examples of successful entrepreneurial cases.

A.V.: The annual number of applications that we receive from Russian participants in economic activity exceeds 600. These requests come from ministries, commercial and industrial chambers, and directly from companies. In addition, we regularly receive requests from Swedish companies that want to find a partner in Russia. This is important to note that despite the active presence of Swedish profile organizations, such as Business Sweden with a representative office in Moscow, many Swedish companies prefer to contact us. This is to a certain extent due to the fact that trade representations of the Russian Federation in foreign

states are state bodies and unlike most foreign colleagues we provide information and consulting services to Russian and foreign participants of foreign economic activity for free.

Speaking about the areas of entrepreneurship, I want to note that we cover almost all of them, looking both from the point of view of industries, and in terms of volumes. To the Trade Representation can apply a company, engaged in the production of construction work gloves, and the largest company that produces agricultural machinery. It is important that in each case we try to arouse the interest of the Swedish partners and conduct negotiations which will lead to a particular agreement.

The most vivid examples of success are when Swedish company uses Russian fibrocement slabs for building a house in Sweden or Russian ATVs during the hunt in the Swedish forests. This is what we are doing and will try to do on an ongoing basis.

Ed.: What sector of the Russian economy interests Swedish entrepreneurs?

A.V.: It's easier to say which one does not attract them. In order to answer this question, you just need to know the Swedes and their history. They have always appreciated fine work, including manual, as well as safety and, especially in recent years, environmental friendliness. Unfortunately, not all Russian products meet these requirements. So to some extent we do fine work - we are looking for those who are ready to meet the highest Swedish requirements. There are many such companies in Russia.

In addition, the Trade representation constantly monitors the current situation on the Swedish market. For example, now there is a construction boom in Sweden. And we know what Russian companies can offer in this situation, and we try not to miss the moment.

Ed.: Do the proposals of Russian entrepreneurs attract interest of Swedish colleagues? In which directions are the Swedes want to cooperate most actively?

A.V.: Any Russian quality product can be in demand on the Swedish market. The key to success is active cooperation with the Trade Representation, including the direct participation of companies in the Swedish events. The Trade Representation provides multilateral assistance and searches for partners for Russian companies, but it is necessary to take into account

promotion of goods to the local market.

Ed.: Is there any hope for a warming of relations in the sphere of economic cooperation?

A.V.: We hope so. And there are certain signals, but we are ready to work under any circumstances.

Ed.: What do you expect from the upcoming VII Russian-Swedish economic forum? What areas of bilateral cooperation will be central at the forum?

A.V.: The Forum has become a recognizable and expected annual



that it is better to take part in the exhibition once than to send your catalogs many times by mail.

Ed.: Does the Trade Representation face any problems due to any legal or economic impediments?

A.V.: The introduction of sanctions, unfortunately, severely limited the set of high-tech Russian products that can be supplied to Sweden. So, since 2014 we had to completely freeze cooperation with JSC «Concern VKO Almaz-Antey», despite the fact that the products of the enterprises that are part of the concern and produce medical and other civilian equipment interested the Swedes. And this is just one example.

It is impossible not to mention the complex political relations between our countries. We hope that in the coming years the situation will change.

Ed.: With what questions and problems does the Russian businessmen address the Trade Representation?

A.V.: Russian entrepreneurs want to become active participants in the Swedish market and find new partners here. Often we go through all stages together with our companies - from preparation of presentations about products, participation in negotiations and certification to logistics and direct

event for the business world of Sweden and Russia. This year we are planning to focus on the sectors that have been actively developed in recent years in Sweden and in our country: building-construction, automotive and ship-construction. In these industries, goods with high added value are being produced, the bringing them to the Swedish market is one of our key tasks. At the VII Russian-Swedish Economic Forum, the Trade Representation will organize presentations of UAZ vehicles, as well as small-sized vessels produced at the Samara shipyard «Volzhanka».

Ed.: Does the Russian-Swedish Steering Committee on Trade and Economic Cooperation operate now?

A.V.: To our regret since 2013 the sessions of the Supervisory Committee have not been conducted. However, we expect that meeting of the chairmen of the national parts of the two countries, the Minister of Industry and Trade of Russia D. Manturova and the Minister for EU Affairs and Trade of Sweden Anne Linde, which was held on September 13 will help change this situation for the better.

Ed.: Thank you for the conversation.

Interviewed Nadezhda Yashina,
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