

A joint news conference by Dmitry Medvedev and Chairman of the Board of the Eurasian Economic Commission Tigran Sargsyan following a meeting of the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council

Excerpts from the transcript:

A joint news conference by Dmitry Medvedev and Chairman of the Board of the Eurasian Economic Commission Tigran Sargsyan following a meeting of the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council

Dmitry Medvedev: We have completed a regular meeting of the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council. Let me, once again, thank our Belarusian friends for their heartfelt welcome and well-organised event. This is a difficult job and we do it through discussion, so good conditions are needed.

Today we discussed strategic directions, specific matters regarding the development of the Eurasian Union. Let me point out again, that generally, fairly good economic indicators have been achieved and common markets are being shaped within the parameters and in the areas that are stipulated in the EAEU founding treaty. A case in point is the growth of internal and external trade. This creates conditions that encourage companies to invest in new projects. And this, on the whole, increases the practical output of integration.

In a time of tremors on international markets, trade wars that are being waged today in various countries, using various methods and on various markets, the value of our integration-based association, in this sense, increases, because we act according to common rules, trying to achieve common results, allowing our economies to develop and our businesses to make investments. All this is valuable in an era of instability in the world trade system.

Regarding the outcomes, we have taken decisions on certain industries, they are all known. There are difficult issues which require more work. They include establishing a common oil and gas market, and work on the design of the Union's financial market. We have agreed that we will combine our efforts in this area.

The Eurasian Commission reported on the results of work to remove various restrictions and barriers in the Eurasian Union's market in 2017–2018. We are overseeing this work. The countries always have reciprocal claims here which is hardly surprising. The only way to somehow sort out this backlog is to

make certain compromises and consistently work to lift various restrictions and barriers that stand in the way of our common economic market's progress.

We have begun work on forming the foundations of the Union's digital economy. It is one of the major areas of our activities. Unlike other areas where countries can advance at different speeds, in my view it is impossible to move at different speeds on digital.

Either we all go digital or one country or another will be sidelined and will not be able to participate in transactions at the interstate level or at the business level. Either that or we will all have to go back to the past and give up the advantages of the digital agenda. This is why we must move in unison on the digital agenda.

We selected eight projects. Two dozen more, as I have already said, are under review. We hope more favourable conditions will be created to carry out those initiatives. We have agreed today to draft a concept for applying special regimes called "regulatory sandboxes."

Also, joint forecasts for the development of the agricultural industry have been considered today, including an assessment of the demand for and production of particular produce, foodstuffs. We have agreed to encourage the production and use of electric vehicles. We have discussed a draft budget. Overall, all the decisions that were to be signed have been adopted. I expect this will create good conditions for celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Eurasian project and the fifth anniversary of signing the Union Treaty. A special programme was devised for celebrating the event. We have approved it today.

Let me thank our Belarusian colleagues again for organising the work and let me state that I think that on the whole we did a good job.

More to be soon...

[Dmitry Medvedev meets with Chairperson of the National Assembly of Vietnam Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan](#)

Conversation with Chairperson of the National Assembly of Vietnam Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan

Excerpts from the transcript:

Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan (*via interpreter*): Mr Prime Minister, Russian friends,

First of all, I would like to welcome you to Vietnam. We have the highest regard for the importance of your present visit as well as for your personal contribution to the development of relations between our two countries in recent time.

We are very glad that Russia boasts stability and that the Russian leadership has succeeded in gaining much support of the population. You are able to maintain the country's unity in order to successfully implement the aims envisaged for the 2018-2024 period.

Russia plays a very important role in maintaining peace and stable development in the region and the world. We have always regarded Russia as our close friend. Almost 70 years have passed since the establishment of diplomatic relations between our countries.

We favour the further expansion of Russia's relations with Asian countries, including relations between Russia and ASEAN. We have always viewed Russia as our foreign policy priority.

Dmitry Medvedev: Ms Chairperson of the National Assembly of Vietnam Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, colleagues, comrades,

First of all, I would like to say that I am glad to have made your acquaintance. And I am very pleased to be visiting the friendly Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

We are indeed strategic partners, and we are friends. Our friendship is many decades old. We maintain active contacts in all spheres and at all political levels, including the national leadership level. The General Secretary [of your party] and President of the country visited [Russia] recently. Right now, I am on a government visit [to Vietnam]. State Duma Speaker will soon visit your country. I would like to take this opportunity to convey greetings from Federation Council Speaker Valentina Matviyenko and State Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin.

I hope we will maintain good relations in the future as well.

[Dmitry Medvedev meets with General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam and President of Vietnam Nguen Phu Trong](#)

Meeting with General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam and President of Vietnam Nguen Phu Trong

Excerpts from the transcript:

Nguyen Phu Trong (*via interpreter*): Mr Medvedev, I am very happy to welcome you in Vietnam. You have conveyed very warm feelings from the people of Russia to us. Your current visit to Vietnam is taking place at a time when relations between our countries are developing very positively. I have the warmest memories of my recent visit to Russia and of our meeting at your residence during my stay in Russia. I am absolutely confident that your current visit will help further strengthen traditional friendship and all-round strategic partnership between Vietnam and the Russian Federation. I would like to once again wish you a successful visit to Vietnam.

Dmitry Medvedev: Mr General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam and President of Vietnam Nguyen Phu Trong,

I would also like to personally greet you, to thank you for your hospitality and to completely agree with you that this visit is taking place at a time when our countries maintain very good relations of all-round strategic partnership. I hope that these events will also help expand our ties.

You have visited us quite recently, and it is very good that the leaders of our countries maintain fairly regular contacts. This guarantees that we will always have good and friendly relations. I would like to pass on greetings from President Putin and to wish you every success in the future.

[Dmitry Medvedev's news conference following his visits to Papua New Guinea and Vietnam](#)

The Prime Minister answered questions from the Russian media.

Dmitry Medvedev's news conference following his visits to Papua New Guinea and Vietnam

Excerpts from the transcript:

Question: You have said during the talks with the Prime Minister of Vietnam that the atmosphere in Hanoi was better than at the APEC Economic Leaders' Week in Papua New Guinea, which made me think of the following question. The participants of the meeting in Papua New Guinea have not signed a final declaration, for the first time in the past 25 years. Could you not agree on the wording or on the essence of the document? Can the WTO be reformed if its main members cannot agree on the wording? Whose side did Russia take in this

dispute?

Dmitry Medvedev: I do not want to offend our friends from Papua New Guinea. They did their utmost to prepare their country, which is not among the best developed country in the world, for this event. We really appreciate this, but speaking about the outcome of the top-level APEC meeting is much more difficult. For the first time since the organisation's inception, we could not coordinate a declaration. You want to know why? The reason for this is what you have asked about: difficulties in international trade, the very same trade wars that are being waged in the world, as well as the discussion that was held both on the sidelines of the APEC meeting and at the negotiating table. Unfortunately, that discussion prevented us from adopting a final document.

This document is important as the declaration of the sides' intentions to reform the international trade system without damaging the advantages offered by the WTO. The worst part is not that we have not coordinated a final declaration, but that this is what I was talking about, to a degree, during the business part of the summit. Regrettably, the international trade system has been put in jeopardy by some countries' decisions. Speaking bluntly, the problem is rooted in the decisions taken by one of our partners, the United States. Everything looks rather difficult now.

Of course, we are ready to hold talks on this subject. If we look at the situation directly and honestly, what will we see? If we cannot coordinate a declaration, how can we reform the WTO? It comprises a huge amount of standards, rules and principles, as well as practical actions regarding some problems. One complaint about the WTO is that its dispute settlement process, or arbitration, is imperfect and that we need to improve it. But how can we reform whole institutions if we cannot even agree on a declaration? In this sense, the outcome of the APEC summit does look unconvincing, to put it very mildly.

You have asked which side Russia took. We have taken our side, the side of Russia's national interests, national economy and, ultimately, the citizens. However, some views are more congenial to us. You know which views these are. Of course, it would be more agreeable if we could preserve the main WTO advantages and its framework while reforming its dispute settlement process. The majority of states, though not everyone, share this view. But some countries, in particular, our American partners, say that everything is fine and they do not think any changes are needed. I believe it is a misguided view. But we will see what happens next.

More to be posted soon...

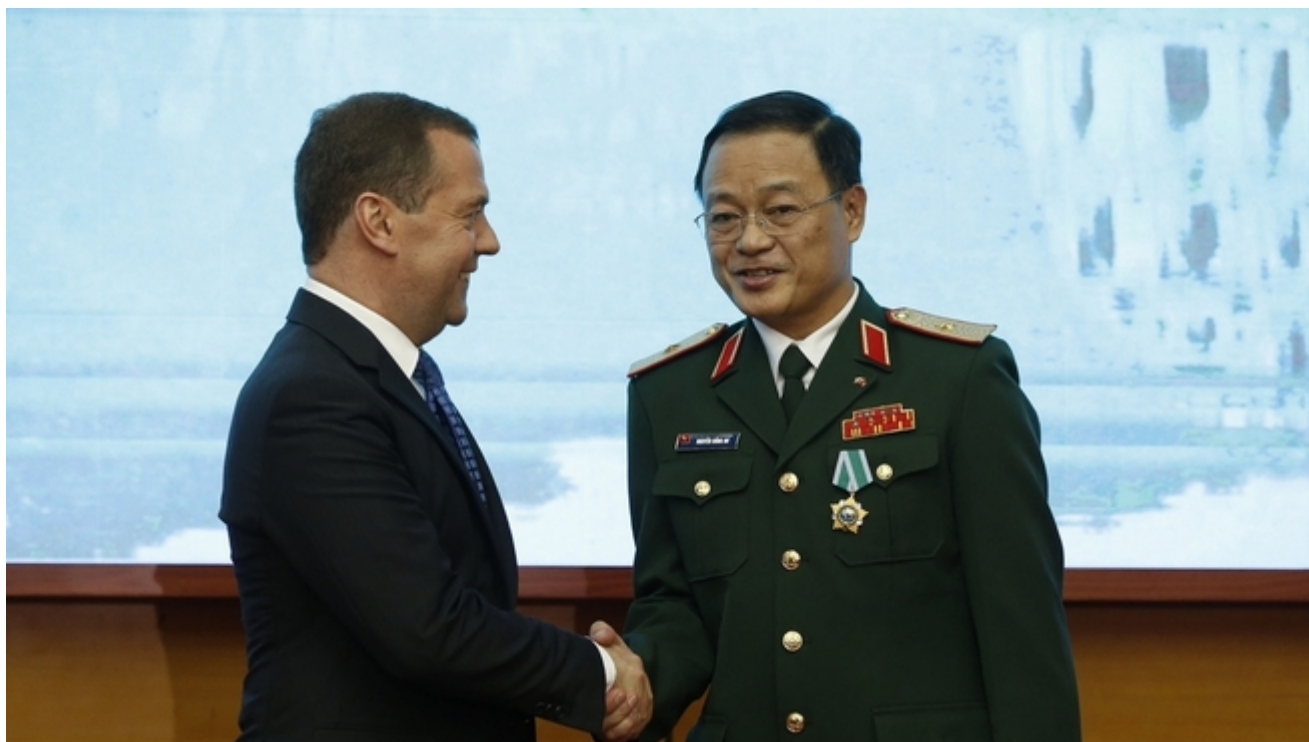
Dmitry Medvedev visits Russian-Vietnamese Tropical Research and Technology Centre

Dmitry Medvedev congratulates the workers of the Russian-Vietnamese Tropical Research and Technology Centre on the occasion of its 30th anniversary and awards Russian Federation state decorations.



Visiting the Russian-Vietnamese Tropical Research and Technology Centre

19 November 2018



Presenting the Order of Friendship to General Director of the Centre's Vietnamese Section Nguyen Hong Du

19 November 2018



Dmitry Medvedev with General Director of the Centre's Vietnamese Section Nguyen Hong Du and General Director of the Centre's Russian Section Andrei Kuznetsov

19 November 2018

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Visiting the Russian-Vietnamese Tropical Research and Technology Centre

Dmitry Medvedev's remarks at a ceremony dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the Tropical Centre:

Friends, comrades,

I am delighted to visit our joint Russian-Vietnamese Tropical Centre. This is a research and technological organisation and one of the key facilities for our cooperation in the scientific and technological sphere. A similar centre – and you know this well – does not exist anywhere else in the world. The centre has been in existence for practically 30 years. Numerous investigations have been conducted in the tropical zone since that time, all of them pursued in both countries' interests. The Centre's record shows that our specialists are able and know how to work together. This cooperation has resulted in unique R&D in the sphere of fundamental and applied science (and you demonstrated some of these results). Many of them have been appreciated by the professional community as well as by Russian and Vietnamese ministries and agencies.

I cannot but note your achievements in the field of environmental protection and medicine as well as the contribution you have made when it comes to solving various applied and scientific problems, such as durability of materials and equipment, including Russian-made equipment supplied to Vietnam as part of military-technical cooperation programmes.

Environmental security research is very important as well. I am referring to the study of the aftermath of the chemical war the US conducted in Vietnam as well as problems related to the emergence and diffusion of particularly hazardous infectious diseases.

Friends, let me cordially congratulate the Tropical Centre on the occasion of its 30th anniversary. I am confident that quite a few interesting projects are awaiting you in the future and that owing to their joint work the researchers from our two countries can achieve impressive results. I would like to deliver to the Tropical Centre's workers a message of appreciation from the President of Russia. This is a sign of high appreciation of your contribution to the development and strengthening of cooperation between Russia and Vietnam. I would like to mention in particular your colleague, Major General Nguyen Hong Du, who began his career here at the Centre and rose up the career ladder to Vietnamese General Director of the Tropical Centre. Today, thanks to your efforts, the Russian-Vietnamese team is working in a coordinated and highly efficient way. Not so long ago, you celebrated your 60th birthday. Let me wish you many happy returns of the day. I am happy to award you a Russian state decoration – the Order of Friendship – for your contribution to defence, research and technological cooperation.

I wish all Tropical Centre workers good health, new scientific achievements

and wellbeing. I once again would like to express a hope that many remarkable discoveries and achievements for the good of our two countries are in store for you and us in the future.

Thank you very much for your work.