

**Выступление Министра иностранных дел
Республики Беларусь В.Макея на
международной видеоконференции в рамках
инициативы “Пояс и путь” (18 июня 2020 г.)**

Dear Mr Minister Wang Yi,
Dear colleagues,

I would like to thank our Chinese colleagues for organising this conference and wish it every success.

COVID-19 is a new reality and the world must mobilise its efforts to defeat the pandemic and to overcome the ensuing world economic crisis.

The sole driving force for these efforts must be based on the common sense. Any politicisation of the coronavirus reality may only compound harm and postpone recovery.

Mutual accusations and trade protectionism ruin the long-built multilateral trading system. Hard times bring forward scourges of discrimination, stigma, racism and xenophobia, which should have no space in modern society, especially when we confront the biggest world crisis this century.

Living alone in an interdependent world, a nation will fall off a cliff. My strong belief is that only by joint coordinated effort we can defeat the virus and its negative consequences.

Belarus was the first to deliver humanitarian assistance to China during the pandemic. We are very grateful to our Chinese friends for the assistance they timely rendered to us and to all those who extended their helpful hand and expressed solidarity.

I would also like to thank the World Health Organisation for their help and look forward to further cooperation with this Organisation and the entire United Nations family in the spirit of unity, solidarity, mutual support and multilateral cooperation.

In Belarus we achieved significant success in fighting the new coronavirus with one of the lowest related death tolls among the developed states: 0.6 per cent of all infected.

During the pandemic we did not cease land communication and air travel. Thanks to what dozens of thousands of people could return to their homes and that softened the negative impact on the national economy.

Belarus is ready to share its experience in mobilising the national healthcare system as well as in preserving the resilience of the economy.

Since the early days of the “Belt and Road” initiative Belarus has been one of the ardent supporters of the idea to link East and West with a single trading corridor.

I am convinced that we need to exploit to the fullest the Initiative's potential, including that of a uniting platform for sharing the COVID-19-related knowledge, experiences, best practices, data, and commodities necessary for the response.

Our common aim is to coordinate the states' actions within the Belt and Road which should be based on equality, fairness and transparency.

To approach this goal at the very early stage we should achieve some practical results on three following issues.

Firstly, we need to **shape digital transport corridors**, especially between China and Europe.

Implementation of the modern satellite navigation seals allows to eliminate excessive customs and other procedures and to shorten the time of goods delivery by 4-5 days. In Belarus we have very much succeeded in promoting the seals technology.

Secondly, we should **abolish the authorisation system in international road transport**. That would serve as additional stimulus for the development of transport and logistics activities.

Thirdly, **our infrastructures should be more interlinked**. We need to further develop near-border stations, motor and railways, bridges, and multi-modal transport hubs. Interrelated infrastructure is a key pillar for the development through cooperation.

Belarus has already made a significant input in the infrastructural development of the Initiative what makes us feel especially proud. Five years ago with our Chinese partners we started from the scratch the "Great Stone" hi-tech park project which became "The Pearl of the Silk road", as the Chairman Xi Jinping has named it.

In 2019 the "Great Stone" Park was ranked by the World Federation of Free and Special Economic Zones as the fastest growing park of its kind in the world with the total amount of investments of 1.2 billion US dollars.

In conclusion, I wish to stress one message: it is up to us whether to follow the new standards of economic cooperation and to create a new big space of prosperity or to roll back to outdated geopolitical manoeuvres.

Thank you for your attention.