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PRESENT TENDENCIES OF INNOVATION POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

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Under the current conditions of global competition the opportunities of a state to meet increasing social demands are primarily defined by the level of its scientific and technical potential of development. Countries with transition economy set the main goal, that is to orient themselves to the innovative development that serves as the main basis for economic national safety and that lets national economy be involved in the global competition when this competition is rather high.

The work of N.D. Kontratyev gave a powerful impulse to research in innovations and their role in economic development, the researches of the Austrian economist J. Shupiter who looked at the main concepts of theoretical innovative processes and innovation as the change of technology and management also made an important impact. Nowadays our national researchers, economists pay much attention to the problem of innovative development, we can distinguish the Doctor of Economic Sciences of the Republic of Belarus P.K. Zhabko, the Academician of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Belarus P.G. Nikitenko, the chairperson of the Academy of Sciences Professor M.B. Myasnikovich and others.

While considering innovative development of advanced countries we should mention that it is undergoing three directions. The first one is oriented at creating new knowledge (the USA, the United Kingdom, France), the second one

puts special emphasis on diffusion of innovations, spreading knowledge (Japan, Germany, Sweden). The third direction of innovative development has a local "transition" character. It is peculiar for postsocialist countries and has a certain concentration of scientific and research potential at specialized institutions.

Among the CIS countries Belarus has the third in scope scientific and technical potential (after Russia and the Ukraine). Purposeful work to save and develop scientific, technical and innovative potential is under way lately. The science management system is being perfected, legal and normative basis for scientific and innovative development is being expanded and strengthened, measures to increase the level of innovative production, to develop information infrastructure, small and medium–sized enterprises, a complex of high technologies are being taken. While Belarus has been an independent state the first technoparks (Metolit /BSTU/ and CSC "Technological park of Mogilev" which is a classical European technopark in its structure) were formed.

Since 2004 regional innovative structures have been speeded up in their formation and the corresponding legal basis has been perfected. All these measures however are not regular and they don't aim at the formation of corresponding market relations and international standards of Belarus. As a result Belarus has single though important fragments of potentially whole research system, they are research and educational institutions, innovation reacting enterprises and innovative infrastructure.

In Belarus researches and developments are lately being done in research trusts, higher educational institutions, at enterprises. Yearly increase of innovative activity is noted and it accounted in GDP 0.69% costs on research development in 2006 in relation to 0.63% in 2005. Innovation activity is significantly contributing to national economic development now. In 2007 17% of the total volume innovation produce was consumed within the country, 25.4% was directed to the CIS countries' market, 57.6% went abroad.

The result of research development of recent years affected the achievements in the field of automobile and tractorbuilding, microelectronics, production of modern TVsets, city transport system, medication and medical equipment, sensor techniques and so on. Scientific and technical centers providing continuity of innovative processes have been set up. In the Republic of Belarus 61 scientific and technical centers are currently functioning. In 2005 955 inventions, 731 useful models, 204 industrial samples, 1800 brands, 24 sorts of plants, 1 topology of integral microscheme, 329 licencing agreements are registered in the state roll, 1600 objects of new techniques, 344 kinds of machines, equipment and instruments, 438 technological processes, 87 automatic systems and complexes have been made.

Considering a certain number of directions Belarus doesn't lag behind the world tendencies, it holds strong positions among the leaders in development of fundamental problems in the field of physics, mathematics, new materials, software.

Nevertheless, there exist some negative tendencies threatening the effective, innovative development of the republic.

They are primarily the following: growing absolete technical and materials basis of research institutions, research staff growing old. There are certain challenges in maintaining workable the unique experimental complexes (mainly the National Sciences Academy institutions). The production level of innovative activity of businesses constitutes only 13%, that is 4 times lower than that of the European Community countries. As a result the share of innovative output in production is only 2.3% per year with its limit of economic satety being 6%. The average making the most of equipment and technologies in the sphere of production of Belarus is 20-30 years. About 50% them had been developed and introduced in the former USSR. The dynamics of the wear and tear of the active part of the basic funds has acquired a negative character because of low equipment renewal (3–5% per year). The share of small innovative enterprises is very low, their number is decreasing. Thus since 1997 it has decreased 2.3 times, from 600 to 275. The staff constitutes 0.6% of the total number of those employed at small enterprises.

Thus the formation of integral innovative system in Belarus will promote the development of innovative processes in production, gradual rejection from material and energy consuming technologies and transition to knowledge oriented economy.