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Brief article

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# **Arctic Agenda of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF-2023)**

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**Abstract.** The article summarizes the general results of the 26th St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF-2023), which took place in St. Petersburg from 14 to 17 June 2023. The author, as a participant of the forum, attended all 15 events of the business program "The Arctic: Territory of Dialogue", organized by the Ministry for the Development of the Far East and the Arctic. The article focuses on the problems of international cooperation, including with Asian countries, and the development of the Northern Sea Route. **Keywords:** Russia, Arctic, Roscongress Foundation, international cooperation, Asian countries, Northern Sea Route

### **Introduction**

According to Roscongress, more than 17 thousand people from 130 countries took part in the work of the 16th St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF-2023) in live and virtual formats.

The main event of the Forum was the plenary session with the participation of the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin and the President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria Abdelmadjid Tebboune.

The United Arab Emirates, whose delegation was headed by President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, was an honored guest country this year. The forum was also attended by the President of the Republic of Armenia, the President of South Ossetia, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Cuba, and more than 150 high-ranking officials — heads of international organizations and associations, foreign ministers, heads of diplomatic missions.

The largest delegations were from the UAE, China, India, Myanmar, Kazakhstan, Cuba and the USA. More than 6,000 representatives of Russian and foreign business from more than 3,000 companies from 75 countries and territories, including 150 companies from 25 unfriendly countries, took part in the Forum.

### **Business program**

SPIEF-2023 was held under the slogan "Sovereign development is the foundation of a just world. Let's join forces for the sake of future generations." Numerous discussions were held within the framework of five thematic blocks: "World economy at a global turning point", "Russian econ-

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omy: from adaptation to growth", "Building technological sovereignty", "Protecting the population and quality of life as the main priority", "Labor market: a response to the new challenges".

The experts stated that the new world order and the new world economy open new strategic opportunities for Russia for business partnership rather than competition. At the final press conference of SPIEF-2023, Anton Kobyakov, Advisor to the President of Russia, noted: "Russia has become the center of the new world order, forming it with its partners in the SCO, BRICS, and EAEU. Partnership with ASEAN countries is developing. Thirty new countries have expressed their desire to join BRICS, and the same number of countries wants to become partners in the SCO. The number of EAEU observer countries is constantly growing. African states are seriously interested in cooperation. Cooperation with Arab countries is expanding." <sup>1</sup>

The Forum focused on the development of business relations and expansion of contacts with trade partners from the CIS countries, the Arab world, India, China, EAEU—ASEAN, Latin America, which allow Russia to demonstrate economic stability under the pressure of huge sanctions. SPIEF-2023 participants started to form a new space of trust based on the principles of equal trading partnership. The Forum clearly showed that a new bloc of countries striving for sovereignty has been formed, ready to build bridges of understanding and cooperation around the world. The main expectation from SPIEF-2023 was the identification of the vector of international, state, economic and social tasks for the future.

More than 100 organizations and companies acted as Forum partners. More than 4,000 media representatives from Russia and foreign countries covered the international event. Representatives of 200 Russian higher education institutions took part in the Forum's Youth Day events. As part of the business program, over 200 events took place at industry and thematic venues. Over the four days, more than 1,500 moderators, experts and speakers, including foreign ones, discussed socio-economic development, ecology, healthcare, transport, culture and tourism, education and science <sup>2</sup>.

The "Soul of Russia" International Festival of the Peoples of the North was a highlight of SPIEF-2023. Its discussion and cultural programs were included in the plan for Russia's chairman-ship of the Arctic Council in 2021–2023. The festival demonstrated the diversity of the cultural heritage of the northern peoples of the Russian Federation.

The cultural and sports programs were rich and varied. More than 50 events were organized for Forum guests: the St. Petersburg Seasons cultural festival, St. Petersburg Art Fair 1703, classical music concerts, the Sails of Kronstadt festival, and the exhibition "Terracotta Army. Immortal warriors of China". SPIEF sports games were held in two cities in 18 sports. The Roscongress Foundation was the traditional organizer of the Forum.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Results of SPIEF-2023. URL: https://www.vedomosti.ru/press\_releases/2023/06/19/itogi-raboti-pmef-2023 (accessed 20 June 2023).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Results of SPIEF-2023. URL: https://roscongress.org/news/itogi-raboty-pmef-2023/?ysclid=ljg54s1ouf44892634 (accessed 20 June 2023).

In addition to the main business program, the Russian Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Forum, the International Youth Economic Forum, the Drug Safety Forum, and the Creative Business Forum were held.

## Arctic agenda of the Forum

The Arctic issues took a special place in the work of the Forum. Over the course of 4 days, 15 events were held within the framework of the business program "The Arctic: Territory of Dialogue" (the exhibition of which was designed in the form of an iceberg and the northern lights).

At SPIEF-2023, the prospects and opportunities for international cooperation, including with Asian countries, issues of Arctic biodiversity, specially protected natural areas, development of the Northern Sea Route, human capital, Arctic cities, scientific and educational potential of the Arctic, and digitalization of the northern territories were widely discussed. Leaders of the Arctic regions of the Russian Federation presented new investment projects of their regions. Events devoted to tourism development, branding, promotion of the Arctic theme in the media and film production were also significant.

Speakers at these events were the Minister of the Russian Federation for the Development of the Far East and the Arctic A.O. Chekunkov, heads of subjects of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation: Governor of the Murmansk Oblast A.V. Chibis, Governor of the Arkhangelsk Oblast A.V. Tsybulskiy, Governor of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug Yu.V. Bezdudnyy, Head of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug D.A. Artyukhov, Head of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) A.S. Nikolaev, Head of the Komi Republic V.V. Uiba, Head of the Republic of Karelia A.O. Parfenchikov, Acting Governor of the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug V.G. Kuznetsov, as well as high officials of the Ministry of Eastern Development of the Russian Federation (G.G. Guseinov, E.R. Nurgalieva, M.A. Dankin), the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, the Russian Academy of Sciences, the State Atomic Energy Corporation Rosatom, heads of large industrial enterprises, business structures, scientific and educational organizations, the Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East.

The speakers emphasized the increasing role of the Arctic in the socio-economic development of the Russian Federation and its regions and noted the negative consequences of limiting the activities of the Arctic Council.

At the session "The Arctic as a special area of international cooperation: prospects and opportunities" 3, prepared within the framework of the Think Arctic — Think Global project, implemented jointly by the Roscongress Foundation and the Center for Comprehensive European and International Studies of the National Research University Higher School of Economics in the context of the program of Russia's chairmanship of the Arctic Council in 2021–2023, the current state

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> SPIEF-2023: The Arctic: Territory of Dialogue. URL: https://forumspb.com/programme/arctic/111143/ (accessed 28 June 2023).

and prospects for cooperation in the Arctic towards achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals in the light of Russia's AC chairmanship were discussed.

The online session was opened by Ambassador-at-Large of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, senior official of the Russian Federation in the Arctic Council N.V. Korchunov, noting that the Arctic is becoming increasingly prominent on the global agenda and more and more countries are showing interest in this region. Particular attention was paid to the BRICS countries, taking into account the upcoming Russian chairmanship in the association. Opportunities for cooperation with the countries of the Persian Gulf and Latin America were also noted. Director of the Department for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation and the Implementation of Infrastructure Projects of the Ministry for the Development of the Russian Far East M.A. Dankin added that the Asia-Pacific countries have shown interest in cooperation <sup>4</sup>.

All the presentations at the session discussed the processes and changes that have recently occurred in the Arctic region and the Arctic Council in particular [1, Lukin Yu.F.; 2, Zhuravel V.P.].

Some of the major European and Asian transnational companies, despite significant financial and image losses, have withdrawn from Arctic projects or revised their plans to invest in them. The European Commission imposed sanctions on the Kolarctic program, members of the Barents/Euro-Arctic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers suspended cooperation with the Russian Federation. Arctic scientific cooperation was frozen [3, Zhuravel V.P., Timoshenko D.S.].

In March 2022, seven countries of the Arctic Council (Denmark, Iceland, Canada, Norway, USA, Finland and Sweden) refused to participate in all meetings chaired by the Russian Federation and held on its territory as a sign of protest against Russia's special military operation in Ukraine. Later, on June 8, these states decided to resume AC activities on a limited basis, but without Russia's participation. All this ultimately resulted in a large-scale boycott ("freezing") of the Russian Federation's presidency of the Council.

Analyzing the speeches made at the session by representatives of Norway, China, India, and the United States, it is possible to identify their concerns. Glenn Diesen, Professor of the Department of Business, History and Social Sciences at the University of South-Eastern Norway, noted that the main areas of cooperation in the Arctic could be infrastructure development, energy and combating climate change. Guo Peiqing, Professor at the School of International Relations at China Ocean University, supported closer cooperation with the BRICS countries <sup>5</sup>. Suresh Gopalan, Professor, Doctor of Economics at Indian Jawaharlal Nehru University, drew attention to the importance of de-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Na PMEF obsudili perspektivnye napravleniya sotrudnichestva v vysokikh shirotakh v ramkakh sessii proekta "Think Arctic — Think Global" [At SPIEF, promising areas of cooperation in high latitudes were discussed as part of a session of the "Think Arctic — Think Global" project]. URL: https://arctic-council-rus-

sia.ru/news/oficial/na\_pmef\_obsudili\_perspektivnye\_napravleniya\_sotrudnichestva\_v\_vysokikh\_shirotakh\_v\_ramkak h\_sessii/ (accessed 28 June 2023).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ekspert: Rossii vazhno razvivat' mezhdunarodnoe sotrudnichestvo so stranami BRIKS v Arktike [Expert: It is important for Russia to develop international cooperation with the BRICS countries in the Arctic]. URL: https://tass.ru/ekonomika/18012037 (accessed 28 June 2023).

veloping science in the Arctic, studying the processes affecting climate, since people in India largely depend on agriculture. In his opinion, the Arctic is the future of large economic projects. Paul Foose, President of the Alaska Marine Exchange, stated that fisheries research, the Northern Sea Route, search and rescue, and Arctic cooperation have been stalled due to sanctions <sup>6</sup>.

Noting the existing difficulties, foreign speakers were unanimous in their readiness for full cooperation as soon as the situation in the world allows. Undoubtedly, in modern conditions it is necessary to develop and implement new forms and mechanisms of interaction with all Arctic countries and their regions, public associations, mass media, and organizations of indigenous peoples, especially youth. Such work experience has been successfully demonstrated by the Northern (Arctic) Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov during the events within the framework of the Russian Federation's chairmanship of the Arctic Council.

In this regard, the speech of M.L. Lagutina, Doctor of Political Science, Professor of St. Petersburg State University, was noteworthy. She noted the end of Arctic exceptionalism and stated the advent of a new era characterized by the globalization of the region, where in the new geopolitical situation the Arctic is moving from a regional to a global agenda. This is manifested in the new balance of power between Russia and NATO countries; Finland's entry into the alliance strengthens the Arctic potential of the military bloc and creates real threats to Russia in the northern direction. If previously there were two trends in the Arctic — economics and environmental protection, now politics dominates, as a result of which cooperation has suffered greatly, which is now limited and manifested only through private ties, mainly among representatives of the scientific community.

The participants of the international session were interested in the speech of the Executive Director of the Northern Forum Secretariat V.N. Vasilyev, who spoke about the plans of the organization. It was formed in 1991 at the conference "Cooperation in a Changing World", held in Anchorage (Alaska, USA). The following year, the organization received UN accreditation as a nongovernmental organization and observer status in the Arctic Council. Since 2013, its Secretariat was transferred to the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) in the city of Yakutsk, where it still operates. Changes in the international situation led to the fact that the Northern Forum de facto turned into an organization of Russian regions at the end of February 2022, although in the initial period foreign member regions did not apply to leave the organization, but stopped any interaction, ceasing to participate in organization events even in online format. According to V.N. Vasilyev, in March 2022, a new Concept for the development of the Northern Forum was developed for the short and medium term, aimed at turning in an eastern direction and actively reaching the global level. The main focus of the organization remains to improve the quality of life in the North, support the sustainable development of tourism and implement initiatives in the field of socio-economic cooper-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Pochetnyy prezident «Morskoy birzhi Alyaski» o segodnyashnikh otnosheniyakh s RF: «Slozhnee, chem ran'she» [Honorary President of the Alaska Marine Exchange on today's relations with the Russian Federation: "More difficult than before"]. URL: https://fedpress.ru/news/78/policy/3248716 (accessed 28 June 2023).

ation between the northern regions. The Regional Coordinators Committee approved the Concept at a meeting on June 6–7 in Khanty-Mansiysk, and the III Governors' Summit, held in Yakutsk as part of the IV Northern Forum on Sustainable Development, approved it on November 28. His speech positively assessed the activities of the Goodwill Ambassadors, including those from foreign countries, who carry out significant work aimed at popularizing, preserving the historical and cultural heritage of the Arctic and northern regions, stimulating environmental, educational, research and other activities, and attracting widespread attention to the problems of the North and Arctic regions. Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug – Yugra became the chairman of the international organization for the period 2023–2025. As the analysis shows, the 30-year experience of this organization is an instructive example of how, under favorable circumstances, it is possible to quickly establish constructive cooperation between the regions of the global North and the Arctic, exchange best practices, accumulated experience and competencies [4, Vasilyev V.N., Krasnopolskiy B.Kh., Pilyasov A.N.]. In our opinion, after the "freezing" of the Arctic Council in 2022, Russia needs to rely more on the Northern Forum in the development of international cooperation in the Arctic, but the basis should be contacts and relations in a bilateral format.

Director of the Arctic and Antarctic Research Institute A.S. Makarov dedicated his speech to discussing the global climate agenda. In his opinion, common problems for the activities of scientists from different countries could be the study of the North Pole, permafrost monitoring, joint use of ships, and year-round expeditionary work on the Spitsbergen archipelago as part of the work of the Russian Science Center. He also noted that Indonesia is interested in cooperation with Russia in the Arctic on climate studies in the Arctic, because climate change in this region greatly affects the monsoons and rains in Asia, which create risks for agriculture and threaten severe floods.

Taking into account the results of the Russian Federation's chairmanship of the AC, the incipient Norwegian chairmanship and the emerging Arctic situation should be analyzed more deeply. It is necessary to clarify the tactics of actions in the Arctic direction, realizing the importance of the Arctic Council in the exploration and development of the Arctic.

A.B. Likhacheva, Dean of the Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs at the National Research University Higher School of Economics, moderated this session with a deep knowledge of Arctic issues.

The session "Russia — Asia. U-turn based on trust" continued the discussion on the prospects of cooperation and the format of Russia's interaction with Asian countries, establishment of research and economic ties between leading scientific, educational and industrial organizations in bilateral and multilateral formats. The discussion was attended by representatives of government authorities, relevant ministries and agencies, scientific and business communities of Russia and Asian countries — Brazil, China and India. The Russian-Asian Consortium for Arctic Research, established at the end of 2022, laid a good foundation for this cooperation. The speakers suggested pos-

sible ways to achieve mutually beneficial and trusting relations between the Russian Federation and Asian countries.

Attention is drawn to the non-functioning of existing regional cooperation institutions against the backdrop of progress towards multipolarity. Much attention was paid to China and India as important partners for Russia in the economic development of the Arctic region. Unfortunately, the speeches did not include an analysis of possible risks and prospects for cooperation in the Asian direction. Indeed, Russia's geo-economic and geopolitical interests are gradually being reoriented towards further strengthening interaction with friendly countries, including countries in the Asia-Pacific region, where China is considered as one of the promising strategic partners [5, Akimov R.H.]. This creates new opportunities to increase the level of cooperation between the Russian Federation and China in the Arctic, primarily in the field of development of oil and gas fields and transportation of hydrocarbons.

For a deeper understanding of the current situation, we would like to draw attention to a number of provisions of an article by A.V. Torkunov and D.V. Streltsov "Russian policy of turning to East: problems and risks" recently published in the journal "World Economy and International Relations" [6]. The authors note: "From the historical and civilisational points of view, Russia remains a "distant neighbour" for the countries of the region, i.e. the country with a Western mentality and Western national traditions. Another problem is Russia's lack of experience and no significant achievements in Asian economic integration structures, as well as the lack of a solid niche in Asian markets." They further write: "Russia's policy-specific risk of pivoting to the East creates an obvious bias towards China in both economic and diplomatic spheres. It is particularly noticeable in the energy sector. In 2021, China imported almost USD3 billion worth of natural gas from the Russian Federation (a 16-fold increase since 2017). Since the start of the SMO, China has become a major alternative to European export markets for Russia. At the same time, Russia is not a monopoly supplier of energy to China. Russia's share in Chinese natural gas imports in 2021 was just over 6% — less than the supplies from "unfriendly" Japan. This gives rise to a risk of the "buyer's dictate" on the part of Beijing, which objectively weakens the negotiating position of Russian suppliers."

Taking into account these warning factors, Russia needs to think through long-term plans for developing relations with the main Asian partners on bilateral tracks. Given the current international situation, Russia also needs strong ties with India, DPRK, and the countries of Southeast Asia (Vietnam, Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, etc.). A strategy should be carefully developed, based on an understanding of the importance of each of these states for Russian national interests. In this regard, it is proposed to continue the development of the Russian Federation's policy strategy in the Eastern (Asian) direction at a new organizational level with the involvement of scientists from the Russian Academy of Sciences and institutions of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation in this work.

The session "Northern Sea Route. Results and plans" <sup>7</sup> discussed the development of the Northern Sea Route in the context of the task set by the President of the Russian Federation to ensure year-round use of the Northern Sea Route as a transport corridor on a global scale and the implementation of the NSR Development Plan until 2035, adopted in 2022 [7, Zhuravel V.P.] .

In his introductory remarks, session moderator M.E. Kuznetsov (director of the Eastern State Planning Centre), speaking about the Northern Sea Route, noted that we are at the beginning of year-round navigation and are actually talking about laying a new route, which are not so numerous on the planet. This was quite a long and intensive course, as a result of which Russia has advanced knowledge and technologies for effective and safe Arctic shipping in ice conditions.

We would like to draw attention to the report of the special representative for Arctic development of the State Atomic Energy Corporation Rosatom V. Panov, which outlined new approaches to the development of the NSR. Firstly, it is required to train personnel. Taking into account the construction of icebreaker-class vessels, it is necessary to have 7500 specialists by 2030, whose training will take 5.5 years. One nuclear icebreaker will require 431 people. In this regard, the Ministry of Transport, Rosatom, shippers, and shipping companies need to develop a specialist training program as soon as possible. Secondly, it is necessary to complete the development of a financial and economic model for the development of the NSR.

Top managers of leading mining, transport companies and scientific organizations attended the session. They discussed a large list of issues related to: ensuring the safety of navigation; effectiveness of government support measures for projects; mechanisms for increasing the efficiency of interaction between shippers, shipowners, authorities and infrastructure operators; competencies and experience of Russian industry in the construction of a civil fleet for work in the Arctic; creation of special vessels (hydrographic, auxiliary ice support vessels, maintenance of icebreakers); possibilities of existing and prospects for the construction of new shipyards.

The session was addressed by G.G. Huseynov, First Deputy Minister of the Russian Federation for the Development of the Far East and the Arctic (the development of the NSR is an urgent change in global logistics); I.V. Tonkovidov, General Director, Chairman of the Board of PJSC Sovcomflot (shipbuilders play a large role in the development of the Northern Sea Route); E.V. Gudkov, Deputy Chairman of the Board of PJSC NOVATEK (the NOVATEK company has begun implementing the Arctic LNG 2 project; for this purpose, a Center for the construction of large-capacity offshore structures, "a plant for the production of plants (LNG)", is being built in the Kola Bay, in the Belokamenka area); A.M. Grachev, Vice President for Federal and Regional Programs of PJSC MMC Norilsk Nickel (the Northern Sea Route is a factor in the development of industry, shipbuilding, tourism, it connects the most remote territories of the country); G.V. Fotin, General Director, LLC "GDK Baimskaya" (the Baimsk project will not only strengthen Russia's position in the international market, but will also radically transform the country's Arctic territories); A.S. Makarov,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> SPIEF-2023: The Arctic: Territory of Dialogue. URL: https://forumspb.com/programme/arctic/111143/ (accessed 28 June 2023).

director of the Arctic and Antarctic Research Institute of Roshydromet (an increase in cargo traffic will require more data), etc.

The task of year-round use of the NSR is complex, since severe ice conditions are predicted until 2050, icebreakers are a key solution to this problem, and by 2030 a group of 14 icebreakers will be operating on the NSR <sup>8</sup>. It is also noted that one of the most important tasks is the provision of personnel, construction and development of new infrastructure for the development of the territory of Siberia and the Far East <sup>9</sup>. There were also discussions about the newly formed institution "Main Directorate of the Northern Sea Route" (FSBI "Glavsevmorput") <sup>10</sup>, created to ensure navigation in the waters of the Northern Sea Route, and its role in increasing security on the Northern Sea Route.

The NSR is the sea route to the East. The SMO has only reinforced the strategic importance of accelerating the development of this path. In 2014, 4 million tons of cargo was transported along it, and since 2020 — more than 30 million tons. There has been a serious growth in 6 years. The Northern Sea Route will continue to develop as new facilities are commissioned.

#### **Conclusion**

For more than a quarter of a century, the Forum has become a sought-after global plat-form for establishing cooperative ties, an authoritative and representative event of the world level. The event took place against the backdrop of a special operation in Ukraine, large-scale sanctions and the departure of a significant number of foreign companies from Russia. The sessions made a significant contribution to a comprehensive understanding of the real situation in the Arctic and made it possible to develop specific steps and effective solutions to fulfill the tasks set by the Russian leadership to ensure balanced sustainable development of the Arctic region and improve the well-being of its inhabitants, including the indigenous peoples of the North. The leadership of the country and the heads of the constituent entities of the Russian Arctic understand that this region is an important and promising territory of Russia. In the foreseeable future, according to experts, economic projects, including those with Asian countries, will become the main ones [8].

As a result of the forum, more than 900 agreements were signed for a total amount of 3 trillion 860 billion rubles (including 43 agreements with representatives of foreign companies, including two with Italy and Spain). Agreements the amount of which is not a commercial secret are taken into account. The top three regions of Russia in terms of the amount of concluded agreements included the Leningrad Oblast (30 agreements, more than 900 billion rubles), St. Petersburg

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> K 2030 godu na Severnom morskom puti dolzhny rabotat' 14 ledokolov [By 2030, 14 icebreakers should be operating on the Northern Sea Route]. URL: https://rg.ru/2023/06/16/reg-szfo/k-2030-godu-na-severnom-morskom-puti-dolzhny-rabotat-14-ledokolov.html (accessed 28 June 2023).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Perspektivy razvitiya Severnogo morskogo puti obsudili v ramkakh PMEF-2023 [Prospects for the development of the Northern Sea Route were discussed at SPIEF-2023]. URL: https://roscongress.org/news/perspektivy-razvitija-severnogo-morskogo-puti-obsudiliv-ramkah-pmef-2023/ (accessed 28 June 2023).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> V «Rosatome» schitayut, chto sozdanie «Glavsevmorputi» povysilo bezopasnost' navigatsii na SMP [Rosatom believes that the creation of the Glavsevmorput increased the safety of navigation on the NSR]. URL: https://tass.ru/ekonomika/18025587 (accessed 28 June 2023).

(more than 50 agreements, 414 billion rubles) and the Krasnodar Krai (24 agreements, 331 billion rubles). The largest number of agreements was signed in the field of industry and construction (206), socio-economic development of regions (185) and international and interregional cooperation (85) <sup>11</sup>.

The Forum was organized by the Roscongress Foundation, a socially oriented non-financial development institution, the largest organizer of all-Russian, international, congress, exhibition, business, social, youth, sports and cultural events. It was created in accordance with the decision of the President of the Russian Federation in 2007 with the aim of promoting the development of economic potential, national interests and strengthening the image of Russia [8].

A delegation of the teaching staff of the Northern (Arctic) Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov took an active part in the work of the 16th St. Petersburg International Economic Forum. The University Rector Professor E.V. Kudryashova made presentations that discussed issues of training personnel for the Arctic regions, the development of science and education, and improving the human factor.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Results of SPIEF-2023. URL: https://roscongress.org/news/itogi-raboty-pmef-2023/?ysclid=ljg54s1ouf44892634 (accessed 20 June 2023).