



The Arctic: Territory of Dialogue

International Conference | 22–23 April, 2010, Moscow

Putin to attend conference on the Arctic in April



Prime Minister Vladimir Putin will attend the international Arctic conference to be held in Moscow on April 22 and 23, Svetlana Mironyuk, editor-in-chief of RIA Novosti, said on Monday at the extended meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Russian Geographical Society (RGS).

“The conference will be the first major international project of the RGS,” she said, adding that Prince Albert of Monaco is expected to participate.

The conference is to be attended by representatives of international organizations, members of the Arctic Council comprising Russia, Canada, the United States, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, the International Arctic Science Committee, the European Polar Consortium, as well as associations of indigenous Arctic peoples research organizations and centers for political studies (the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation and the Aspen Institute), Polar researchers and members of international Arctic expeditions, foreign political scientists and economists who study Russia, environmental scientists and representatives of wildlife protection and conservation organizations, Russian and foreign journalists from leading international media organizations.

The conference’s agenda will highlight the exploration and development of mineral resources, in particular in offshore areas, environmental protection, and improving transport infrastructure in the Arctic.

The conference will be convened because the Arctic has become a focal point for the world’s leading powers due to political, economic, military and information reasons. Therefore, the conference’s key goals will be: finding new forms of international interaction in turning the Arctic into an area of peace and cooperation, attracting international media attention to key problems in the Arctic, and establishing a venue for expert level discussion to encourage serious analysis and the exchange of opinions on the most pressing problems in the Arctic.



Mr. Putin is expected to make the opening address at the conference as the head of the Board of Trustees of the Russian Geographical Society. The RGS, a non-governmental organization, is the leading Russian public and scientific agency focused on environmental problems and climate change and is key in drafting a comprehensive approach to the studies of Russia’s polar regions.

The Russian Geographical Society was founded in St. Petersburg on August 18, 1845 by decree of Emperor Nicholas I. Prior to the 1917 October Revolution, it was known as the Imperial Russian Geographical Society. It changed its name to the State Geographical Society in 1926 and to the USSR Geographical Society in 1938. In 1992 it was renamed the Russian Geographical Society.

Currently, it has 27,000 members across all of Russia’s regions and abroad working at its 127 regional and local divisions, branches and offices. It is headquartered in St. Petersburg, with the Primorye and Moscow divisions being its largest departments. In November 2009, Emergencies Minister Sergei Shoigu was elected president of the RGS.

The Russian news & Information Agency RIA Novosti, which has hosted and organized many large international events, including the Valdai International Discussion Club and the Eurasian Media Forum, will be the media sponsor and operator of the conference.