

## **PROTOCOL**

### **from the second session of the Norwegian-Russian Working Group for Regional and Cross Border Cooperation of the Norwegian-Russian Intergovernmental Commission on Economic, Industrial and Scientific-Technical Cooperation**

The second session of the Norwegian-Russian Working Group for Regional and Cross Border Cooperation of the Norwegian-Russian Intergovernmental Commission on Economic, Industrial and Scientific-Technical Cooperation, previously Working Group on Cooperation in the Northern Regions (hereafter – Working Group) was held on 27-28 October 2011 in Bodø, Norway.

The Norwegian delegation was headed by State Secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Industry of Norway, Mrs. Rikke Lind.

The Russian delegation was headed by Deputy Minister for Regional Development of the Russian Federation, Mr. Maxim Travnikov.

The Working Group considered the following questions:

#### **1. General introduction**

The Working Group referred to the 14th meeting of the Joint Norwegian-Russian Intergovernmental Commission on Economic, Industrial and Scientific-Technical Cooperation in Oslo on 28 February 2011, and expressed satisfaction with the signing of a work plan to follow up the Joint statement by the Foreign Ministers of Norway and Russia on strengthening Norwegian-Russian cross border cooperation of 2 November, 2010.

The Working Group also welcomed the signing in Oslo of the Agreement between Norway and Russia on the border crossing check point Storskog-Borisoglebsk on the Norwegian-Russian state border, and hopes that this agreement will contribute to increase the capacity of the check points.

#### **2. Status of the implementation of the Work plan to create favourable legal, trade, economic and other conditions for strengthening Norwegian-Russian cross border cooperation, 2011-2015**

The Working Group took into consideration reports from responsible Ministries, organizations and governmental bodies on status of the projects in the Work Plan.

The Working Group welcomes the implementation of the Agreement between Norway and Russia on facilitation of travel for border residents of Norway and Russia and hopes that the Agreement will enter into force during the first half of 2012.

The sides noted progress in most projects in the Work Plan, and were content with the activities in responsible Ministries, organizations and governmental bodies on the implementation of the Work Plan.

### **3. General remarks on the implementation of the Work Plan**

The Working Group expressed general content with the progress of the projects in the Work Plan, and encouraged the Ministries, organizations and other governmental bodies to continue the implementation of the plan.

The Working Group reminded that the Work Plan was developed as a “living” document and is subject to changes. The sides agreed to consider the need to revise the Work Plan before the next meeting in the Working Group. The co-chairs encouraged experts from both states to start looking into this in order to present a revised version of the Work Plan on the next meeting in the Working Group.

The Norwegian side informed the Russian side that due to limitations in the Schengen Agreement, it will at present not be possible to grant visa free arrangement for Russian tourist groups to Norway.

The Working Group decided to establish an ad-hoc Sub-Group of experts to discuss and identify possibilities to establish a common border crossing facility on the Norwegian-Russian border.

The Russian side informed the Norwegian side on the impossibility at present to extend the working hours of the Borisoglebsk border crossing check point due to limitations of the existing infrastructure.

### **4. Russian-Norwegian Regional and Cross Border Cooperation**

The Working Group took general information regarding regional and cross border cooperation between Norway and Russia into account.

The Working Group encourages a continued extension and strengthening of the cooperation between Russian and Norwegian regions, particularly in the fields of business development, tourism, transport infrastructure, arctic navigation and shipbuilding, innovation, as well as commercialization of innovative technology

The Working Group noticed that cooperation in multilateral organizations also promotes the development of the Russian-Norwegian regional and cross-border cooperation. In this respect, the sides noted that Norway took over the Chairmanship in the Barents Euro-Arctic Council from Sweden on 14 October 2011.

The Working Group will consider arranging seminars on relevant topics within the framework of the meetings in the Working Group in the future.

The Working Group took note of the Russian side's readiness to create a Sub-Group on economic cooperation between the bordering municipalities.

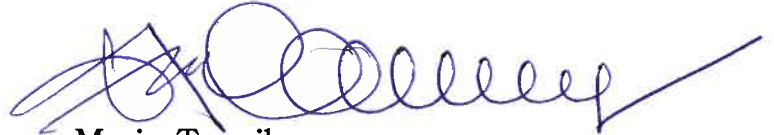
This Protocol is signed on the 27 October 2011 in Bodø in two copies, both in the English language.

State Secretary  
of the Ministry of Trade and Industry of  
Norway, Chair of the Norwegian part of the  
Working Group on Regional and Cross  
Border cooperation of the Norwegian-  
Russian Intergovernmental Commission for  
economic, industrial and scientific-technical  
cooperation



Rikke Lind

Deputy Minister  
for Regional Development of the Russian  
Federation, Chair of the Russian part of the  
Working Group on Regional and Cross  
Border cooperation of the Russian-  
Norwegian Intergovernmental Commission  
for economic, industrial and scientific-  
technical cooperation



Maxim Travnikov