The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Putin Talks WTO, Agriculture at APEC

By Anatoly Medetsky

September 06, 2012



Putin speaking Friday at a plenary session of the APEC summit in Vladivostok. **Grigoriy Sisoev**

VLADIVOSTOK — President Vladimir Putin on Friday said Russia would push for changes in WTO rules to allow member countries to protect their vulnerable industries at times of global instability.

"As a full-fledged member of this organization, we intend to get rigorously involved in the process of shaping fair rules of international trade," he said in a keynote speech at the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

Speaking to the members of APEC's advisory business council, Putin also proposed that Asian economies consider the customs union that Russia formed with Kazakhstan and Belarus as a transportation bridge to Europe.

"If you look at the territory of the three countries, it will be clear that we do have something to offer," he said. The union, which erased all customs barriers among its members, is sandwiched between China and Europe.

In another idea, Putin invited Asian investment in farming and other agriculture-related projects in Russia, saying they should be reciprocal.

After an exorbitantly expensive facelift of Vladivostok, Putin refrained from announcing any major new plans to develop the Far East, instead refreshing the delegates' memory on the projects that are already in the public domain.

He said the government and the companies it runs will invest in future energy projects, such as connecting Russia's western and eastern grids, which he said would help make electricity cheaper for eastern consumers. He also mentioned the Vostochny Cosmodrome, which is under construction in the far eastern Amur region, and the need to expand capacity of the Trans-Siberian Railroad.

"We want an effective way of moving people and cargoes around here," he said, fielding a question from a Vladivostok businessman.

The government and state-controlled corporations plowed about $20 billion into various construction projects over the last five years to make Vladivostok worthy of hosting the international summit.

Related articles:

- Putin Says WTO a Factor in APEC Talks
- APEC Ministers Work on Green List
- What Awaits Investors in the Far East After APEC

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2012/09/06/putin-talks-wto-agriculture-at-apec-a17617