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## Russia's Position on Northeast Asian Cooperation

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At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Russia more than ever feels the need to implement its role as a kind of integrating knot, tying together Asia, Europe, and America. Northeast Asia in particular is in the limelight, and it is time to move from words to actions.

Russia nowadays can propose several promising projects of strategic cooperation in this region. First, I would like to mention the possibilities of joint development of the fuel resources of Siberia and the Russian Far East, including the construction of pipelines and a power grid. I would like to express my appreciation for the efforts of the People's Republic of China and the Republic for Korea for pioneering a joint gas pipeline project together with Russia.

A global communication breakthrough could be achieved by using Russian land and air space to bring the Asia-Pacific and Euro-Atlantic regions closer together. The trans-Siberian rail link seems more efficient for that goal than any competing land transport project. We hope that transport by way of Siberia can also promote, among Asian businesses, the idea of developing the enormous natural wealth of this area.

Russia can offer not only raw materials but also hi-tech as well—for example aerospace technology, including space imaging, the launching of satellites, and nuclear power production and technology, excluding the use of enriched uranium and plutonium. Science and technology cooperation is the priority direction of Russia's cooperation with neighboring countries. As Russian science overcomes the crisis of the 1990s, new possibilities for such cooperation emerge.

Almost five years have passed since Russia joined APEC. Russia willingly participates in its activities, staging events such as the Seventh Investment Symposium and the Third Investment Market in Vladivostok, in September 2000. I sincerely hope that some of those present here will make their way to those events.

We fully understand that our sincere desire to develop mutually advantageous cooperation with neighboring Northeast Asian countries can come true only under conditions of peace and stability in this region. Russia spares no efforts to promote the settlement of regional political and security issues. For example, Russia was instrumental in promoting the inter-Korean dialogue and reconciliation, which opened new possibilities for regional cooperation. The increased role of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea among the economic elite of the region, as a result of these processes, is also to be

supported. We note with satisfaction that increased trust between the neighboring countries brings about increases in mutually advantageous economic cooperation, and we support that “self-generation” tendency.