

Rails, Uranium Mark Mongolian Visit

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Medvedev greeting Elbegdorj in the Kremlin on Tuesday. Biosphere and research agreements were also reached. **Dmitry Astakhov**

Russia and Mongolia have signed five documents following the official talks between Presidents Dmitry Medvedev and Tsakhia Elbegdorj on Tuesday.

The leaders signed a joint Russian-Mongolian statement and other documents, including a memorandum on research cooperation between the two countries' academies of medical sciences, an intergovernmental agreement to create the Ubsunur Hollow Biosphere Reserve, an intergovernmental agreement on the mutual protection of intellectual property in bilateral military-technical cooperation and a protocol of changes to the bilateral agreement of June 6, 1949, setting up the Soviet-Mongolian Ulan Bator Railway.

The enactment of an agreement signed by the Russian and Mongolian governments to establish the Dornod Uran uranium mining enterprise has been held back by procedural issues, Rosatom director Sergei Kiriyenko told journalists Tuesday.

"We have already signed the final framework documents, which have yet to come into force. But it has been slightly delayed by procedural things on Mongolia's part. We have signed an action plan, according to which the Mongolian side is required to compile a list of property and assets it is ready to contribute to joint ventures. But this stage is facing delays today," Kiriyenko said.

"This process has been slow. Colleagues have promised us that it [the process] will be finalized in the near future," he said.

Meanwhile, a consortium of investors including Russian Railways is ready to spend up to \$1.5 billion on rail infrastructure in Mongolia if the group wins a bid for the Tavan Tolgoi coal field, the railway said Tuesday.

Russian Railways head Vladimir Yakunin also told journalists that Mongolia would decide on the list of final bidders in June or July for the railway infrastructure project to ship coal from the field.

Mongolia is in the process of deciding how to develop the massive Tavan Tolgoi field.

Russian Railways hopes to receive the \$1.5 billion for the Tavan Tolgoi coal project from the state, a source from Russian Railway's top management said.

"We're prepared to invest \$1.5 billion in the project if the state gives us the cash," the source said.

The source did not specify the overall cost of the Russian bid.

Tavan Tolgoi is in southern Mongolia, 250 kilometers from the Chinese border and 540 kilometers from Ulan Bator. It is estimated to contain 6.5 billion tons of high-calorific coal — 40 percent of it coking coal. A 400-kilometer railway and power plants will have to be built for it to be fully developed.

Russian Railways on March 9 received official confirmation from Mongolia that a bid by its consortium, which includes the Siberian Coal and Energy Company (SUEK), Korean Resources Corporation, Itochu and Sumitomo, among others, had passed the Tavan Tolgoi tender's pre-qualifying round.

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