

Hockey and Mentality Link Russia and Canada

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Canada and Russia have a lot in common: huge territories, similarity in climate, rich natural resources, high agricultural potential and, last but not least, a passionate love for hockey.

In addition, the two countries share a similar mentality, which is probably due to the genetic relatedness of the population due to many waves of emigration from Russia and the former Soviet Union to North America.

What's more, both countries are sparsely populated, which leads to similar social and economic problems, and both are clearly not fully using their authority and capacity on the political arena.

With so many similar traits, it is surprising that the economic partnership between the two countries is at a relatively low level.

Each year, Russia integrates increasingly more into the international community. In the near future, Russia will become a full member of the World Trade Organization, which will reduce risks for foreign partners in trade and investment. European businesses are already cooperating actively with Russian businesses.

Canada and Russia could represent one of the most promising potential partner tandems. The reasons for the formation of mutually beneficial and comprehensive cooperation are fairly simple. Canada's main economic partner — the United States — is not experiencing the best of times. Neither is the European Union.

The list of cooperation areas can and should be expanded to include: aerospace and aviation, oil and gas production and exploration, agriculture, chemicals, energy efficiency and conservation, logistics, communications, nanotechnology and biotechnology.

Enhancing business and political cooperation between two powerful and influential nations cannot only be mutually beneficial but can also become a new geopolitical reality that in many ways defines the modern world order.

Will such a scenario of Russian-Canadian relations become a reality?

It depends on the vision, will and desire of politicians.

It also depends on ordinary Canadians and Russians and businesspeople who understand that trade cooperation is more beneficial than geopolitical competition between the two governments.

Let us have bitter rivalries only in hockey.

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