

China-Russia Airplane Venture Planned

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United Aircraft Corporation and Chinese Commercial Aircraft Corporation plan to start a joint venture to develop long-haul aircraft, Vedomosti reported Thursday. United Aircraft Corporation will provide the knowledge base and design expertise for the project, while China will supply the financing and manufacturing facilities.

The companies are expected to sign the agreement for the joint venture next week during President Vladimir Putin's visit to China, Yury Slyusar, deputy industry and trade minister, told Vedomosti.

The new aircraft, currently code named "2020," will be based on the Ilyushin II-96, a four-engine airliner designed in the Soviet Union. The cost of the project has not be disclosed, but Slyusar estimated it to be about \$7 billion to 12 billion with a seven-year deadline.

Planes will be produced in China, but Russia is expected to benefit from the funds its partner will inject into local research, Sergei Sanakoyev, secretary of the Russian-Chinese Center of Trade and Economic Cooperation, told Vedomosti.

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