

Lukashenko Bolsters Partnership with China

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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With the slow deterioration of the economy and the impending possibility of the country's second currency devaluation, Belarus has decided to partner up with China to stimulate its dwindling economy, a news report said Tuesday.

The partnership between the two countries has been kick started with a three day visit of President Alexander Lukashenko to Beijing, Kommersant reported.

The trip started yesterday with Lukashenko's meeting with Chinese government officials, including President Xi Jinping and the Premier of the State Council Li Keqiang. During the three-day visit more than 20 agreements, documents and protocols will be signed regarding trade and investment. The two countries will also issue a joint declaration outlining their relationship.

Many individuals in Belarus see the cooperation between the two countries as a "strategic

partnership." With an injection of trade from China, Belarus may be able to prevent economic collapse. In return, China will receive free access to the Russian market through Belarus' membership in the Eurasian Economic Community.

Experts believe that this trip took on added importance to Lukashenko because of Belarus' economic situation, which continues to deteriorate despite appearances of stability.

"If in 2011 Russia saved Lukashenko from the effects of the devaluation, this time around, in the case of repeated devaluation shock, there is no guarantee that Moscow will give support," Andrei Suzdaltsev, a professor at the Higher School of Economics, said.

Suzdaltsev added that the partnership is Belarus' way of provoking a competitive rivalry between China and Russia that would result in Belarus receiving financial support from both of countries.

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