

**РЕЧЬ ВО ВРЕМЯ ВЫСТУПЛЕНИЯ
НА ВСТРЕЧЕ С РЕКТОРАМИ УНИВЕРСИТЕТОВ г. ЕКАТЕРИНБУРГА**

В статье ректора Гентского университета профессора Жака Виллемса представлены выдержки из его выступления на встрече с ректорами университетов г. Екатеринбурга (3.02.95г.).

Главное внимание профессор Ж.Виллемс уделяет роли Гентского университета в деле содействия сотрудничеству с Россией в области образования. В статье дан краткий обзор долговременной политики интернационализации, проводимой университетом Гента и тесно связанной с его основными функциями: образованием и служением обществу.

Der vorliegende Artikel macht den Leser mit der Rede von Prof. Sh.Willems, Rektor der Universitaet in Gent waehrend des Treffens mit den Rektoren der Jekaterinburger Universitaeten (3.02.95) bekannt.

Prof. Sh.Willems richtet sein Hauptaugenmerk auf die fuehrende Rolle der Genter Universitaet in der Foerderung der Zusammenarbeit mit Russland auf dem Gebiet des Bildungswesens.

Im Artikel wird ein geraeffter Ueberblick der gegenwaertigen internationalen Politik, die von der Genter Universitaet durchgefuehrt wird, gegeben.

Academic contacts and exchanges between the Flemish Government and the Russian Federation have a long tradition (dating from the contacts between Belgian and former USSR governments). The Flemish-Russian Agreement was the first one to be concluded after the creation of the autonomous Russian State – a fact that Minister Tkachenko has repeatedly stressed in public.

The assistance the Flemish Community is lending to Russia in its transition towards a modern, democratic and decentralised society depends to a large extent on voluntary efforts and spontaneous consent. A number of projects are operational in the fields of Educational and Legislative Reform, Teacher Training and University Management.

One of the Flemish Community's main goals in 1994 and the coming years is to create initiatives for fostering cooperation between universities. A special budget has been provided for this purpose so that concrete projects will be able to be carried out in several fields, particularly in cooperation with the highly esteemed establishments in Ekaterinburg.

The University of Ghent played a key role in promoting cooperation with Russia right at the outset of the bilateral Agreement and is continuing to do so now. Therefore at the start of this "New Era", the University of Ghent is proud to have concluded a

Bilateral Cooperation Agreement with the Russian Ministry of Education in September 1993.

Even if the magnitude of the Russian country surpasses our level of comprehension or imagination, the University of Ghent is taking advantage of new cooperation possibilities with partner universities in the Russian Federation.

As a result of that agreement – and with the financial cooperation of the Flemish Ministry of Education – five Russian professors from the Ural State Vocational Pedagogical University of Ekaterinaburg stayed in Ghent for a retraining and updating period of 3 to 12 months.

I am glad to see quite a number of you again on your home ground, and to have the opportunity to take a look at the reforms you are implementing at your university. Last but not least this exchange resulted in a successful Tempus-Tacis Application for a preparatory *Joint* European Project, which has just finished its first stage of preliminary activity.

And I stress the word JOINT European Project, as efforts up to now have been concentrated mainly on the bilateral cooperation between the University of Ghent and the Ural State Vocational Pedagogic University. In the second phase it will be very important to establish a real Joint Venture between the 4 Ural Partners on the one hand and the Santander Group Universities and Network on the other hand.

The first foundations for this effort have been laid by the visit of the 4 Rectors of the Ekaterinburg Universities in November last year to the University of Ghent, with the willing participation of the Erasmus University Rotterdam, one of our most loyal partner universities.

I am pleased to announce you that I have received very recently the confirmation by the Minister of Education of the Flemish Government of his approval for the Project which was proposed, implementing the Agreement which was signed between your universities, my university and the Minister himself.

This visit will allow us all to establish personal and institutional links for the benefit of our future cooperation in a number of areas, focussing mainly on the improvement of the “university management” and the Upgrading of the Regional Academic Level in the URAL Project.

Later during this visit I will have the honour to give a guest lecture – as a professor in Electrical Engineering – for the Engineering students and staff of your universities, providing some information on the organisation and guiding principles of the Engineering Education in Flanders and at the University of Ghent in particular.

Allow me – as a Rector – to remind you now very briefly the long term internationalisation policy of the University of Ghent, which is linked to the core functions of the university: education, research and high level service to society.

Broadly a ***fivefold*** strategy for international cooperation can be discerned:

- Firstly the University of Ghent has decided to take full advantage of European Union funding for ***European academic projects*** (both for education and research).

- For this reason the university has – secondly – created a ***Department for European Projects***, which promotes the cooperation possibilities at the university. Starting from scratch, the University of Ghent is now involved in some 226 projects,

covering all of Europe and extending to North- and South-America and the Mediterranean area. This amounts to some 320 million Belgian francs or over 5 million Ecu revenue for the University of Ghent.

As the political situation in the world has changed, as well as the European Union's attitude towards these changes, the University Board as well has recently decided to bring all aspects of International Academic Cooperation together in one office, the *International Relations Office*.

- Thirdly the conclusion of *bilateral cooperation agreements*, helps the university to finance "exploration missions" in order to start projects, which themselves are financed by external funding (for example the European Union). As you can see for yourself in the *URAL project*, this is quite a successful and beneficial strategy.

- Fourthly, a multilateral network cooperation within the *Santander Group* supports the cooperation possibilities offered by the European Union and provides a strategic tool for university management.

In the URAL Project, as in many other projects where a clear focus of interest for collaboration exists across several Santander Group members, the group will prove to provide a useful mechanism for pooling contacts and expertise with a view to mounting specific joint projects.

- Finally the foundation of specific *European/international institutes*, which function as catalysts and centres of excellence, is a logical consequence of this policy at European and university level, providing specialisms in a number of academic fields.

Next to – for example the Scandinavian Institute, the Greece Centre or the European Institute this *Russki/Russian Institute* is most notable for you. It organizes the teaching and training of Belgian and Russian future managers. And, as many of you have already experienced during your stay at the University of Ghent, it is a hospitable home for our Russian friends staying in Ghent.

As I already explained, the Internationalization policy of the University of Ghent in the recent past has been based on a broad structural platform in which European and university policy for a high-standing inter-university cooperation in Europe are closely aligned, based on the key principles of network structures and mutual mobility.

Thus, the university of Ghent has a high level of experience in European cooperation in general and is well-prepared to start cooperation with Russia and Ekaterinburgh in particular. Cooperation with the University of Ghent should, however, by no means be considered as a one-way ticket, but as a long-lasting relationship between equal partners with mutual benefits and complementary strengths.

I hope to have adequately illustrated the University of Ghent's policy to create and support an outstanding but permanent framework of flexible structures, while maintaining a high-quality academic standard.

This policy has allowed this rather young, medium-sized university with a minority language to respond effectively to the needs of a changing Europe, thus succeeding in gaining a certain place and fame in the European academic field.

I would like to conclude this speech by stressing the vital importance for the international community, for governments and universities to become involved in the reform of Russian society as a matter of priority.

I am convinced that greater cooperation in the fields of education and research between the URAL universities and the University of Ghent can fulfil a pioneering role in the context of Russian-EU cooperation. The URAL universities also have to continue to play a leading part in the Russian academic community.

I hope that our joint endeavours will be fruitful for both communities. A lot of work is waiting for us as well in the next months as in the further years to come.

Лив Ван ден Боссе-Браке

УРАЛ: ПОВЫШЕНИЕ РЕГИОНАЛЬНОГО АКАДЕМИЧЕСКОГО УРОВНЯ

Статья руководителя отдела международных связей Гентского университета Лив ван ден Боссе-Браке "УРАЛ: повышение Регионального академического уровня" представляет собой ее речь на встрече с ректорами университетов г. Екатеринбурга (3.02.95г.).

В своем выступлении автор подробно останавливается на основных вопросах международного сотрудничества между университетами по проекту УРАЛ, проводимому в рамках программы ТЕМПУС-ТАКИС (TEMPUS-TACIS). В заключение Лив ван ден Боссе-Браке выражает надежду на продолжение совместных действий по программе ТАКИС и на выработку эффективной стратегии для международного сотрудничества в системе высшего образования Урала.

Der Artikel "Ural: die Erhoehung des regionalen akademischen Niveaus" macht den Leser mit der Rede von Lieve Van den Bossche – Bracke waehrend des Treffens mit den Rektoren der Jekaterinburger Universitaeten (3.02.95) bekannt. In ihrer Rede konzentriert sich die Autorin auf die Hauptfragen der internationalen Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Universitaeten und erklaert das Wesen von TEMPUS – TACIS – Programm: seine Ziele, Aufgaben, Schwerpunkte und Arbeitsformen.

Zum Schluss drueckt sie ihre Hoffnung auf die Fortsetzung der Zusammenarbeit im Rahmen des TACIS – Programms aus.

On September 12th 1994, I had the opportunity to address some of you already during my first visit to Ekaterinburg.