

**Alexei Kudrin**  
**Problems in Reforming Russian Universities**

Dear friends and trustees of the European University at St. Petersburg! Today we see here new faces, and we are always glad to greet new participants who are interested in the University's projects and development. Hopefully, in the future many of them will become our partners. That is why we are ready to deliver to them necessary information on our projects, and thus make their interest deeper.

I would like to tell you about some aspects of our work, of which I spoke less at our previous meetings. Today we are working on a unique project that aims at creating competitive Russian research and educational centers that would be financed from endowment and by private donations. In order to create a university which will become the best of its kind among Russian centers and will reach the level of, and compete with, the world's leading research institutions, one needs to make serious organizational efforts, to modernize the educational process, to cooperate with post-graduates and to work at drawing numerous resources. Now we are working on improving the University's management, defining its strategy: finding out the spheres where we can obtain the leading positions. This will be the key problem for us to solve in the near future.

Federal institutes and universities face the same problem. Let me remind you that the Government stated that in the coming years there will be six Federal universities — key educational centers in Russian regions, that will accumulate the best professors, students and technological base. Also, the Government decided to form 27 National research universities. Today those 27 universities had been selected. We will also be working on improving our faculty and educational facilities.

I told you about Federal universities, but our project is a bit different. In the aspects of the organizational structure as well as the sources of financing, it is a pilot project for Russia. The closest analogue of the European University is the New Economic School in Moscow. Some features can be compared, but, nonetheless, they are quite different. Our goal is to be included into international realm of research and education, and the experience that we have already accumulated allows us to say that we are successful in this aspect.

I would like to remind you that our founding rector, outstanding sociologist **Boris Firsov**, is present at the meeting. He founded our university. He had his first foreign employment in the London School of Economics in 1967, later worked in such institutions as the Institute of Socio-Economic Problems of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and the Institute of Ethnography of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, after which he was the head of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.

I would also like to introduce our second rector — the leading linguist and ethnologist, **Ni Nikolay Vakhtin**, who was a Fulbright Scholar in American universities, and, when EUSP was established, he traveled abroad specifically to obtain experience in university administration in Cambridge.

Our present rector, **Oleg Kharkhordin**, is a rector with a Doctor of Philosophy degree obtained in an American university, and has experience in teaching for several years at Harvard and at Yale, and in the School of Political Science in Paris.

During the 14 years of its existence **EUSP has been lead by three most competent rectors**, who, even while fulfilling their administrative duties, continued their international research activities.

And we would like to develop these traditions and to help our professors to work on the international educational scene; we welcome our department chairs and professors to work in such leading world universities, such as Princeton, Yale, Cambridge or Chicago. At the present time they are transferring their experience and expertise here, at the European University at St. Petersburg. So, what the federal, government universities have not yet had time to develop, what

still needs to be done, we have already started to implement in a more flexible, dynamic project at the EUSP.

It is our goal to create a modern system of university governance. In the past several months the Rector and several Vice-Rectors have visited universities in the U.S. in order to become acquainted with the best practices and by-laws and to adapt them to the Russian environment as a whole, and to EUSP in particular. As a result, together with the already existing Rector's meetings and Department Head meetings, and the Faculty Committee for Selection of new professors, a university-wide **Financial Committee and a Personnel Committee were created.**

I would like to, once again, compare the European University at St. Petersburg with the New Economic School, which, as a result of its profile, has more a corporate-type of structure, with a Board of Directors, committees, comprised mainly of university faculty. In this respect we consider EUSP to be **the first successful self-governing incorporation of professors in present-day Russia.** And we would like to continue this academic style, this independent attitude regarding socio-economic processes, formulated within its walls.

We are in the process of creating a unique to Russia **International Consulting Council at EUSP.** We invited the following experienced people to participate in this undertaking, people famous for developing various educational projects:

— **Henry Rosovsky**, former Dean of Harvard College, who radically reformed this institution in 1974;

— **Jonathan Fanton**, former Director of the MacArthur Foundation, and also the former President of the New School of Social Research in New York;

— **James Wolfensohn**, who is present, and who gave a speech to students at EUSP today. He is known to you as the long-time President of the World Bank. But maybe it is not that well known that he is also the Head of the Board of Trustees of the Institute of Perspective Research at Princeton, and has just recently completed a thorough external quality assessment of this educational institution. He has graciously given a copy of his results to us. And, what is even more important, he has offered to help performing such an audit in EUSP also. The experience obtained at Princeton will, it is hoped, be most helpful.

I would like to say that I have already had a first meeting with the above, we have exchanged ideas on how to structure the work of the Council, and how to determine the best strategy for our University.

Other invited members of this Council are: **Ellis Rubinstein**, Head of the New York Academy of Sciences (formerly the editor of "Science" magazine) and **Jack DeJoia**, President of Georgetown University. Such a solid group of members for the International Consulting Council will help us in the future. We are in contact with the members and are discussing how the Council should commence its work. I repeat, the first exchange of ideas has already taken place, we are in the process of exchanging information.

One of the latest achievements of EUSP has been the creation of new, and the strengthening of existing, partnerships with large international and Russian companies. Representatives of many of them are present here, and we are thankful to them for their constant cooperation, participation in our Board of Trustees.

EUSP, as an independent Russian university, is striving to create Named Professorship positions utilizing funds obtained from private companies, and, at the same time, utilizing a candidate nomination and selection process developed during the last several years.

We are striving to create the most effective mechanism for candidate selection. Actually, we are trying to be even better than the Higher School of Economics, where there are comparable professorships, but nomination is made by administrators, and final selection is decided only by faculty who work in the specific department (an analogous procedure, by the way, is also being reviewed by the Russian Academy of Sciences). At EUSP nomination is performed by a Faculty Committee, and an open selection process, with the intention of attracting outside experts of international prominence. In this way EUSP strives to be

unequivocally an independent academic facility, with a goal of hiring the world's best specialists.

**Maximum academic independence can only be achieved through long-term financing support. We are creating an endowment, which foresees the financing of specific Departments and Research Centers.**

As a result, in the near future, our main goal will be to designate part of the University's Endowment to our main structural units, i.e. our Departments and Research Centers.

Our Rector and Vice-Rectors will provide you with more specific information about our Departments and Research Centers.

At the present time, I pass the floor to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of EUSP, Mikhail Piotrovsky, who will say a few words about the University, specifically to those of you who are attending our meeting for the first time.

Thank you.