

# Hu, Putin resolve dispute

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## BORDER CRISIS

IN A historic decision, China and Russia on Thursday resolved the last of their decades-old boundary disputes with Chinese President Hu Jintao and visiting Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin finalising the delimitation of their 4,370 km-long eastern border and inking a series of key agreements to boost trade.

According to diplomatic sources, the Chinese and Russian sides inked a series of accords including an additional agreement on the eastern stretch of Russia-Chinese border,

which was not resolved previously.

The disputed area was in the region of Heixiazi Island and Abagaitu Islet in the eastern section of the Sino-Russian boundary line. The two countries have been negotiating to reach a settlement for a long time.

The length of the Sino-Russian border is about 4,370 km. Of that, the eastern section accounts for about 4,320 km and the western section accounts for 54 km.

Other accords are an intergovernmental protocol on navigation of Russian and Chinese ships in a basin adjacent to Tarabarov and Bolshoi Ussurisky islands, a protocol to an intergovernmental agreement on the joint use of the island in a border area and a memorandum of Russian and Chinese governments on applying the current agreement to new delimited segments of the state border.

Russia and China also have signed a package of documents on the completion of talks on Russia's admission to the World Trade Organisation.

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# SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP-II

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## Problems Remain, But The Way Ahead Is Clear

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By SERGEI PRIKHODKO

Much is to be done in developing trade and economic ties between the two countries, and the present structure of bilateral trade needs to be improved. The share of high-tech products involved in this trade does not correspond to the industrial potentials of the Russian and Chinese economies. It is time for Moscow and Beijing to abandon primitive bartering and develop modern forms of economic and investment cooperation, as well as the transport and inter-bank infrastructures. It is also vital that the countries work to enhance the ties between the small and mid-size businesses.

### Balanced answers

Many problems are yet to be solved in cooperation in the fuel/energy sector. The desire of our Chinese partners to meet their rapidly growing demand for energy resources by increasing guaranteed Russian supplies is understandable. Yet there should be no haste in addressing this issue. This area of interaction is of strategic and long-term importance and requires billions of US dollars in investment. The parties must continue to search for balanced answers to these questions without resorting to emotion.

The Russian citizens who are living in bordering areas with China are naturally more concerned with local problems, such as illegal migration, poaching being committed by Chinese citizens on Russian territory, environmental pollution, and so on. The ecological problem may become the greatest problem of them all.

The rapid growth of the Chinese economy is accompanied by increased attacks on the environment. Deforestation, together with the ensuing destructive floods and soil exhaustion, could eventually grow into

a transborder problem, which could be solved only with a high degree of cooperation between the two countries. It seems that China is prepared for this dialogue.

Although the migration prob-

lem does exist in Russian-Chinese relations, its dimensions should not be overestimated, as the Russian mass media tends to do. According to reliable estimates, the total number of Chinese citizens now permanently living in Russia hardly exceeds 150,000-200,000. And the official figures of the latest Russian census indicate a much smaller number — 35,000 people.



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### Migration problem

There are no grounds for suggesting that the Chinese government "prompts" its citizens to move to Russia, especially illegally. Russia and China are now organising a special working group which will address migration problems with the goal of arriving at a comprehensive solution to the issue.

Another very important area of cooperation involves the law enforcement bodies of the two countries. Their joint efforts will

operating in the border areas. Problems that arise in Russia's relations with China often are the reverse side of the fast development of bilateral interaction. However, instead of dramatising the differences, the parties should develop a systematic approach for their settlement. It is very important to strengthen the social basis of Russian-Chinese relations by promoting people-to-people contacts, developing tourism, strengthening inter regional and transborder relationships.

It is also essential that the two countries increase their interaction in the social and humanitarian areas, in culture, the sciences and the mass media. These efforts will be our contribution to eliminating many false stereotypes regarding the perception of China, which still exists in the minds of many Europeans and Americans.

These stereotypes stem from

the uncertainty about the potential conduct of a "strong China" on the international stage after it has carried out its grandiose modernisation plans and become an economic, technological and military superpower.

The last 20-odd years have shown that as China is rapidly developing, its foreign policy has become more balanced and oriented towards integration into the world economy; this has enhanced its level of cooperation with various countries.

### National interests

There are good grounds to believe that this tendency will continue. As China's competitiveness increases, it increasingly upholds and advances its national interests. This is a natural process, and the only normal reaction to it from other states, including Russia, should be enhancing the effectiveness of their own policies while developing constructive interaction with China in various fields.

The potential for economic interaction between Russia and China is tremendous, and its realisation will determine the economic future of the entire Eurasian and Pacific space. If we look at Russian-Chinese relations in a global context — through the prism of the global situation, and from the point of view of the vital interests of the two countries — we will see that a strategic partnership between Russia and China, and one that is based on trust, will be an enduring value in the 21st century. It will serve as the bulwark for an equitable, democratic and multipolar world order, which is now being built. The success of this relationship is of vital importance for international peace and security, as well as for the tranquility and wellbeing of the two great neighbouring nations.

(Concluded)

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## China, Russia agree to enhance military ties

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Russia

BEIJING, March 16. — Chinese and Russian militaries today reached “broad consensus” on enhancing their strategic ties and boosting cooperation in the future. This follows the eighth round of consultations held between the Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army, Gen. Xiong Guangkai and first Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Russian armed forces, Yury Baluyevsky here.

“The two sides reached broad consensus. They agreed that developing the friendly cooperative ties of the two armed forces is an important component of the strategic cooperative partnership between

the two countries.”

The two sides also exchanged views on the regional and international security situation, major international issues, cooperation between the two armed forces and other issues of common concern, it said, adding that both sides jointly vowed to further boost cooperation in the future.

“They shared the same view that to maintain and develop the current friendly cooperative ties between the two armed forces is not only helpful to the defence and military construction of the two countries, but also important to the bilateral strategic cooperative partnership,” the report said. — PTI