

International Conference on Complex Exploration of the Ocean and Continental Shelf as a Key Factor of APEC Sustainable Development

In Yokohama Bay on 14th December 2011 a remarkable conference took place on the training ship *Nadezhda*. The *Nadezhda* (which means hope in Russian) is a magnificent tall ship belonging to the Maritime State University in Vladivostok. On board the ship can be accommodated almost 200 people and the vessel includes a classroom in which the conference took place.

The conference was primarily an exchange between Japanese and Russian specialists discussing how to develop the sea's resources while managing the potential for conflict amongst APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) countries. For Russia, APEC is especially relevant as in September 2012, it will for the first time host the annual APEC summit in Vladivostok. There has been massive investment and redevelopment of the city in order for it to be capable of hosting this event and the *Nadezhda* is playing a vital role promoting the city by visiting the ports of APEC members in the lead up to this summit.

The conference on board *Nadezhda* opened with welcoming remarks from the co-organisers of this conference: Professor Masahiro Akiyama (Chairman of the Ocean Policy Research Foundation, Tokyo); Dr. Sergei Odogay (Rector of Maritime State University, Vladivostok); Dr. Viacheslav Kholodkov (Head of Department, Russian Institute for Strategic Studies, Moscow); and Dr. Tagir Khuziyatov (Deputy Vice-President for International Relations, Far Eastern Federal University, Vladivostok).

This was followed by a fascinating discussion of the Ecological and Political Challenges of the Ocean and Continental Shelf Exploration in the Asia Pacific. Two excellent presentations in this session focussed on the political opportunities and challenges facing the APEC region (Sergei Sevastianov and Viacheslav Kholodkov). There were also interesting reports on the development of the APEC energy sector (Masumi Motomura and Alexey Karaivanov), and the challenges of sustainable development and protecting the environment (Hiroshi Terashima and Nobuyuki Miyazaki).

After lunch, sessions included a forum on Security Implications for APEC Economies' Sustainable Development. There were reports on Shipping and its potential in the Arctic (Tagir Khuziyatov and Sergei Smirnov), the role of maritime education and trans-border infrastructures (Anton Kostyuk and Norio Yamamoto), and a timely discussion on the initiatives and prospects for maritime cooperation between Japan and Russia (Takeshi Yuasa).

In a packed afternoon schedule there was still time for a final session which combined two themes: New Cooperation Approaches - Energy and Advanced Technologies as Key

Factors of APEC Progress; and Energy Cooperation in APEC. This session included a video conference with experts in Moscow who focussed on issues of Energy Security and Asian Energy Market Reform (Stanislav Zhiznin, Teodor Shtilkind, and Andrey Konoplyanik). Meanwhile on *Nadezhda*, presenters discussed academic research and the ecological impacts of global warming for shipping and ocean resources (Oleg Shcheka, Hiromitsu Kitagawa, Michio Kawamiya, and Hiroyuki Nakahara). Finally, the well-known Japanese commentator, Shigeki Hakamada, addressed questions to the Russian delegation on Russia's objectives and ambitions in Asia.

This conference proved to be a unique chance for Russian and Japanese experts to engage with some of the most relevant and pressing maritime issues of the moment. All participants agreed that maritime resources, borders, and security are set to assume an ever greater importance for APEC countries in the coming years. Such forums as this on *Nadezhda* are vital for promoting dialogue in order that the sea's resources can be sustainably and peacefully utilised. It also revealed that Russia and Japan have many joint interests in their surrounding seas, which would benefit greatly from increased cooperation.

One of many enjoyable moments of being on board *Nadezhda* was a chance for the participants to informally exchange ideas over lunch and a reception in the ships mess. The ship, a symbol of international connections and commerce, was the ideal place to hold such a forum. As delegates enjoyed real Russian food cooked in the ships galley, new ideas and partnerships for solving some of the pressing maritime issues facing Japan and Russia could be formulated.

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