RUSSIA AND OECD SIGN DOCUMENTS ON CO-OPERATION

A Declaration on Co-operation and an Agreement on Privileges and Immunities were signed today on behalf of the Federation of Russia and the OECD at a special meeting between a Russian delegation led by Foreign Minister Kozyrev and Ministers from the OECD member countries after their annual session of the OECD Council at Ministerial level. The signing ceremony was followed by a working lunch at which Ministers discussed the economic situation and reforms in Russia.

This signature marks the firm intention of both parties to "further develop their relations of partnership and co-operation".

Ministers from the 25 OECD Member countries welcomed the signature in the communiqué issued after their meeting. They expressed the hope that the OECD’s assistance would help to consolidate the economic transformation of Russia and contribute to the full integration of this major country into the world economy.

Under the terms of the joint Declaration, the OECD will develop a policy dialogue with Russia and assist it in building a market-based economy, in particular helping with the design and implementation of market-oriented reforms for the economy as a whole. These include the creation of appropriate legal and institutional instruments, and the development of a statistical base for economic and social policymaking. The OECD will also prepare and publish Economic Surveys of the Russian Federation, which will be similar to the studies published on Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Republics.

Assistance has been provided by the OECD to the Russian Federation since 1991. Co-ordinated by the OECD Centre for Cooperation with the Economies in Transition (CCET), this assistance has covered such areas as advice on economic statistics, privatisation, competition policy, foreign direct investment, financial sector reform, defence industry conversion, labour market and social...
safety net issues, science, technology and innovation policies, agriculture, nuclear safety and environmental policies and trade policy. A number of studies relating to this work have been published. The OECD has also provided some training for Russian officials, mainly at the OECD Tax Training Centres in Copenhagen and Moscow, but also at the Joint Vienna Institute, which the OECD organises in co-operation with certain other international institutions. Russia has also participated as an observer in a few OECD committees.

Under today’s Declaration, this assistance is expected to be intensified and broadened on the basis of annual work programmes, which will take into account the economic priorities of Russia and the objectives and resources of the OECD. These programmes will be jointly prepared and agreed by the OECD Secretariat and the Russian authorities and submitted for approval to the OECD Council composed of representatives of Member governments. Russia will provide the OECD with the information needed to draw up and implement the programmes.

Also signed today was an Agreement under which Russia grants OECD the usual privileges and immunities accorded to international organisations, in order to secure full co-operation for the effective use of OECD assistance.

Key statistics on the Russian economy are attached. The texts of the Declaration and Agreement are available from the OECD Press Division, 2 rue André Pascal, 75775 Paris cedex 16 (tel. 45 24 80 88 ou 80 89 - fax 45 24 80 03).