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Putin wants Russia and China to join forces against the West

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Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in China on Tuesday, June 5th, for a two-day official visit. Putin plans to sign more than a dozen of various bilateral documents during his meetings with Chinese officials. On June 6-7, he will take part in the Beijing summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, *RIA Novosti* reports.

During his visit to China, Putin will coordinate the positions of the two countries on Syria and Iran. As for the SCO, the sides will discuss the questions related to the penetration of extremists to Central Asia.

Putin is making the trip to China against the background of the surging crisis on the financial market and the increasing pressure that the West has been putting on Russia and China in terms of the Syrian and Iranian problems. To crown it all, the withdrawal of NATO's troops from Afghanistan may put the national security of the two countries at risk. The discussion of the most serious problems of international politics will show to which extent Russia and China are close to each other.

The two powers do not accept the policies of the West the main goal of which is to change "non-democratic" regimes. China and Russia share similar views on Syria and Iran. The same can be said about the role of the United Nations in international affairs. Moscow and Beijing stand against the interventions in Arab countries bypassing the UN.

However, Russia promotes integration via the Eurasian alliance, the Collective Security Treaty Organization. China is less interested in these organizations. According to Chinese experts, Putin wants to get Russia involved in integration processes in Europe in the first place. Asia comes second for the Russian administration, they say.

China's *People's Daily* newspaper published Putin's article prior to his visit to the Celestial Empire. During his presidential campaign, Putin presented his program in the form of seven lengthy articles in the press.

The article published in the Chinese newspaper says that the commodity circulation between Russia and China in 2011 set a record level - \$83.5 billion. By 2015, Russia and China plan to reach \$100 billion and \$200 billion - by 2020, Putin wrote.

Even though the Russian-Chinese trade has reached a record level, Russia is not happy with the structure of it. Moreover, the structure of this trade hurts Russia's national pride. For China, Russia has become a supplier of raw materials and metals. In return, Russia imports technological products from China. It would not be correct to blame China for that, though. Chinese investors are concerned about the unfavorable climate for foreign entrepreneurs in Russia.

China needs more natural gas. Nevertheless, the agreement about the pipeline transportation of gas, which was achieved last year, has not materialized. Vice Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich said that the two countries still differ on prices.

Putin did not leave this issue out of attention in his article. He reminded of the launch of the Russian-Chinese oil pipeline, which already transported 15 million tons of oil last year. He also reminded of the long-term contract (25 years) for the shipment of Russia's electric power to China.

It is worthy of note that the role of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has been growing in the world during the recent years. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is going to arrive in Beijing too to take part in the conference of the organization. Putin intends to hold a separate meeting with him. Putin will also have a meeting with Afghan President Khamid Karzai.

