
"Aluminium Industry is Green" – declared Italian Ambassador to Russia at the opening of the First Italian Russian Aluminium Forum

Aluminium is an immortal material that is endlessly recyclable - this is how the metal of the future was introduced to the participants of the first Italian Russian Aluminium Forum, held on 24 -25 June, on the online platform of the Russian Aluminium Association that brought together over 150 aluminium and related industries' professionals. The organizers of the event were the Russian Aluminium Association and the Italian international exhibition of the aluminium industry Metef.

Development of the potential of investment and trade relations between Russia and Italy in the field of the aluminium and increasing the contribution of the aluminium industry to sustainable development - these are the topics of the forum's first day sessions. Its program involves the exchange of best practices in the use of aluminium solutions in all areas of production, discussion of ways to expand the use of aluminium as a material for the future, and the search for new ways of cooperation between Russia and Italy. The high status of the guests of the forum and a wide range of its participants, including representatives of 32 Russian and Italian companies, professional organizations and scientific institutions, testifies to the relevance of the topic of the event.

The opening of the forum was attended by Metef President Mario Conserva, Italian Ambassador to Russia Pasquale Terracciano, his Russian counterpart - Russian Ambassador to Italy Sergey Razov, Head of the Directorate for Industrial Policy, Competition and Small and Medium Business Issues of the Italian Ministry of Economic Development Mario Fiorentino and President of the Italian-Russian Chamber of Commerce Vincenzo Trani.

Speakers underlined that the pandemic affected many aspects, including the economic sector - supply chains of goods were interrupted, exchanges in the international sphere were limited. There is another challenge that we need to handle - reviewing production structures and moving to more sustainable economic models. Recovery and further growth will be fueled by increased adoption of digitalization and greener technologies. This is only possible by strengthening international cooperation. The international agenda also needs to be revised - more attention needs to be paid to sustainable development, ecology and innovation. A concerted effort is required to deal with future shocks such as climate change.

The importance of the climate aspect was mentioned in the welcoming speech of the head of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation, Denis Manturov, which was read by the director of the Department of Metallurgy and Materials of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Russia Semyon Mashkautsan.

“In light of the growing attention to the problem of climate preservation in the world, I want to emphasize that Russian aluminium is produced with minimal impact on the climate on the basis of renewable energy from Siberian hydroelectric power plants. This ensures a reduction of the carbon footprint along the entire production chain right down to the final product”- indicated the head of the ministry in his speech.

Metef President Mario Conserva noted the importance of strengthening bilateral cooperation in the aluminium industry during the forum opening. The economies of the two countries complement each other: Russia is one of the world leaders in the production of primary aluminium with a low carbon footprint, and Italy is the second largest manufacturer of equipment for mechanical engineering in Europe. Besides, according to Dr. Conserva, the deficit of metal in the EU countries, which need primary aluminium supplies from outside, is 75%, then in Italy it reaches 100%.

“It is necessary to create and maintain favorable conditions for direct dialogue between representatives of leading industry associations and companies in order to exchange experience and know-how of aluminium application in various industries,” said the head of Metef.

Co-chairman of the Aluminium Association Artem Asatur reminded that the First Russian-Italian Aluminium Forum is being held in development of memorandums of cooperation that were signed in 2018 between the Russian Aluminium Association and two Italian industry associations (Association of Foundry Workers (AMAFOND) and the Aluminium Center of the Association of Non-Ferrous Metals (CENTROAL-ASSOMET). According to Artem Asatur, cooperation in the aluminium sector includes a wide range of issues: the creation of joint ventures, technical re-equipment, personnel training, exchange of practical experience and scientific knowledge.

“We, of course look forward to the successful completion of the project to restart RUSAL's alumina refinery on the island of Sardinia, which will strengthen Italy's role in global aluminium chains and become an example of successful cooperation between our countries in the aluminium sector,” remarked Artem Asatur.

Co-Chair of the Aluminium Association Irina Kazovskaya drew the attention of the forum participants to the scale of Russian-Italian cooperation in the aluminium sphere. More than 20% of Russian aluminium export to all EU countries go to Italy. At the same time, many Russian metallurgical enterprises operate on the equipment of the Italian company Danieli.

According to Irina Kazovskaya, cooperation between Russia and Italy has great prospects in in the second in terms of aluminium consumption sphere after the automotive industry – construction which accounts for 26% of world aluminium consumption.

“Five years of work of the Aluminium Association have been dedicated to removing barriers to the use of aluminium in various fields, including building and construction. Today we are interested in the experience of our Italian colleagues in promoting the use of aluminium solutions to improve the quality of the urban environment and infrastructure. The second day of the forum will be devoted to this topic” said Irina Kazovskaya.

She invited Italian architects, builders, planners and designers to participate in the Second International Forum "Aluminium in Architecture and Construction" (AlumForum), which will be held on September 21-23, 2021 at the Skolkovo Technopark.

Russian Ambassador to Italy Sergey Razov spoke about the current state of Russian-Italian trade turnover, which shows an increase of 4.5% over the past four months, despite the difficulties associated with the pandemic. The diplomat highlighted the fundamental nature of the bilateral partnership, which has been a distinctive and unique feature of relations with Italy for many decades. An active industrial dialogue has been established, the main directions of which are represented by the electric power industry, metallurgy, aviation and space, oil production, and transport.

"Today it is important to look for ways to realize the potential of Russian-Italian cooperation and open its new horizons by joint efforts. I am confident that the Russian-Italian Aluminium Forum has a promising future" said the Russian ambassador.

Italian Ambassador to Russia Pasquale Terracciano also noted the importance of the forum for strengthening cooperation between Russia and Italy in the aluminium industry. The two countries have great potential in the field of aluminium, the Italian diplomat said. This metal can be applied in various fields: from transportation and construction to packaging and mechanical applications. Italian manufacturers can provide the necessary transfer of their advanced technologies.

"Aluminium is a wonderful material. It is environmentally friendly and easy to recycle. The aluminium industry is green. Many technological innovations have been introduced in Russia in recent years, which is important for Italian companies - they are ready to transfer technologies and share their knowledge with Russian companies to develop new projects" said Pasquale Terracciano.

Danilo Amigoni, President of the Italian Association of Non-Ferrous Metals (Assomet-Centroal), Chief Operating Officer of Baldassare Agnelli, gave an overview of the Italian aluminium industry. The speaker noted that per capita aluminium consumption in Italy reaches almost 35 kg. Most of the aluminium is in form of foundry castings, extrusions and rolled products. The biggest part of finished aluminium products are used by transport, packaging and construction. However, in recent years, the scope of aluminium has expanded significantly. Now this metal is actively applied in the consumer goods sector.

"Aluminium is an immortal material. It is endlessly recyclable. For example, 600 recycled aluminium cans can be used to make a bicycle" said Danilo Amigoni.

The first day of the Forum continued with presentations containing unique information about the aluminium industries in Italy and Russia. The second day of the forum was devoted to the opportunities and significant achievements in the aluminium application in architecture, construction and industrial design.