

**THE ST. PETERSBURG INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC FORUM – 2009**

**4–6 JUNE 2009, ST. PETERSBURG**

**THE FUTURE OF CITIES: PREPARING FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH**

Moderator:

**Oleg Chirkunov**, Governor of Perm Region

Panellists:

**Viktor Basargin**, Minister for Regional Development of the Russian Federation

**Vyacheslav Glazychev**, General Director, "Europe"; President, National Academy of Design

**Mikhail Blinkin**, Head Research Institute of Transport and Road Management, Ph.D.

**Vadim Moshkovich**, Member of the Council of Federation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

**Prof. Ir. Kees Christiaanse**, Architect, Planner and Founding Partner KCAP Architects & Planners

**Peter Bishop**, Group Director Design, Development & Environment (London Development Agency)

**Jürgen Bruns-Berentelg**, CEO, Hafencity GmbH

**Stephan Solzhenitsyn**, partner, McKinsey & Company

**Leonid Kazinets**, President, BARKLI Construction and Development

Participants in this session on the future of cities emphasised the need to protect cities' identities at a time when global competition for economic and political superiority often disregard their unique characteristics. Examples were given such as cities with highly developed infrastructure and logistics, entrepreneurial and creative industries, and those which focus on a high quality of life. Participants also commented that, often, there are cultural or historical reasons why cities have developed in a particular way.

In Russia, many smaller towns struggle with their identity. Panelists agreed that in order to attract more investment, they need to define their purpose for existence. There are several issues making this more difficult, such as industry moving outside of towns, and internal migration. Nevertheless, the concept of identity was agreed by all participants as key in terms of developing new modern metropolitan areas.

It was commented that towns of the future should be built, not for any grand political or economic purpose, but first and foremost to satisfy the needs of the population: people need jobs, social infrastructure, security, high quality dwellings and a good environment. Participants cited examples of new developments in London, Hamburg and Perm to discuss the current thinking behind town development. Preference was given to cities/large districts with mixed residential and office space development, integrated in a new and well thought out environment. New cities should provide cultural and entertainment space in an aesthetic setting and large public areas. Transport infrastructure should facilitate easy access to all areas. It was concluded that towns that have developed in this way are able to attract new dwellers and provide ample possibility for a high quality of life. The participants agreed that such towns will become future centres for innovation, technological development, economic prosperity and cultural advancement. All the participants discussed the issue of cities clogged up by a lack of adequate transport infrastructure. The key in the future is to develop sustainable mobility ensuring easy access for the population. It was mentioned that the problem of de-clogging towns of traffic is very difficult to achieve. The focus, nevertheless, should be on ensuring greater penetration of public eco-transport (trams were mentioned as a solution) together with punitive measures for using private transport (expensive parking, city centre fees etc). Panellists concluded that only towns with an efficient infrastructure would become a desirable place to live and work.