

TÄLLBERG FOUNDATION

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Tällberg Conversation in Moscow, Russia

“Leadership through the converging crises”

Tuesday, May 26, 2009

Introduction

This first Tällberg conversation in Russia, on May 26th 2009, at the Winzavod, Moscow, is an afternoon gathering of a small group decision makers from different sectors in Russia. The purpose is to stage a systems-based conversation around some of the most pressing issues for business, politics and society today. This afternoon will give the participants an opportunity to reflect on the immediate questions that develop as we see financial, economic, ecological and social crises converge.

This meeting is jointly organised by the Tällberg Foundation and the Swedish Institute, in cooperation with the Embassy of Sweden in Russia.

Background

We are currently witnessing how a financial crisis has triggered the deep real economy crisis that now is spreading around the world with undiminished strength. Transition economies and mature states alike face a new situation of mass unemployment, deficits and economic decline. Russia and other resource dependent regions face an additional strain.

Wherever one looks, decision-makers are on “terra incognita.” Economic predictions and political promises during the last decade have not come about. Voices of warning have been few. There have been practically no preparations for anything other than steady unbroken growth, “business as usual.” Few have applied a precautionary principle, with respect to either the economy or the environment.

How will the crisis continue to play out over the next few months, years and over the long term? What are the possible consequences? And how will the economic and policy landscape look “on the other side” of the crisis?

It is high time to begin formulating and articulating the difficult questions in order to discuss strategic political and business decisions in the right context. Decisions must point out a way forward that is more sustainable than the one that led to today’s collapse. Great pressures are now put upon the institutions and mechanisms for cooperation and problem solving.

Unlike earlier crises, we are not facing a set of local or regional difficulties, but a truly global challenge. We also see how more profound imbalances around the world that have been with us for decades are becoming apparent and making the situation even worse. Economies heavily dependent on natural resources are in for an even more turbulent ride.

The seriousness of the crisis is heightened by the precarious ecological problems, including global warming that is being generated by modern society’s economic activity and energy system. Over the last 10-15 years environmental and climate issues have become all the more an important factor influencing societal and economic development; the endurance and stability of globalization.

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“Mainstream” political and economic visions have now hit the wall. However, in this there is also an opening – an opportunity to learn to manage smarter and with greater foresight, to rethink strategies and policies, and to trust less in utopias. Will we gather ourselves to a common and provident action? It remains to be seen.

Meeting outline

Starting with an analysis of the interrelated and converging crises, this meeting will explore what new steps could be taken to respond to this crisis by applying a systems perspective and accounting for the increasing inter-dependencies within Russia and globally.

Among the specific questions to be explored are:

To tackle the social and economic development that is expected during the next years, what preparations are necessary today – in business and governance?

How can the finance and energy crisis be used as an opportunity to diversify the Russian economy and to attract new kinds of investments?

Can the experiences from the financial crisis be used to rethink business leadership approaches and political strategies?

Do we need a new view on economic growth and development – and go beyond the GDP concept for measuring growth?

The meeting will gather 30-40 decision makers and leaders from business, academia, the public sector and society in Russia.

This Tällberg Conversation in Moscow builds on the discussions at the annual Tällberg Forum (the next Forum will take place June 24-28, 2009). Leaders and thinkers from seventy nations gather in Sweden for four days of conversations and workshops related to the opportunities and challenges of global interdependence, under the general theme: “How on earth can we live together?”. Conversations at Tällberg have increasingly focused on the systems problems emerging from the growing imbalance between nature and human activity.

The Forum has developed into a globally recognized arena for conversations on the major challenges facing humanity. In addition to the annual Forum, the Foundation convenes conversations and conferences in different parts of the world (Brussels, London, New York, Washington DC, Cape Town, etc) and generates ideas and proposals for policy, strategy and institutional development that work in the interests of the whole.

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Programme

Tuesday, May 26, 2009

- 15.00** **Opening and introduction**
- Representative from the Embassy of Sweden to Russia
 - Karin Bruce, Tällberg Foundation
- Informal presentations
- Diverging Interests, Converging Crises**
- Bo Ekman, Founder and Chairman Tällberg Foundation
- 15.30** **The defining challenges for Russia's future – a systems view on finance, resources and environment**
- Sergei Guriev, Morgan Stanley Professor of Economics and Rector, New Economic School
 - Evgeny Shvarts, Director of Conservation Policy, WWF Russia
- 16.10** **The financial crisis – an opportunity to rethink strategies and policies?**
- Anders Wijkman, Member of the European Parliament
 - Aleksandr Timofeev, Managing partner, MTD Development*
- Conversations in groups**
- Concluding remarks**
- 18.30** **Session concludes**
- Åsa Bjerling, Swedish Institute
- 18.30 – 20.00** **Reception**

Location: Winzavod, 4th Syromyatnicheskiy per. 1, b 6 (www.winzavod.ru)

* To be confirmed as speakers

The conversation is held in Russian and English (presentations and inputs can be in either English or Russian language, translation will be available for non-Russian speakers)