

Paris, 15th December 1994
OLIS : 15-Dec-1994
dist. : 15-Dec-1994

SG/NR(94)67

OECD MEETING ON RUSSIAN OFFICERS CONVERSION PROGRAMME

Paris, 19th-20th December 1994

Delegates from the Russian Federation and OECD Member countries are to meet at OECD headquarters on 19th and 20th December to discuss the co-ordination of training and re-employment efforts for Russian military officers returning to civilian life. By 1996, some 1.5 million Russian military personnel will be demobilised, 350,000 of them officers.

An issue affecting the political and social stability bearing on the economic development of the Russian Federation, the Russian Officer Conversion Programme is based on recommendations from a 1993 OECD report which was completed at the request of the Russian Federation State Committee for Higher Education and is one of the activities of the OECD Centre for Co-operation with the Economies in Transition (CCET) for the Newly Independent States. A further report, Russian Officer Conversion Programme, a Proposed Approach [GD/(94)115] has been prepared for this meeting and is based on discussions with several Russian Ministries and international development agencies.

The programme was developed to strengthen the East-West partnership established to mitigate the effects of increasing unemployment by providing quality training and career transition assistance to former military officers. It proposes that the co-ordination of resources allocated for retraining in areas of expected market growth would increase the effectiveness of existing programmes and leverage funds for additional assistance from both the public and private sectors.

The conference will draw high level participation from seven Ministries (Defence, Education, Higher Education, Social Protection, Employment Service, Labour and Foreign Affairs) of the Russian Federation and OECD Member countries. Among the organisations attending are the European Commission TACIS, G-7 Support Implementation Group, EBRD, NATO and the ILO. The event

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will be chaired by the Ambassador of Finland to the OECD, Mr. Pasi Rutanen, and keynote speakers will include Mr. Salvatore Zecchini, Assistant Secretary General of the OECD and Director of CCET, Marshal Victor Kulikov, former European commander of the Warsaw Pact, Mr. Thomas Alexander, OECD Director for Education, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs and Mr. Giorgio Bonacci of the EC/TACIS programme.

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