

Azot Welcomes British Researchers

A group of chemistry researchers from Cambridge University has visited Severodonetsk Azot corporation. The cooperation with eminent British researchers is being initiated by Mr. Dmitry Firtash, Head of the Board of Directors Group DF. The group has visited different shops of the facility and discussed the cooperation priorities with Azot's senior management and R&D staff.

Our city greeted the guests with the genuinely English weather but the sadness of murky skies was offset by the cordiality of Azot personnel. Ukrainian folk-costumed girls welcomed the guests at the plant's lodge handing them the traditional bread-and-salt.

'I have spent six months working in Ukraine to ascertain how hospitable Ukrainians are,' commented Mr. Ian Bird representing Group DF. 'Our delegation consists of university professors, researchers and professionals with multi-year experience in the industry. I am sure, they will be most interested in seeing how your company operates, and optimum avenues for cooperation will sure be found.'

Mr. Ivan Volokhov, Azot's Vice-Chairman of the Board, coordinated the tour of the facility with British guests. Most logically, the tour started with Azot's R&D center where the most extensive and constructive conversation between fellow researchers took place.

Then, the delegation went on to examine the company's technological sections: the shops producing ammonia, potassium and sodium nitrates, acetic acid shop, 1-A ammonia shop and urea and ammonium carbonate shops.

Here are some of the impressions shared by Prof. Peter Davidson, member of the Royal Academy of Engineering: 'I have an extensive experience of work with ammonia and ammonia nitrate equipment as I am dealing with chemical technologies at a renowned company ICI and used to serve as an innovations advisor to certain governmental agencies in the UK. I was very pleased to see even old shops at your facility in a pretty condition. New pieces of equipment look quite impressive too – they are quite comparable to the installations used in other countries. Yet, there is always room for improvement and the objective of our visit is to find possible areas of cooperation between Group DF and Cambridge University boasting the world's best chemical and biochemical engineering department. I am hopeful that this cooperation will yield good results as I have seen how many talented professionals work at your plant.'

After the tour of Azot's production facility, an excursion was organized at the 'People's Museum' followed by a roundtable. This discussion brought together the British guests and Mr. Bugayev, Chairman of Severodonetsk Azot; Mr. Volokhov, Azot's Chief Technical Officer; Mr. Ignatov, CFO; Mr. Solomakha, HR and PR Director and other senior managers. When the discussion was over, Ms. O. Golovko, the Museum Director handed special mementos to the guests, including a book about Severodonetsk Azot.

The high spirit of the roundtable participants clearly showed that the discussion had been interesting and productive. 'It's great that Mr. Firtash had initiated meetings of this kind,' said Mr. Bugayev. 'We plan to continue our consultations with Cambridge researchers in

the future. Thus far, this cooperation is only confined to such areas as nitric acid, ammonia nitrate and methanol production. We are looking into a possibility of sending our specialists for training at Cambridge.'

Mr. Nikolay Oseyko, HR Director of Group DF's Corporate Center accompanying the delegation pointed out an excellent organization of the event: 'The Cambridge professors received comprehensive information concerning the equipment they examined. I think that even at this point, the visit may be assessed as a successful one as the roundtable involving the plant's senior management revealed that the potential for promising cooperation is clear and obvious. I am sure that this potential will be eventually materialized in concrete actions.'

There are no doubts that Severodonetsk Azot will immensely benefit from the newly established cooperation with the world-famous University of Cambridge which will most certainly boost the plant's further development.