

Potential of Russia's biotech sector

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The common bases in Russian and US history that have triggered new thinking in the former about how to use privately-owned patent rights and cooperative government-university-industry technology transfer arrangements to secure successful market commercialization and peaceful adaptation of publicly-owned bio-warfare technologies, is highlighted by **US international trade and business legal practitioner Lawrence Kogan** and Russian government lawyer Yelena Bakulina. This appeared in a short article published March 21 by the Washington Legal Foundation.

The article arose from Mr Kogan's June 28, 2007, presentation at a symposium convened by the Vyatka State University, Kirov in Russia, as part of a long-standing joint Russian-US cooperative non-proliferation program overseen by the International Science and Technology Center, Moscow, Russia.

Using the American experience

According to Messrs Bakulina and Kogan, "the [US] federal government['s]...transference of innovation from energy, space and defense to that of the private sector, and...the American experience in innovation and intellectual property may be advantageous to use in Russia..."

Furthermore, the authors note, "the Kirov Region certainly has the potential to develop effective innovation systems supported by the investment and protection of privately-owned intellectual property in the sphere of modern high-tech technology. If properly managed...this could create jobs, know-how and other economic and social benefits in the Kirov Region."

Could leapfrog EU markets, where the Commission is obsessed with dictating rules

Such an approach, adds Mr Kogan, "would allow Russian biotechnology markets to leapfrog those of the European Union to capture a greater share of the global marketplace for biomedical and bioenvironmental products and processes. Unfortunately, the current EU innovation model is fixated on governmental market control via regulation rather than on market facilitation via economic incentives that ease the burdens and costs of doing business," emphasizes Mr Kogan.

"The EU Commission is more obsessed with dictating the rules of the game to ensure 'parity-over-progress' than with providing hi-tech European businesses operating in the biotech sectors with the necessary property rights-based enabling environment and economic freedom to grow and prosper," he continued. As a consequence, according to Mr Kogan, "EU biotech and pharma companies have increasingly relocated their operations to the USA."