**Belarusian Investment Forum (BIF) 2017**
Foreign direct investment has traditionally acted as an instrument to transfer not only foreign capital, but also technology. Without the participation of foreign capital, the development of Belarus will be slow, and, most likely, reverse.

In order to attract foreign direct investment in the country and stimulate the growth of the country's competitiveness, we have to integrate ourselves into the rapidly changing world economy and the world order, find our place in global value chains, while pursuing our own interests. To do this, it is necessary to understand clearly the trends in the development of the world economy and future challenges. Therefore, it is very important to hold in Belarus a specialized forum devoted to attracting foreign direct investment in the country.

The National Agency of Investment and Privatization will hold the Belarusian Investment Forum in Minsk on September 28-29, 2017, one of the most important events in the country's economic life. The forum will gather about 500 participants from more than 30 countries, including from the CIS countries, the European Union, Asia, the United States of America.
Minsk forum will bring together representatives of major international and foreign financial institutions, private foreign investors, government, national business and the expert community to discuss in the framework of an open dialogue the opportunities of doing business in the country.

The largest international companies with a worldwide reputation – Facebook, Microsoft Corporation, Citibank, Bank of New York Mellon, Culligan Italiana SpA and others – will take part in BIF-2017. The event will also involve the largest international investment and financial organizations and funds, including the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Finance Corporation, the European Investment Bank, the Netherlands Development Bank, and other institutions.

As part of the forum, a plenary meeting is planned, as well as panel discussions on IT, the financial and real sectors of the Belarusian economy, investment into infrastructure, problems and opportunities for business in green economy and energy. The experts will discuss the possibilities of attracting foreign investments to Belarus, the investment, technological and personnel potential of the country, government measures to maintain business and investment activity.

For discussion at the forum, we identified the areas most in demand in foreign business, with which the Agency has been actively working for more than a year and is accompanying investors at all stages of implementing investment projects. We see that the demand for high-tech and information technology services is high in the world. And then Belarus really could claim it. Of course, not without the help of HTP - the preferential regime operating in the whole of Belarus and making the Belarusian IT industry even more attractive for foreign investment inflow.

We also understand that sustainable development of Belarus is impossible without environmentally friendly, energy and resource-saving technologies. Therefore, within the framework of the forum, we have decided to launch a dialogue between interested parties regarding existing energy and environmental challenges in the country, the solution of which must be modeled taking into account the potential of foreign capital. Experts will discuss the strategy for the development of energy, housing and communal services, the waste management system in the country, the place and role of renewable energy sources in the development of the energy system. This topic sounds especially relevant in the context of the commissioning of the Belarusian nuclear power plant. The result of such a discussion will be the identification of business opportunities for the private sector, taking into account the world experience and technological achievements in these areas.

During the second day of the forum, on September 29, foreign participants will be able to visit the sites of the High Technologies Park, Great Stone Industrial Park, Minsk Free Economic Zone and become personally certain of the created favorable conditions for doing business.
We invite business people to take part in the Belarusian Investment Forum. I am confident that for investors the event will be the first step for investing in the Belarusian economy, and the Agency, in turn, is ready to become a guide for foreign business in our country.