

---

## **TATARSTAN CAPITALIZES ON CHINA'S EXPANDING ROLE IN MIDDLE VOLGA**

- 25.09.2023

---

Eurasia Daily Monitor (21 September 2023)

Paul Goble

Russians have become increasingly accustomed to, if not comfortable with, the expansion of Chinese influence in the Russian Far East, along the Northern Sea Route, and in some of the former Soviet republics of Central Asia and the South Caucasus (see EDM, March 9, May 24, August 10). Now, the Kremlin is confronted with a potentially more disturbing development: the rise of China as a major player not just along Russias periphery but near its core. Beijing has been increasing its investments and influence in Tatarstan and the Middle Volga. This trend has assumed particular prominence in the past month as Chinese firms have moved to replace Western firms leaving these regions due to sanctions against Russia for its war in Ukraine. Increased Chinese activity is already giving Tatarstan and the adjoining regions and republics new sources of leverage over Moscow. The Vladimir Putin regime has attempted to present these developments as simply evidence of strengthening Russian-Chinese ties. Nevertheless, the situation is sparking questions about Beijings intentions and the future of the Kremlins influence.

Trade between China and Tatarstan has been steadily growing. In 2023, it will likely exceed \$2 billion. This only represents a fraction of Russian-Chinese trade, which reached \$134 billion in the first seven months of 2023 alone (RBC, September 8). According to Russian commentator Ruslan Gorevoy, these figures do not accurately reflect the growing role of China in Tatarstan for three primary reasons (Versia.ru, September 18). First, Russian exports mostly raw materials to China, while Chinese production in Tatarstan centers on finished goods. This effectively places industries into Chinese hands that many Russians think should be Moscows alone. [...]

[Click for more](#)

---

Kaynak/Source: