

Belarusian TV Show Becomes Unlikely Player in East-West Tug of War



New York City, Nov 16, 2019 (Issuewire.com) - The longtime leader of Belarus continues to resist entreaties from Russia to draw the two former Soviet republics deeper into a “union state,” and now a modeling competition may be strengthening his hand.

The leader, Alexander Lukashenko, who has declined to allow Russian military bases on his soil and has stayed neutral as Moscow fights a low-level war in neighboring Ukraine, appears to be getting an assist from a decidedly Western-style television event, the annual “Supermodel of Belarus” competition.

In its inaugural season, the TV program riveted the nation, with an astounding 60% of Belarusians glued to their sets. The show appears to take as its inspiration the American and British versions of “Next Top Model.” What helps make the program so endearing to its audience is that there are no size, height or age limits for the model-contestants.

Production is ramping up for the sophomore season with Europa Plus committed to carrying the

program. The same three judges from Season One will be back, Belarusian fashion stylist Alexander Kirinyuk, Belarusian fashion magazine founder Denis Arger and the New York-based, Belaruisian-born top model Valentina Belianka. The second season winner will get a contract with a well-known New York modeling agency.

The Belarusian program is the brainchild of Angelina Gromchenko, who serves as its founder and producer.

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