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EU Seeks Polish Changes for Gas Deal

By The Moscow Times

November 07, 2010

The European Union has called on Poland to prepare detailed measures for its natural gas market before getting the green light for a new supply agreement with Russia.

"We managed to ensure that the intergovernmental agreement between Russia and Poland was brought into line with EU law," EU Energy Commissioner Guenther Oettinger told a briefing in Warsaw last week. "Both the Polish authorities and my services agreed that the operator agreement will have to be complemented by further implementation measures."

Russian exporter Gazprom and state-controlled Polish distributor Polskie Gornictwo Naftowe i Gazownictwo reached a draft agreement in January to boost gas supplies. The final signature of an intergovernmental deal was delayed until last week after the European Union regulator said it needed to be adjusted to guarantee compliance with EU rules on pipeline management, access for third parties and pricing.

In a parallel deal, operators of the Yamal pipeline agreed last month that Poland's Gaz-System will take over the local management of the pipeline from EuRoPol Gaz, a joint venture

between Gazprom and Polskie Gornictwo, also known as PGNiG.

Under the intergovernmental accord signed on Oct. 29, PGNiG will be able to buy as much as 10.2 billion cubic meters of gas a year from Gazprom, up from 7.45 billion cubic meters in the previous contract. The central European country consumed 13.7 billion cubic meters last year, according to BP data.

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