Ukraine Backs 2 Reactors

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Ukraine's parliament gave the green light on Wednesday for a joint project with Russia to build two nuclear reactors in western Ukraine, financed by a multibillion-dollar Russian loan.

Ukraine already operates 15 nuclear units at four nuclear power plants, and nuclear energy covers about a half of its electricity needs.

The agreement, signed in April, calls for construction of two Russian-designed units at the Khmelnytsky plant, each with a capacity of 1,000 megawatts. Russia is to issue a loan to pay for the nuclear equipment it supplies to the project. Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych said last year that the loan could reach $2 billion, while one Russian official put it at "several billion of dollars."

(Reuters)

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