

Nabucco Pushes Back Start

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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VIENNA — Nabucco Gas Pipeline International said it pushed back the start of construction of its 7.9 billion euro (\$11.5 billion) link to carry Caspian natural gas to Europe to 2013 and start of operations to 2017.

"The timeline has changed as a direct result of the changes in the timing for gas supplies in the Caspian and Middle East regions, as announced by potential suppliers," Nabucco said Friday on its web site.

The pipeline — a joint venture of Germany's RWE, Vienna-based OMV, Budapest-based Mol, Bulgargaz, Romania's Transgaz and Ankara-based Boru Hatlari ile Petrol Tasima — is designed to carry gas more than 3,900 kilometers from Turkey to Austria to reduce European dependence on Russia. The venture previously said it would start construction in 2012 and operations in 2015, after moving the timeline several times.

"From today's point of view I don't see further delays," Nabucco managing director Reinhard Mitschek told journalists Friday on a conference call from Vienna. He said "it remains to be

seen" when the final investment decision, which was scheduled for this year, would be made.

Nabucco is open to new partners if there is "added value," and any negotiations would be between the existing partners and a potential new one, Mitschek said, adding that he was not aware of any "concrete discussions" with the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan, or SOCAR.

Mitschek also said a report Thursday that the pipeline's cost had risen to as much as 15 billion euros was "speculation" and that the link's extension by about 25 percent because of feeder lines wouldn't necessarily boost the project's price.

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