The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Gas Agreement With China Likely by Start of Forum

By Irina Filatova

May 12, 2011



Russia and China are likely to sign an agreement on natural gas supplies during the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in June, presidential economic aide Arkady Dvorkovich said Thursday.

Gazprom and China National Petroleum Corporation hope to complete talks in the next weeks, he said. Gas is due to start flowing from Russia to China in 2015.

"As far as the agreement with China is concerned, the work on it is under way. Of course we would like this work to be completed before the start of the forum," Dvorkovich said at a news conference devoted to the St. Petersburg Economic Forum.

The two countries have been negotiating the final price of the gas since 2006, with China asking for a discount on the price that Russia charges European countries.

Chinese leader Hu Jintao will participate in the forum's opening ceremony together with President Dmitry Medvedev, who will be at the event for three days, from June 16 to June 18. Medvedev will join some sessions and hold bilateral meetings, said the Kremlin adviser, adding that the president will also chair a meeting of the consultative board he created to advise on making Moscow an international financial center.

Among other high-ranking guests expected to attend the event are Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero and Finnish president Tarja Halonen, who also attended the forum in 2009, Dvorkovich said.

Last year French President Nicolas Sarkozy attended the forum as a special guest.

This year's forum will focus on the new drivers of growth of the global and domestic economy after the financial crisis, said Economic Development Minister Elvira Nabiullina, adding that the event's budget had grown to 880 million rubles ($31 million) — up more than 11 percent from last year.

According to Dvorkovich, the results of the Group of Eight summit — which will take place at the end of this month in France — will affect discussions at the forum on the situation in the Middle East, the global commodity market and the development of the Internet.

At least one session will be devoted to the $10 billion sovereign fund created by the government to attract direct foreign investment. Details of the fund's strategy and the structure of its supervisory board will be discussed in St. Petersburg, Dvorkovich said.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/05/12/gas-agreement-with-china-likely-by-start-of-forum-a6911