

TNK-BP Resists Cuts in Its Exports to Poland, Belarus

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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TNK-BP is pushing back after its temporary exclusion from the pipeline export route to Poland and cuts in crude volumes it can ship to Belarus, its chief oil trader said Tuesday.

TNK-BP clawed back some volumes but the allocations it got for the third quarter remain below previous levels, said Jonathan Kollek, senior vice president for sales, trading and logistics.

"After 10 years of working with one of our most profitable destinations we are thrown out. Can you say why?" Kollek said in a forthright two-hour interview at TNK-BP's new headquarters.

The British-Russian venture saw its volumes slashed in pipeline operator Transneft's second-quarter export schedule to Poland amid a shareholders dispute over co-owner BP's bid to partner with Rosneft.

Kollek's boss, TNK-BP shareholder German Khan, fired off a series of letters to top officials demanding explanations over why TNK-BP's allocations had been cut in the quarterly "graphic" of exports to Poland compiled by Transneft.

The company was told, Kollek said, that priority would be given to companies that sign direct contracts with end users.

Reluctantly, TNK-BP last Friday signed a term contract for the third quarter with Polish refiner PKN Orlen despite having a long-standing relationship with trading house Mercuria to cover its Polish shipments.

TNK-BP has typically received a quarterly allocation of 1.35 million tons that covers its contractual commitments to supply the Polish market via Mercuria.

That was cut to 400,000 tons in the second quarter, all of which was lumped into April. TNK-BP received no allocations for May but managed to win some additional volumes for June after initiating a letter-writing campaign, Kollek said.

For the third quarter, TNK-BP has received a Poland allocation of 980,000 tons, again below its typical volumes.

Kollek is lobbying to increase that to 1.5 million tons, or even as high as 1.8 million tons, so that TNK-BP can make good on its commitments to Mercuria and supply up to 300,000 tons direct to PKN.

"On Poland an absurd, non-transparent action forces us to be in a position where we cannot fulfill a commitment to an internationally reputable company," said Kollek, an Israeli who previously worked for trading house Marc Rich. "We lose money. Russia loses money. We lose face."

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