

Naftogaz Adds to Tymoshenko's Legal Woes

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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KIEV — Ukrainian state energy firm Naftogaz filed a lawsuit against former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko on Friday, seeking \$190 million in damages and adding to a barrage of criminal charges against her.

The government of President Viktor Yanukovich accuses Tymoshenko, his fiercest political opponent, of abusing her power in brokering a 2009 gas supply deal between Naftogaz and Gazprom.

The government says the deal, which ended a dispute over prices that briefly disrupted Russian gas supplies to Europe, was a sellout of national interests, and state prosecutors have filed criminal charges against Tymoshenko, who is now on trial.

Tymoshenko, who served twice as prime minister, has dismissed all charges against her as politically motivated and accused Yanukovich, who narrowly beat her in the 2010 presidential

election, of cracking down on the opposition.

On Friday, Tymoshenko was indicted in absentia, having been expelled from the courtroom for refusing to stand up when addressing the judge. She says he is following orders from Yanukovich's office.

In addition to the criminal charges, a Naftogaz lawyer presented a civil lawsuit against Tymoshenko, seeking 1.52 billion hryvnas (about \$190 million) in damages, her political party BYuT said.

BYuT said the sum represented Naftogaz's estimate of losses incurred from signing the gas agreements with Gazprom on Tymoshenko's orders.

Tymoshenko faces a number of other criminal charges related to her time as prime minister as well as earlier business activities. She has been accused, in particular, of misusing receipts from the sale of carbon emission permits.

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