

SOCAR Starts Talks on DESFA

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Azeri state energy company SOCAR said it has started talks with the Greek government on purchasing the country's natural gas grid operator DESFA, after being the only bidder in a failed tender for the asset sale.

"The tender procedure on the privatization of DESFA is over and SOCAR has started talks with the Greek government," SOCAR's President Rovnag Abdullayev told reporters. "It means that the whole natural gas distribution system of Greece will be in our hands soon."

Russian energy company Sintez and Greek-Czech group PPF-Terna dropped out of the race for DESFA earlier this month, leaving SOCAR as the only major player in the running.

Abdullayev said a purchase of Greek assets would "strengthen the export potential of SOCAR."

SOCAR wants to increase the level of its gas distribution in Greece, from 17 percent at present, and deliver gas from the major Shah Deniz field off Azerbaijan to the European country.

(Reuters)

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