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Canada Oil Province Boycotts Moscow Conference Over Ukraine

By The Moscow Times

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Canadian oil province Alberta has boycotted a Moscow oil conference over the crisis in Ukraine.

Alberta, the Canadian province whose oil sands hold the world's third-largest crude reserve, said it will not participate in a global oil conference in Moscow next month as a protest against Russia's actions in Ukraine.

The province's Conservative government said it will not staff a booth, as had been planned, in the Canadian pavilion at the World Petroleum Congress, scheduled for June 15 through 19. It also won't support any Alberta-based companies attending the event.

"Continuing actions to undermine stability in Ukraine make Alberta's participation in Moscow untenable," Dave Hancock, the province's premier, said in a statement. "We continue to support the federal government's persistent calls to de-escalate the crisis and oppose military aggression and illegal occupation."

Canada has imposed sanctions on a number of Russian individuals and banks to protest Moscow's annexation of Crimea and its role in the Ukraine crisis. But the Canadian government has not prevented companies or individuals from doing business with their Russian counterparts.

Held every four years, the World Petroleum Congress is one of the largest and most prestigious oil industry events. A number of Alberta-based organizations and companies had signed up for exhibition space at the congress, including Canada's largest oil and gas company, Suncor Energy, according to the WPC website.

Suncor said Wednesday it has decided to skip the conference.

"We are no longer going," Sneh Seetal, a spokeswoman for the company, said in an email. "We feel WPC is important, however, given the uncertainty in the region, we have chosen to not attend."

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