

Merkel: EU May Have to Rethink Its Energy Partnership With Russia

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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German Chancellor Angela Merkel attends a cabinet meeting at the Chancellery in Berlin, Sept. 24, 2014.

BERLIN — German Chancellor Angela Merkel has there are good reasons to continue the European Union's energy partnership with Russia for the time being but that might change if Moscow continues to violate basic principles.

Merkel, speaking Monday at a news conference in Berlin with Finland's Prime Minister Alexander Stubb, said that in the medium- to long-term it might be necessary to reconsider that energy partnership with Russia.

"There are good reasons to continue the energy partnership with Russia," she said and noted that within the European Union different countries had different levels of dependency on supplies of Russian natural gas.

"It's not our goal to completely sever our dependency," she said, noting that cooperation

in the energy sector was in the mutual interest of the EU and Russia.

"Nevertheless we have naturally to think about what we might have to change in the medium- to long-term as far as energy policies go if there is a continued violation of basic principles," she said, referring to respecting national sovereignty.

She added that it was important to keep the pressure on Russia, and that Germany and Finland were in agreement on that. She added that she saw no scope to relax the economic sanctions against Russia, imposed over Moscow's policies on Ukraine.

"We are unfortunately far away from that," she said.

A rift between Russia and the West since the Ukraine conflict has prompted European countries to look at ways to reduce their dependence on Russian oil and gas.

Russia provides around a third of the EU's oil and gas, and 40 percent of the gas is shipped through Ukraine.

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