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Russia, Ukraine Trade Barbs Over Europe's Largest Nuclear Plant

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Russian military convoy stands on the road toward the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Station in Enerhodar, Zaporizhzhia region, in territory under Russian military control, southeastern Ukraine, Sunday, May 1, 2022. **AP Photo/TASS**

A top Russian official claimed Wednesday that Europe's largest nuclear power station - that was captured by Russian forces in Ukraine - will provide electricity to Russia .

Ukraine's energy providers dismissed the comments on the seized Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant as a technical impossibility.

Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Marat Khusnullin, on a visit to the occupied areas of southeastern Ukraine, said Wednesday that the Zaporizhzhia plant (ZNPP) will provide electricity to Russia.

"If Ukraine's power system will be ready to pay, then we'll work; if it won't, the plant will work for Russia," Khusnullin said in remarks broadcast by state-run media.

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Ukraine’s electricity grid operator Ukrenergo said Wednesday that the country’s power system has no physical connections with Russia’s power system.

“Therefore, the supply of electricity from Ukrainian power plants to Russia is currently physically impossible,” it said in a statement on messaging app Telegram.

“Any change in the situation at ZNPP will mean an act of nuclear terrorism.”

Ukraine's Energoatom, which operates the Zaporizhzhia plant, said in a statement the same day that: “there’s no technical or any other possibility” for siphoning off the plant’s electricity to Russia, adding that both the plant and the city of Enerhodar where it is located in “will soon be returned to Ukraine.”

The Russian military's seizure of the Zaporizhzhia plant in early March shortly after the beginning of the invasion of Ukraine caused a small fire and raised global fears of a Chernobyl-like disaster.

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