

Absent Turbine a Russian 'Excuse' to Cap Gas Flows – Germany

By [AFP](#)

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AP / TASS / Michael Probst

The German government on Wednesday accused Russia of using the absence of a turbine as an "excuse" to limit gas deliveries via a key pipeline due to go back online this week.

"I would like to stress that according to our information this is an excuse by the Russian side," a German economy ministry spokeswoman told reporters when asked about the reduced flows via the Nord Stream 1 pipeline.

Russia's state-owned energy giant Gazprom has cut flows to Germany via Nord Stream 1 by some 60 percent in recent weeks, blaming the absence of a Siemens gas turbine that was undergoing repairs in Canada.

The repaired turbine is currently understood to be en route to Russia, according to German media, as routine maintenance work on Nord Stream 1 is due to be completed on Thursday.

Berlin has rejected Gazprom's turbine explanation and believes Russia is squeezing supplies in retaliation for Western sanctions on Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine.

"We are doing everything we can to eliminate this excuse from the Russian side," the economy ministry spokeswoman said, noting that the turbine in question was not meant to be deployed until September.

Russian President Vladimir Putin insisted on Tuesday that Gazprom would meet all its delivery obligations, with Nord Stream 1 set to resume operation from Thursday.

"Gazprom has fulfilled, is fulfilling and will fulfill its obligations in full," Putin told reporters in Tehran after holding talks with the leaders of Iran and Turkey.

However, he said that as another gas turbine was due to be sent for maintenance at the end of this month, energy flows could fall to 20 percent of capacity from next week.

Since Putin sent troops to Ukraine on February 24 and the West responded with sanctions against Moscow, Russia has begun reducing its gas deliveries to prevent EU countries from replenishing reserves, prompting the European Commission to prepare a "gas demand reduction plan" to get through the next winter.

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