

Transnistria Rejects EU Energy Aid Over 'Russian Blackmail,' Moldova Says

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Moldovan Prime Minister Dorin Recean. **Parlamentul Republicii Moldova**

Moldova's breakaway region of Transnistria rejected 60 million euros (\$61 million) in conditional aid from the European Union due to pressure from Russia, Moldova's Prime Minister Dorin Recean said Monday.

Moldova began supplying EU-funded gas to Transnistria on Feb. 1 as part of an initial emergency aid package worth 30 million euros (\$31 million). Those supplies were set to expire on Monday.

The EU had [pledged](#) an additional 60 million euros, contingent on Transnistria making "steps on fundamental freedoms and human rights." Recean said the region also needed to "gradually increase" utility costs for consumers to receive the funds.

"Tiraspol refused this solution. Russia does not allow them to accept European aid for fear of losing control over the region," Recean [wrote](#) on Facebook.

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Instead, he said, Transnistria opted for an “unpredictable” arrangement in which Moldova would allow gas transit in exchange for “a few actions to demonstrate openness,” including releasing political prisoners and permitting Moldovan television broadcasts.

Chisinau has accused Russia of fueling an energy crisis to destabilize Moldova ahead of parliamentary elections later this year, aiming to install a pro-Russian government. The Kremlin, in turn, has blamed Moldova and Ukraine for the disruptions.

Russia’s state-owned Gazprom halted gas supplies to Transnistria on Jan. 1 over an outstanding debt, while Ukraine refused to renew a Russian gas transit agreement.

Pro-Russian authorities in Transnistria have not publicly commented on the reported EU aid rejection. Earlier, the region extended its economic state of emergency over the gas crisis until March 10.

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