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Pressure to Reopen Russian Oil Pipeline Like ‘Blackmail’ – Zelensky

By AFP

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Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky told his European allies that pressure to reopen the Druzhba oil pipeline transporting Russian crude was like "blackmail," he said in remarks released Sunday.

The Soviet-era pipeline that crosses Ukraine was damaged in a Russian strike in January, Kyiv says. Ukraine says repairs could take up to six weeks, angering both Hungary and Slovakia, which depend on the pipeline for much of their energy needs.

Hungary and Slovakia have threatened to block EU aid to Ukraine unless it swiftly reopens the pipeline, while the European Commission has proposed a mission to inspect the pipeline.

"I am saying openly: I am against it. But if I am given conditions that Ukraine will not receive weapons, then, excuse me, I am powerless on this issue, I told our friends in Europe that this

is called blackmail," Zelensky told reporters.

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