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Kazakhstan Says It Will End Russian Electricity Imports by 2027

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Kazakhstan plans to stop importing electricity from Russia by 2027 as it brings new domestic power generation capacity online, Deputy Energy Minister Sungat Yessimkhanov said, in another sign of Astana's efforts to reduce its dependence on Russian energy infrastructure.

The move would deal a fresh blow to Russia's electricity exports, which have already been hit by the loss of the Chinese market amid power shortages in Russia's Far East and growing competition from China in Central Asia.

"If we commission all the planned energy facilities by the end of this year or the beginning of next year, then I think we will not be buying [electricity from Russia] at all in 2027," Yessimkhanov said, according to the state-run news agency TASS.

Kazakhstan still expects a power deficit of 1 billion to 1.2 billion kilowatt-hours this year, which it plans to cover through imports from Russia, Yessimkhanov said. He noted that the country's electricity shortfall stood at 2.1 billion kWh in 2024, but was gradually shrinking.

Energy Minister Yerlan Akkenzhenov said in January that Kazakhstan was working on 81 energy projects with combined capacity of 15.3 gigawatts and total investment exceeding 13 trillion tenge (more than $25 billion). Many of the projects are scheduled for completion by the end of the first quarter of 2027.

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Kazakhstan is among Russia's largest electricity buyers. In 2025, it accounted for around 60% of Russia's total electricity exports, according to Russian data.

At the same time, Russian electricity exports to China — long Moscow's main export market — have fallen sharply due to domestic power shortages in the Far East and stopped completely at the start of 2026.

Russian state-controlled electricity exporter Inter RAO reported that exports rose 5.8% year-on-year in the first quarter to 2.12 billion kWh, with most deliveries going to Kazakhstan and Georgia.

Astana has also increasingly sidelined Russian companies in major energy infrastructure projects.

Earlier, Kazakhstan dropped Russian participation in the construction of thermal power plants in the cities of Semey, Kokshetau and Ust-Kamenogorsk.

Authorities decided to build the Kokshetau plant independently, while the other two projects are being developed by a Kazakh-Singaporean consortium involving state-owned Samruk-Energo.

Russia had previously been expected to provide concessional 15-year financing for the projects, which were valued at $2.7 billion, with Inter RAO set to act as the main contractor, but financing difficulties stalled the plans.

Kazakhstan also revised plans for a third generating unit at the Ekibastuz GRES-2 power plant, replacing Russian turbines and generators with equipment from China's Harbin Electric International.

Kazakhstan's Energy Ministry said the cost of the project fell from 650 billion tenge to less than 400 billion tenge, allowing savings of around $500 million.

The project had also initially been expected to receive concessional Russian financing that never materialised.

In another setback for Moscow, Kazakhstan last year awarded contracts to China instead of Russia for the construction of two nuclear power plants, First Deputy Prime Minister Roman Sklyar said.

According to Sklyar, feasibility studies and project documentation are currently being prepared.

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