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EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen

EU Energy Commissioner Kadri Simson

EU Parliament, MPs: Lithuania, Estonia, Poland

**Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium
Hadjia Lahbib**

**Minister of Energy of Belgium
Tinne Van der Straeten**

**Prime Minister of Belgium
Alexander De Croo**

Open letter to the European officials, politicians and the public on the introduction of sanctions against liquefied natural gas of Russian origin

First of all, we sincerely thank you for Your comprehensive support of and assistance to Ukraine in its fight against the Russian aggressor and defense of our common European values and freedom of Europe.

However, we, as representatives of the civil society in Ukraine and Europe, are deeply concerned that the trade of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the EU countries remains a key item of the export revenues for the Russian budget enabling it to continue its bloody war against the people of Ukraine as it still brings significant profit.

Overall, in seven months of 2023, the EU countries imported more than 22 bcm of LNG of Russian origin. According to Aurora Energy Research, the share of the Russian LNG during this period reached a record 16% of all LNG supplies. This year, the EU countries are expected to pay more than €5.2 billion to Putin's gas monopolies for the Russian LNG¹.

Oil and gas constitute Russia's main export revenues which are used to increase the production of lethal weapons that are then sent by the Russian soldiers in the direction of Europe.

¹ <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/lng-imports-russia-rise-despite-cuts-pipeline-gas-2023-08-30/>

Although LNG imports to the EU countries in Q3 of this year decreased by 3 billion cubic meters compared to Q1 and Q2, the share of Russian LNG continued to grow.

In January-July 2023, European countries imported 40% more LNG from the Russian dictator's gas monopolies compared to the same period in 2022 and the same period before the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Russian gas supplies are energy blackmail and a threat to the EU stability, predictability and prosperity.

Russian LNG is supplied mainly through the ports of Belgium, France and Spain. As per the Medium-Term Gas Report 2023 (Q4 -2023) published by the International Energy Agency (IEA)², about 80% of all LNG imports of Russian origin come through the ports of the mentioned three countries.

In 2022-2023, the EU imposed sanctions on imports of the Russian coal, oil, and petroleum products and reduced the purchases of the Russian gas supplied by pipelines by 40% in 2022. However, the purchases of the Russian LNG have continued to grow this year due to the fact that they have not been subject to sanctions. At the same time, as a result of the energy crisis, demand for gas in the EU, including LNG, has been declining since March 2022³.

The existing sanctions are not enough to stop the Russian military machine, which requires huge funds that Russia receives from the sale of fossil fuels on the world markets and its own gas production for the supply to the EU.

Certain gas traders, primarily those having connections with Russia, are taking advantage of the absence of sanctions to support the Russian bloody dictator's war machine due to income generated from the sale of the Russian LNG, which is available in sufficient quantities on the markets. These companies continue to order transshipment capacities for the Russian LNG. Thus, we appeal to the European Parliament to amend energy regulations as soon as possible to introduce transparent and clear rules on gas markets as regards ordering transshipment capacities and to exclude the possibility of using them for transshipment of the Russian LNG.

We call on You to limit the purchase of the Russian LNG and to impose sanctions at the European Union level on the purchase of gas of Russian origin, regardless of how it has been transported to the EU, in 2024. If the supply of the Russian LNG does not stop in 2024, it threatens to disrupt the implementation of the pan-European decision to refuse from the fossil resources of the Russian aggressor by 2027.

Ukraine, which is fighting on the battlefield against a bloody dictatorship for its European future, needs to see the EU's leadership in diversifying and making energy supplies transparent. This will create the preconditions for building our common European markets and prospects.

Supporters:

1. NGO Ekoltava
2. NGO Ecoaction
3. NGO Social Initiative City of the Sun

² <https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/f2cf36a9-fd9b-44e6-8659-c342027ff9ac/Medium-TermGasReport2023-IncludingtheGasMarketReportQ4-2023.pdf>

³ <https://www.oxfordenergy.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Russian-gas-to-the-EU-to-sanction-or-not-to-sanction.pdf>

4. NGO Regional Center for Economic Research and Business Support
5. NGO Rivne Social Partnership Centre
6. NGO Agency of Journalistic Investigations Fourth Estate
7. NGO Razom we stand
8. Energy Transition Coalition
9. Rivne oblast organization of the All-Ukrainian NGO Civil Network OPORA
10. NGO Pravopolicy
11. NGO All-Ukrainian Sustainable Development and Investment Agency
12. Regional Development Agency of the Kyiv region
13. NGO Hromadske Volyn
14. NGO Khmelnytskyi Energy Cluster

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Nataliia Lytvyn
Project coordinator of the NGO Ecoclub

