

Bosnia: Republika Srpska entity will not allow BIH federal gov to enter into energy block against Russia

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BIH Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations Boris Tucic, announced indirectly on Monday that the Government of Republika Srpska will prevent BIH's joining to the formation of unique energy block of EU and adjacent countries against Russia.

Reacting to the announcement that European Energy Community (EC) could already this week impose sanctions to Bosnia and Herzegovina for not passing on time laws about gas market regulation, Tucic, who was pointed to the position of Minister by Milorad Dodik's Savez nezavisnih socijaldemokrata (SNSD), said that the background of the events is EU's intention, due to current crisis, to create unique block of countries which would oppose Russia in the field of energy.

"It's all about general context which implies the intention of creation of unique "European" energy block against Russian Federation that would include not only EU members, but candidates and potential candidates as well. In that context someone probably has the problem because one part of BIH opted for intensive cooperation with Russian Federation in the field of energy", said Tucic in the statement submitted to media from his office.

Tucic considers that EC's sanctions to BIH are announced with the intention to "politically discipline", alluding to RS President Milorad Dodik's endeavor to strengthen, at any cost, relations with the government in Moscow, in the current situation of strained relations between Western countries and Russia.

During last week's meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Dodik said that government of RS is unconditionally supporting construction of gas pipeline "South Stream", whose validity under conditions set by "Gazprom" is challenged by Energy Community.

Dodik announced the possibility for new investments from "Gazprom" in BIH, respectively RS, and Russia's gas giant's investment of 700 million EUR.

Sanctions of EC to BIH were announced due to a fact that this country, to this day hasn't passed the Law on gas, nor has established state regulatory mechanism for supply and distribution of gas. Tucic now claims that such thing wasn't necessary because in this phase all can be regulated on entity level. He points out RS has already passed appropriate legal regulations, while BIH didn't do so because it wants for that matter to be solved on state level. Because of that Tucic blamed FBiH government for "advocating the sanctions" for political reasons.

Sanctions of EC could mean withholding of funds for co-financing of the construction of electric power infrastructure in BIH, which includes the one for gas supply, but for electricity



as well.