

Croatian Minister for State Assets Goran Maric said in an interview that the decision on the purchase of the stake that Hungarian MOL currently holds in Croatian oil company INA will primarily depend on the price of the shares and the buyout model.

Minister Maric reiterated that the Government has made it clear that it wants to protect its interest in INA and restore its ownership of the company. He added that the final stage of the INA appraisal or specific buyout model has not been reached yet and noted that the Government still plans to go ahead with the buyout.

Earlier this week, the Government announced that Swiss court has yet to rule on Croatian appeal for the annulment of the arbitration ruling in INA-MOL case, stating that on 12 April, Swiss court only rejected Croatia's appeal for the postponement of the implementation of the ruling.

In December 2016, the Arbitral Tribunal of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) has ruled in favor of MOL in an arbitration proceeding brought by Croatia. Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic said that the Arbitral Tribunal has ruled that the evidence presented is not sufficient to prove that the agreements signed in 2009 are the result of the corruption activities and refused to nullify them, adding that the Government is strongly opposed to the ruling and it is considering all legal options to contest it. In the meantime, Croatian Government announced its plans to buyout MOL's stake in INA, which should be financed by the initial public offering (IPO) of 25 % minus one share of stateowned power utility HEP.

In February, PM Plenkovic confirmed that Croatia has requested the nullification of the ruling of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) in Geneva, which dismissed Croatia's claims against Hungarian oil and gas company MOL regarding the managerial rights in INA. He said that the motion for nullification of the ruling is based on well-substantiated arguments, and the Government hopes that in the proceedings, which are expected to last several months, the Swiss Federal Court will consider those arguments in an appropriate way. He did not disclose any specific details regarding the appeal as proceedings before UNCITRAL between the Croatian state and MOL are confidential in accordance with the arbitration rules and an agreement reached between the involved parties.

Hungarian oil and gas company MOL owns 49.08 % of INA's shares, while the Croatian state has 44.84 % stake in the company.