

Serbia: South Stream agreement crisis, Serbia will have to follow EU rules

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Date : December 26, 2013

"Serbia's talks with the EU, which should start at the same time as the EU-Russia talks on revising contracts, are two connected and parallel processes," Oettinger stated. This is if the country "wants to avoid bringing its accession talks with the EU to a halt.

"Serbia is a member of the European energy community and has to accept its market rules," he said at a forum on the EU's energy policy in Brussels on Wednesday.

"The contracts Gazprom has with six EU members and Serbia are in violation of EU regulations and could lead to ecological damage," he pointed out.

Oettinger noted he will meet with Russia's Minister of Energy Alexander Novak on behalf of the six EU members to start the negotiations on revising their contracts with Gazprom.

"Serbia's talks with the EU and the EU-Russia talks on revising the contracts, which should start at the same time, are two connected and parallel processes," Oettinger confirmed.

Although it is not in the center of the issue at the moment, "Serbia should take care not to allow its talks with the EU to grind to a halt at one point because of South Stream," he remarked.

"The EU is not against the construction of South Stream, but simply insists on following the rules that go for everyone," the commissioner underscored.

EU officials earlier this month said that the bilateral agreements to build the pipeline were "violating EU law."

Serbian officials reacted by saying that the country "would not revise its agreements with Russia," and that this matter should be resolved between the EU and Russia.

Source; Serbia Energy