

The issue of gas supply in Serbia is most sensitive in the system of energy security, because we have one supply route from Hungary. Before each winter there are tensions regarding this issue, but I deeply believe that the supply of this fuel will be stable, said Minister of Energy and Mining Aleksandar Antic, adding that the scenarios for possible unpredictable events have been prepared.

During the conference “Energy Security” organized by Electric Power Industry of Serbia (EPS) and Balkanmagazin under the patronage of the Ministry of Mining and Energy Antic said that the gas storage in Banatski Dvor currently has 412 million cubic meters of stored gas, and that reserves of other energy fuels have been secured so that they could be used as a substitution for gas if needed.

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According to his estimates, the gas supply in the coming winter period will be resolved in the “triangle of Russia-Ukraine-the European Commission”, as the interest of some is to sell, and of others to transport and the interest of Europe is secure supply.

Antic said that final discussions with Gazprom are underway regarding the expansion of gas storage Banatski dvor, whose current capacity is 450 million cubic meters and that he expects that a decision how the storage will be expanded will be made in the coming weeks. He reminded that Banatski dvor underground gas storage facility is 51 percent in the ownership of Gazprom, and 49 percent owned by Srbijagas and that storage is occupied in this respect, i.e. about 220 million cubic meters of gas is owned by Russia.

According to him, the annual storage fee is about USD 30 per 1,000 cubic meters, and it is estimated that the annual income of Banatski Dvor UGS amounts to USD 13 million dollars. Antic added that the Russian gas is indisputably the future of gas supply for Europe, but that is also necessary that Serbia has other “alternatives and valves”.

“Serbia has had a questionable decision to define its energy stability regarding gas with only one project, and I have no problem to say it. In the future, we should not be focused only on one project and find flaws in others. Our job is to build a new interconnection with Bulgaria, Romania, to follow Greece, because it is in the interest of our children to build something” Antic said.

He added that the interconnection with Bulgaria is certain and it is expected that a memorandum will be signed very soon.

According to Minister of Energy, debts of Srbijagas to Gazprom are at a historic low, and debt to the Russian company is at the level of one monthly invoice, but there are still “historic debts” and the problem is that they are not resolved quickly.

Antic said that the Serbian Government is doing everything to improve the overall energy

stability, and that a lot has been already done, reminding that after many years a new thermal power unit of 350 MW in Kostolac is being built, and the construction of two wind farms is also expected.

“The new facilities that are being built, existing investments in order to extend their lifetime, capacity increase, investments in renewable energy sources and operation in line with highest standards is our orientation for the future in terms of providing energy stability”, he added.

Antic pointed out that serious steps have been made when it comes to oil and oil derivatives, and Serbia currently has oil reserves for 12 days.

The plan is to provide reserves of oil and oil derivatives for 60 days by 2023.

At today’s conference it has been concluded that the energy security of one country depends on its economic situation, because any energy security costs.