

EU Pushes Trans-Caspian Pipeline Versus Russia, Iran

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Global Research, February 29, 2012

[Trend News Agency and Stop NATO](#) 29

February 2012

Region: [Europe](#), [Russia and FSU](#)

Theme: [Oil and Energy](#)

Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and the EU are preparing two documents that will allow them to take delivery of the Caspian and in particular Turkmen gas to Europe, Azerbaijani Industry and Energy Minister Natiq Aliyev said at a meeting with members of the Caspian-European Integration Business Club (CEIBC) on Wednesday.

He said Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and the European Union are preparing a political document to support the Southern Gas Corridor, as well as an inter-governmental agreement on Trans-Caspian gas pipeline. This should take place before the end of the year.

In September, 2011 the EU Council gave a mandate for negotiations between the EU, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan to build the Trans-Caspian gas pipeline.

Trans-Caspian gas pipeline running to around 300 kilometres will be laid from the Turkmen coast of the Caspian Sea to Azerbaijani, where it will be linked to the Southern Gas Corridor. Negotiations between Turkmenistan and the EU and other countries on the construction of the Trans-Caspian gas pipeline have been on-going since the late 90s.

During negotiations with Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, the EU will discuss agreements outlining the legal obligations of the parties necessary for Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan for the construction and operation of the Trans-Caspian pipeline. Also on the agenda will be the legal framework to be applied to the issue of filling the gas pipeline from Turkmenistan including the recognition of commercial agreements.

The Southern Gas Corridor' is one of the priority energy projects for the EU. It is designed to diversify the routes and sources of supply and thereby increase the energy security of the EU. The Southern Gas Corridor project includes Nabucco, the Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) and ITGI.

The Trans Caspian project involves laying a pipeline (300 km) through the seabed from Turkmenistan to Azerbaijan.

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