

Kiev Fights in Ukraine's Southeast for Shale Gas Deposits to Be Controlled by US

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MOSCOW – The control over Ukraine's southeast is important for Kiev first of all because of the shale gas deposits, which Western countries should be developing, head of the State Duma's international affairs committee Aleksey Pushkov said on Saturday.

"Kiev is fighting in Ukraine's east for the gas reserves: Germany says the reserves make 5,578 billion cubic metres (bcm) [the U.S. reserves are 8,976 bcm]. Control will be from the U.S.," he wrote on Twitter.

The Yuzivska shale gas field is at the border between the Kharkov and Donetsk regions. The resources are estimated at over four trillion cubic metres. In May 2012, British-Netherlands Shell won the competition for development. Another company, certified for development of deposits in the Dnepropetrovsk-Donetsk area is Ukraine's Burisma, where recently son of the U.S. Vice President Joe Biden became a member of the board of directors.

Residents of Slavyansk, which is the centre of the Yuzivska deposit, within several past year organised protests against development of the deposit. They even planned to organise a referendum on the issue.

Ecologists are concerned about consequences from hydrofracturing used in production of shale gas. They say the chemicals used are highly poisonous and may affect not only water, but also the air. Experts say utilisation of poisonous substances is still an overdue issue worldwide. The media report many countries have refused from developing deposits of the kind in their own territories – the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, and France.

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