

Brussels, 15. 07. 2025

Dear Prime Minister, *dear Robert*

I fully share your objectives to ensure affordable and secure energy to all EU citizens and businesses. In this context, I acknowledge national specificities and challenges that Member States face. This is particularly relevant in the context of our shared objective of phasing-out Russian fossil fuels in our energy system.

The Commission proposal for a regulation on phasing out Russian natural gas imports (COM(2025) 828) is framed in that context, aiming to design a phase-out that is at the same time legally robust, effective and adapted to regional and national circumstances. The proposal complements and aligns with various initiatives to deliver on our security and affordability, including the Clean Industrial Deal and the Competitiveness Compass and the Affordable Energy Action Plan.

The measures to phase-out Russian gas and oil have been designed to preserve the security of the EU's energy supply while limiting any impact on prices and markets. We have been working closely with Member States most directly concerned, notably Slovakia, to ensure that the EU-wide phase-out of Russian energy imports will be gradual and well-coordinated across the Union.

To complement the regulation, we have developed an ambitious and comprehensive work plan with Slovakia, in recognition of the particular challenges stemming from national circumstances. To support the implementation of the work plan, the Commission has just established a dedicated 'Diversification Task Force'. This Task Force will provide tailored assistance to Slovakia, monitoring progress and, where relevant, facilitating cooperation with other Member States, transmission system operators and alternative suppliers. The Work Plan identifies short and medium-term deliverables on infrastructure and gas transit capacities, regulatory issues including gas transmission tariffs, dedicated regional demand aggregation as well substantial progress under the regional CESEC format.

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H.E. Robert Fico
Prime Minister of Slovakia

In addition, I would like to reassure you that we will engage to address the concerns of Slovakia that we have discussed on 26 June on the occasion of the European Council. My services already travelled to Bratislava on 3 July for high-level meetings with your government and stakeholders to ensure effective and immediate follow-up to our meeting. I can assure you of the Commission's commitment to work with you to (i) implement the agreed work plan and (ii) address the specific challenges for Slovakia in our bilateral cooperation, at regional level and in the ongoing legislative process.

The Commission will:

- *Clarify triggers and criteria of the so-called 'emergency break', in recognition of the risk of extreme price spikes alongside with security of supply risks related to the scarcity of gas on the market or infrastructure bottlenecks, in line with the objectives of the Commission proposal.*
- *Develop and implement, using appropriate legal measures, a satisfactory and legally compliant solution for cross-border tariffs in oil and gas sector for Slovakia, or the region, aiming at reducing costs and taking into account particular situation of Slovakia. If necessary, for the regional dimension, this issue will also be addressed under the newly established Energy Union Task Force. At the same time the Commission will further explore and facilitate implementation of solutions and possibilities to address challenges related to gas cross-border tariffs to minimize any negative impacts resulting from the phase out of Russian gas.*
- *Clarify mechanisms to use spot operations which are enabling full execution of the existing long-term contracts and allow amendments of these contracts during the transition phase in order to implement more favourable terms and conditions for Slovakia in line with the RePower regulation objectives.*
- *Assist and cooperate with Slovakia on new and existing measures aimed at increasing energy security and decreasing final energy prices in the electricity and gas sectors, including through accelerated treatment of state aid schemes.*
- *Stand ready to discuss legal matters with Slovakia and intervene, if necessary, during potential different litigation resulting from the implementation of the Regulation on phasing-out Russian gas.*
- *Prepare possible solutions with Slovakia to use EU funds, especially in case of risks of decommitments, for energy-related purposes, to compensate the negative impacts for households and industry and to support the diversification efforts, in line with applicable rules.*

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The Commission takes note of the request of Slovakia for:

- *A Commission decision on the envisaged emergency break upon request of one or more Member States; and*
- *A review clause on 30 June 2027 or immediately after the conclusion of a just and comprehensive peace agreement between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, based on the principles of the UN Charter and International law, to assess whether the measures remain justified, proportionate, and aligned with the Union's medium and long term strategic interests, including the effect on the prices of gas in the EU and thus competitiveness of the EU economy.*

The Commission intends to give positive consideration to these issues, subject to proper justification, if requested in the legislative process by Slovakia in the light of its specific challenges linked to the phasing out of Russian gas.

Yours sincerely,



Ursula von der Leyen