

RAZOM WE STAND

**Minister-President of Flanders
Jan Jambon**

Vlaamse Regering (Government of Flanders)
Martelaarsplein 19
1000 Brussel

24 May 2024, Kyiv, Ukraine

Open Letter to the Flemish Government: Support the 14th Sanction Package that includes a ban on Russian LNG

**Dear Minister-President Jambon,
Dear Members of the Flemish Government,**

We, the undersigned representatives of civil society organisations Razom We Stand, B4Ukraine, Promote Ukraine, Bond Beter Leefmilieu: Leef, Vredesactie write to you with an urgent plea for your support on a matter of profound importance for European unity and global justice. Flanders is currently blocking a unified Belgian position on including a transshipment ban for Russian LNG in the 14th sanction package against Russia and further banning Russian LNG imports in Europe. We urge you to reconsider your position as the Ukrainian people fight for their right to self-determination.

The ongoing war initiated by Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine continues to inflict devastating human, economic, and environmental consequences. This war is not only a direct assault on Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity but also a blatant violation of international law and human rights. Every day, lives are lost, communities are destroyed, and a region is plunged deeper into crisis.

Despite the sanctions imposed thus far, Russia continues to finance its war efforts through the sale of fossil fuels, including liquefied natural gas (LNG). The revenue generated from these sales gives the Russian government the financial resources to sustain its military operations. By transshipping Russian LNG, European nations inadvertently contribute to prolonging this conflict. Between 2021 and 2022, deliveries of Russian LNG to the EU [increased by 32%](#). Last year, the EU [imported 18,5 billion cubic meters \(bcm\)](#) of LNG from Russia; in addition, 5.25 bcm was transshipped through Europe's terminals and exported to non-European states.

The proposed 14th sanction package, which finally addresses Russian LNG, represents a critical step towards cutting off a significant source of funding for the Russian war machine. By supporting the proposed ban on transshipments of Russian LNG in the package, the Flemish government would demonstrate its commitment to peace, the rule of law, and the fundamental values that bind the European Union.

Russia's Yamal LNG, a joint venture led by Russia's Novatek, uses the Zeebrugge gas terminal for transshipment. This is a [hugely lucrative business for Zeebrugge](#). The 20-year contract with Yamal LNG, concluded in 2015, delivers €50 million a year to Fluxys, the terminal's system operator. At the same time, it is estimated that the Kremlin earns no less than €500 million in tax revenues alone from transshipped Russian LNG in Zeebrugge.

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This means that Fluxys, of which almost all Belgian municipalities have ownership, not only receives Russian blood money but also fills the Russian war chest. All the other Belgian regions are in favour of supporting the end of Russian aggression in Ukraine and further, except you, who support the killing of innocent people in Ukraine.

Sanctions on LNG transshipments and access to technology impose a very high cost on Russia [with negligible impact on EU interests](#). There is no security of supply issue as 90% of the transshipped gas goes to non-EU markets. A repeat of the energy crisis of 2022 is also out of the question since the share of Russian gas on European markets has fallen sharply since then, and the fact that LNG markets are predicted to be flooded by 2025 ([IEEFA](#) and [ACER](#)). Furthermore, because of the REPowerEU plan, gas demand in the EU has decreased significantly and is expected to keep decreasing. In an LNG market with falling demand and abundant supply, we do not need to fear a price increase; it's simple economics. Those who claim otherwise are defending their interests in the Russian LNG trade.

Moreover, the ban on Russian LNG transshipment is not only a matter of economic pressure but also a moral imperative. It sends a clear message that Europe will not stand by idly while war crimes are committed and international norms are trampled. It is a statement of solidarity with the people of Ukraine and a reaffirmation of our collective commitment to a just and peaceful world.

We firmly believe that the cost of inaction far outweighs the immediate economic considerations. In the long run, supporting the sanctions will help to restore stability and security in the region, which is in the best interest of all European nations, including Belgium.

We urge the Flemish government to support the 14th sanction package, which includes banning transshipment and further banning Russian LNG imports in Belgium and Europe. Your actions are crucial in ensuring that Europe remains united in its stance against aggression and in its support for democratic values and human rights.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

1. Razom we stand
2. B4Ukraine
3. Promote Ukraine
4. Bond Beter Leefmilieu: Leef
5. Vredesactie