

Jailing of Ukraine ex-PM 'dangerous': Putin
Reuters
October 11, 2011

BEIJING, Oct 11 – Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin criticised the jailing today of former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko over a 2009 gas supply deal, saying it could jeopardise energy relations between the two former Soviet states.

“It is dangerous and counterproductive to cast the entire package of agreements into doubt,” Putin said, referring to the deal signed in January 2009 that ended a supply shutdown that disrupted transit supplies to Europe.

But Putin, speaking on a visit to Beijing, expressed no personal sympathy over Tymoshenko’s seven-year sentence for abuse of office, describing her as a political opponent who had sought to lead her country towards the West.

“Tymoshenko for us, and for me personally, is neither a friend nor a relation. Moreover, she is a political opponent, because she was always a political person of western orientation,” said Putin.

“I think that we would have gained greater competitive advantage if we had joined forces in the context of integration processes in the post-Soviet space.”

Russia supplies a quarter of the European Union’s gas needs, and 80 per cent of its exports pass through pipelines across Ukraine. Kiev is trying to renegotiate the 2009 deal, arguing that it imposes an excessively high price. – Reuters

The Malaysian Insider
Copyright © 2011 The Malaysian Insider
Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/world/article/jailing-of-ukraine-ex-pm-dangerous-putin/>