

Azerbaijan's dep. speaker sees little prospect of Caspian-Ukraine oil deliveries by-passing Russia

VIENNA. APRIL 24. INTERFAX CENTRAL EUROPE - Azerbaijan's Deputy Speaker of Parliament Valeh Aleskerov sees little prospect of crude oil deliveries from the Caspian Sea to Ukraine via a pipeline by-passing Russia, he told Interfax Central Europe at the sidelines of the Europe-Russia Forum in Vienna on Tuesday.

"I don't know who will pay," Aleskerov said. "Go ask them and they will tell you how realistic this is."

Following a trip to Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan in early April, Poland's President Lech Kaczynski said pipeline deliveries of Caspian crude oil via Ukraine could be launched as soon as 2011. Kaczynski extended an invitation to Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev to attend a summit in Poland on crude-oil and natural-gas deliveries from the Caspian to Europe.

Aliyev was enthusiastic about the possibility of supplying the West with oil and gas, saying: "Azerbaijan has the capabilities to supply its energy resources to the world and European markets and Poland can play a role here."

However, Aleskerov indicated Tuesday that Azerbaijani deliveries via a pipeline by-passing Russia are a long way from the drawing board - and that the energy summit may prove little more than a talking shop.

"Of course we can talk about this," Aleskerov said. "We Azerbaijanis are Caucasians, too - we love to talk."

AN/JT

For further information please e-mail newsroom@interfax.pl or phone (+48) 22 630 83 88.