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## **KAZAKHSTAN NOT YET INVITED TO OIL MEETING IN QATAR**

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Kazakhstan has not yet been invited to a meeting in Qatar on April 17 at which major oil producers plan to discuss freezing output at January levels, Kazakh Energy Minister Vladimir Shkolnik said on Thursday.

"There has been no official invitation," he told reporters, adding that Kazakhstan, the second-biggest oil producer in the former Soviet Union after Russia, had already reduced output.

"Unofficially, we as a country are doing everything we can to balance ... demand and supply on the oil market, to stabilize prices."

Kazakhstan indicated this month it had no plan to freeze output and would instead raise its production target to 77 million tonnes this year from 74 million tonnes if the oil price stayed above \$40 a barrel. That is still lower than last year's output of 79.5 million tonnes.

"If everyone does the same (reduces output), we will have no problems with oil prices," Shkolnik said.

OPEC and non-OPEC producers will meet in Doha next month, following February talks between Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Venezuela and non-OPEC Russia. It remains unclear whether all 13 OPEC members and which outside producers will attend.

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Kaynak/Source: