
RUSSIA GROWING, LOW RUBLE WILL HELP: DEPUTY PM

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The Russian economy is adjusting to a new low oil price environment, the country's deputy prime minister told CNBC on Wednesday, adding that a weak ruble will help it to export more to China and Europe and stabilize the economy.

Arkady Dvorkovich said the chemical and pharmaceutical industries were growing and the agricultural sector was helping to drive the economy forward. Last year, Russia increased its agricultural exports to China by 25 percent, he said.

"We hope (oil) prices will be more or less around today's level," Dvorkovich said, adding he saw downsides as well as upsides. "The energy market is still volatile, oil is hard to predict." A lot would depend on how China would develop over the next few months and Europe's migration crisis was also a risk to the economy, he said.

Brent crude is currently trading at around \$41 per barrel.

He warned demand was still low, but supply was going down.

There have been renewed calls for privatization of Russian state-owned assets, and Dvorkovich said Russia was preparing the markets for a series of transactions.

"We have a list of companies where we can sell some stakes. Also strategic companies. Not just in the financial sector but also in logistics, in the oil sector and some other sectors of the economy." he said.

"Our plan is to start this year."

Addressing speculation that the country might sell a stake in Sberbank this year however, Dvorkovich said: "That is out of the question."

Kaynak/Source: