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## **RUSSIA FORGES AHEAD WITH GAS AMBITIONS IN UZBEKISTAN, KAZAKHSTAN**

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Joanna Lillis

*Moscow is driving forward its energy ambitions in Central Asia as it seeks new markets for gas that Europe now shuns.*

When Russia floated the idea of forging a tripartite gas union with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan late last year, it fell flat.

Critics derided it as a bid by Central Asia's former colonial master to gain political and economic leverage. Both countries seemed to pour cold water on the idea.

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