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HEADLINE: Caspian role in global energy security to be discussed Tue

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Government officials, the executives of large oil and gas companies, and representatives of international agencies meet here on Tuesday to discuss the role of the Caspian region in ensuring global energy security.

The high-level meeting is held under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), within the framework of which an Energy Security Forum has been functioning since 2003.

Igor Yusufov, presidential special representative in charge of international energy cooperation, is to address those present at the meeting on behalf of Russia. Officials of Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Turkey, the United States, Romania, the UN, the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, and NATO are also to set out their vision of ways to ensure energy security.

The meeting on the Caspian Sea is held by a decision of the ESF for the first time. The region has been chosen a subject for discussion as a 'model'. Some other region, the Middle East, for example, may be considered next time, an ESF official has told Itar-Tass.

The high-level discussion in Geneva is to provide answers to three questions. Firstly, how the Caspian countries can contribute to reducing risks as regards global energy security.

Secondly, how the world community could promote the development of the petroleum and gas industries, and, thirdly, how international cooperation can advance the development of markets and reduction of risks. A Final Statement is expected to be adopted.

The organisers of the high-level meeting point out that the ESF was formed within the ECE framework in 2003 in response to the world community's mounting concern over tension in the Middle East, over terrorist acts against large energy-supply facilities, and over the growing dependence of a majority of energy user countries on energy imports.

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