

Russia Poised to Supply U.S. Air Base

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The Federal Customs Service has removed a duty on oil product exports to Kyrgyzstan, a telegram sent by the agency showed, in a move clearing the way for Russia to supply jet fuel to a U.S. air base key to its Afghan war effort.

The export duty, introduced in April 2010, was annulled from Jan. 1.

Kyrgyzstan last month unveiled a new state company, Manas Refueling Complex, which could take over part of the contract to supply the Manas base, possibly in partnership with a Russian firm.

Valentin Vlasov, Russia's ambassador to Kyrgyzstan, said Dec. 8 that a unit of state-owned Gazprom Neft planned to team up with the Kyrgyz state concern.

Melis Turgunbayev, head of pricing at Gazprom Neft Asia, said his company had received permission from customs authorities to begin purchasing oil products at prices exclusive of the tariff, which was set at \$217 per ton in December.

"We concluded a contract last week. The volumes are without the export duty, and they should

arrive here," he said.

Jet fuel accounts for about one-third of Russia's oil product exports to Kyrgyzstan.

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