

# What lies beneath



*Lebanon must act to keep its seat at the oil and gas table*

Lebanon has missed several opportunities to grow its nascent oil and gas industry at an ideal pace, but now regional developments threaten not just further delays, but also permanent losses unless the country acts to protect its national interests.

The new urgency stems primarily from two principal events. The first was last summer's discovery of the giant Zohr gas field off Egypt's northern coast by Italy's ENI, a find estimated by some to have doubled the North African country's natural gas reserves overnight. It also significantly increased the likelihood of commercially viable deposits in nearby offshore acreage belonging to Cyprus, Lebanon and Israel. This has sparked renewed interest in this section of the Eastern Mediterranean basin from major international oil companies.

The second event – in part at least a consequence of the first – was the Cypriot government's approval in late February of a two-year extension for an ENI-led consortium to conduct exploration and production in Blocks 2, 3 and 9 of Cyprus' exclusive economic zone (EEZ), the first and third of which are adjacent to Lebanon's EEZ. Apart from general location, these blocks also share similar geology with Zohr and other Egyptian and Israeli fields, and undersea hydrocarbon deposits obviously pay no heed to political or other borders, so it's possible that Cyprus' Blocks 2 and 9 have reservoirs that extend into Lebanon's maritime area.

This prospect should be good news for all Lebanese because it offers a chance to share in any revenues derived from any

reservoir that may be discovered, even if this country's energy sector has yet to undertake any production operations of its own. It would also offer an opportunity for Lebanese individuals, companies and government departments to gain experience by cooperating with Cyprus and ENI, helping to prepare our public and private sectors alike for the day when this country starts actively exploring for its own resources.

### **Friends without benefits**

All it takes to start reaping the early rewards of these happy circumstances is for the Lebanese government to exercise a modicum of self-preservation through a little initiative. The only things missing are a maritime border deal with Cyprus to define the line between the two countries' EEZs and a Framework Unitization Agreement (FUA) that would establish terms for joint development and exploitation, including the formula(s) for any revenue sharing.

Herein lies the problem; Lebanon and Cyprus enjoy friendly relations, neither has staked out an extreme position in this process, talks on an FUA have made progress and a delineation map was agreed upon way back in 2007. However, the unitization talks have been stalled since 2013, and the map has yet to be ratified. Absent of such agreements, the scope for legal disputes over potential resources will be considerable, exposing the interests of both sides to unnecessary delays, but hurting Lebanon more because it would prevent this country from assisting and learning in the process – and rob its people of revenues to which they are entitled.

No such questions hang over Egypt's Zohr field, which lies adjacent to Cyprus' EEZ, because the modalities of any shared reservoirs have already been set by Cairo and Nicosia. Time is running out for Beirut to protect its long-term interests with a similar agreement that would, inter alia, insulate it against any kind of "rule of capture" claim if and when Cyprus starts recovering oil and gas from areas adjacent to Lebanon's

EEZ.

The solution is clear: Lebanon needs to re-engage with Cyprus as soon as possible and, when it does, to remain focused and keep its priorities in order. If recent history is any guide, there will continue to be distractions that limit the pace of oil and gas development, including the ongoing stalemate in Lebanon's political class and various obstacles attached to (and compounded by) the state of war that still exists between this country and Israel. To further complicate the situation, the latter is one of three regional states, along with Syria and Turkey, that have neither signed nor ratified the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), usually the most reliable mechanism for resolving offshore resource disputes.

No matter. None of this prevents Lebanon's diplomats and energy officials from getting on with the business of finalizing the necessary arrangements with Cyprus. The politicians may not get around to activating Lebanon's energy industry as a whole any time soon, but this aspect is a no-brainer: in order to ensure Lebanon receives any revenues to which it is entitled from shared reservoirs, all it has to do is reach an agreement with a friendly country. And although there is no agreement on the tripoint where the EEZs of Lebanon and Cyprus meet that of Israel – leaving an overlap between the Israeli and Lebanese claims – this has no bearing on the rest of the bilateral line between Lebanon and Cyprus, or, for good measure, on the 90 percent or more of Lebanon's EEZ that is not in dispute with anyone.

### **Sharing the spoils**

Lebanon and Cyprus can accelerate this process by jointly enlisting the support of the United States to help define the aforementioned southern tripoint. The Israeli failure to commit to UNCLOS is a significant obstacle, as is the absence of Lebanese-Israeli relations. At present the only country

with the diplomatic heft to ford this impasse is the US, which, through separate discussions with Lebanon and Israel, has already made progress in narrowing the gap between the two sides' respective maritime claims.

Timely cooperation with Cyprus will also preserve Lebanon's interests by garnering fuller recognition of our EEZ. The same partnership may allow Lebanon to start collecting revenues from shared oil and gas fields even before its own production begins. Further down the road, if and when Lebanon is producing enough natural gas for export, Cyprus can be an important outlet to crucial markets in Europe and elsewhere.

Of course, it would be nice if more politicians would provide these and other negotiations with all the support and cover they deserve. Most of Lebanon's political institutions have been hamstrung by partisan wrangling, but parliament still has considerable resources. Having the legislative branch resume its role could be pivotal on this score.

Lebanon is not the first country to face the unique challenges of developing an oil and gas industry during a prolonged period of turmoil, and luckily one of the best examples is Cyprus itself. A third of that country has been occupied by Turkey since 1974 and its political landscape is a raucous one, populated by outsized personalities with sharply different views, and with an economy that is still struggling to regain the ground it lost since the global financial crisis of 2008-2009.

Despite these handicaps, and some decidedly unsubtle Turkish threats, successive Cypriot presidents and their ministers have kept their eyes on the prize, methodically laying the groundwork for its future as a modern oil and gas producer and, quite possibly, as the region's premier energy hub. Successes at home have been matched by effective diplomacy abroad, integrating the tiny country into an interlocking web of bi- and multilateral partnerships that give it a voice on

the regional stage. In addition, far from acquiescing to the continuing division of the island nation as an insurmountable obstacle to this process, Cyprus has turned the tables by holding out future energy revenues as an incentive for reunification.

These attitudes have allowed for meaningful progress across the legislative and regulatory spectrum, encouraging investments and partnerships that even now are fleshing out the infrastructure and support systems for a thriving oil and gas sector. Even more importantly, they have demonstrated the effectiveness of dialogue and cooperation, showing a way to break the cycle of conflict and instability that has gripped much of the region for so long.

That may sound like a lot of ground for Lebanon to cover if its energy sector is ever to catch up with those of Cyprus and other neighboring countries, but the facts are not quite so bleak.

Before the current political stalemate spread into virtually every nook and cranny of the Lebanese public sector, parliament and cabinet designed and even began to install many of the necessary administrative and legal structures, including a suitably empowered Lebanese Petroleum Administration to oversee the sector. While not quite “plug and play,” most of these can start functioning as soon as the right levers are pulled and crucial pieces of enabling legislation are passed. Therefore, while it is probably too much to hope that Lebanon’s deeply divided politicians will act with unity of purpose any time soon, if and when sufficient numbers of them get serious about serving the people they are supposed to represent, the right tools for the job will be close at hand.

Finally, Lebanon should also strongly consider joining the emerging club composed of Cyprus, Egypt, Greece and Jordan. Apart from the technical and economic advantages to be gained,

the various cooperation agreements linked to this grouping give each member greater influence over how the Eastern Mediterranean's energy resources will be developed. Signing on would radically enhance Lebanon's standing, and while the immediate goals of such membership would be economic, the resulting relationships would do much to promote regional stability. That, at least, would offer some hope that all of the peoples in the Eastern Mediterranean might one day know both peace and prosperity.

*Roudi Baroudi is CEO of Energy and Environment Holding, an independent consultancy based in Doha, Qatar.*

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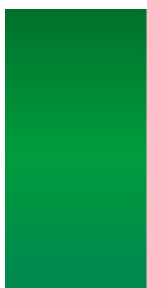
Finally, Lebanon should also strongly consider joining the emerging club composed of Cyprus, Egypt, Greece and Jordan. Apart from the technical and economic advantages to be gained, the various cooperation agreements linked to this grouping give each member greater influence over how the Eastern Mediterranean’s energy resources will be developed. Signing on would radically enhance Lebanon’s standing, and while the immediate goals of such membership would be economic, the resulting relationships would do much to promote regional stability. That, at least, would offer some hope that all of the peoples in the Eastern Mediterranean might one day know

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## Da Il Giornale l'importante punto di vista di Roudi Baroudi





## **«Petrolio tra Libano e Israele, serve la mediazione dell'Onu»**

L'esperto di energia Baroudi si rivolge a Ban Ki Moon: "Risorse che possono aprire nuova era nell'area" Un Problema ancora molto difficile. Perché Libano e Israele non riescono autonomamente a trovare un accordo su come gestire quella porzione di territorio potenzialmente ricchissima né tantomeno su come suddividere eventuali ricavi. Baroudi quindi si appella a Ban Ki Moon perché dia vita ad un'opera di mediazione. "I due Paesi sono rimasti tecnicamente in guerra dal 1949, non hanno relazioni diplomatiche ufficiali di alcun tipo.

Una lettera aperta al Segretario Generale delle Nazioni Unite Ban Ki-moon:

Gent.mo Segretario Generale

Benvenuto in Libano, regione che ha contribuito a fondare le Nazioni Unite e che continua a credere nei suoi ideali, ma che adesso ha bisogno di una serie di prodighe azioni.

Mi riferisco ad una piccola ma critica sezione della Zona Economica Esclusiva (EFZ) del nostro paese che confina con quella sostenuta dal vicino Israele, un potere molto più grande che ha usato le forze militari contro il nostro paese decine di volte nel corso degli ultimi decenni, compresa un'occupazione di 28 anni in gran parte del Meridione. Queste azioni, la maggior parte delle quali ingiustificate o esageratamente sproporzionate rispetto a quello che le ha provocate, hanno ucciso decine di migliaia di persone, ripetutamente dislocato centinaia di migliaia di persone e riempito di paura i cuori di milioni di persone. Il costo

della distruzione fisica ammonta a decine di migliaia di dollari, così come quello della crescita economica perduta. Inoltre, innumerevoli Libanesi sono stati lasciati senza scelta e costretti a cercare impiego e opportunità di business all'estero, costringendo molte famiglie a vivere separate per anni, un destino i cui costi non possono essere calcolati in termini monetari.

Sebbene sia passato più di un decennio dall'ultimo grande confronto, le forze militari israeliane continuano a violare il territorio libanese – via terra, via aerea, via mare – su base giornaliera, quindi la minaccia di ulteriori aggressioni non è mai lontana dalla mente libanese. E ora quello che dovrebbe essere motivo di celebrazione è invece un motivo per preoccuparsi ancora di più: la prospettiva di ingenti giacimenti di petrolio e di gas intorno alla sovrapposizione con le nostre rispettive pretese EFZ significa che un nuovo casus belli è da considerarsi, uno in cui la posta in gioco non potrebbe essere più alta.

Vostra Eccellenza,

Come sappiamo tutti, le Nazioni Unite sono state costruite sulle ceneri delle guerre più distruttive della storia dell'umanità, i suoi fondatori sono determinati a ridurre la possibilità di conflitti futuri fornendo un forum internazionale per la risoluzione pacifica delle controversie. Sfortunatamente, sebbene il Libano sia ancora enormemente orgoglioso di essere stato, nel 1945, uno dei 51 stati membri fondatori originali delle Nazioni Unite, la sua popolazione ha trascorso la maggior parte degli ultimi sette decenni vivendo in guerra o con la minaccia quasi costante della stessa. La diplomazia delle Nazioni Unite, attraverso la forza di pace e l'assistenza allo sviluppo è stata indispensabile per mitigare alcune delle conseguenze di queste guerre, ma adesso l'organizzazione ha la possibilità di prevenirle completamente.

I fatti sono relativamente semplici. La sovrapposizione marittima tra il Libano e Israele si compone di circa 840 chilometri quadrati, meno del 10% di tutta la Zona Economica Esclusiva libanese e una percentuale ancora più piccola di Israele, ma il suo potenziale di petrolio e gas è significativo e l'incertezza su questo piccolo pezzo di fondale comporta implicazioni inutili e persino pericolose per una zona molto più ampia. La soluzione più ovvia è quella di risolvere la questione in modo tempestivo, riducendo così la minaccia di una guerra, incoraggiando investimenti, e andando avanti con l'attività di sviluppo di una risorsa che promette enormi benefici socio-economici per tutti i popoli coinvolti. Roudi-Baroudi-Giornale-marcopolonews

Fonti diplomatiche occidentali indicano che Israele ha già ufficiosamente riconosciuto che i due terzi della sovrapposizione appartiene al Libano, così una formula a breve termine sarebbe quella di dichiarare il rimanente terzo e la zona cuscinetto circostante proibiti all'esplorazione e alla produzione fino a quando non si arriverà ad una soluzione permanente.

Il problema è che, chiaramente, il Libano e Israele non riescono a raggiungere tale accordo da soli. I due paesi sono rimasti tecnicamente in guerra dal 1949, non hanno relazioni diplomatiche ufficiali di alcun tipo e i loro rapporti sono mediati da diffidenza confinante con la paranoia. Anche se il Libano voleva avviare tali relazioni, la sua vulnerabilità alla destabilizzazione causata da forze esterne gli ha impedito, senza l'aiuto da parte di stati regionali più grandi, il raggiungimento di tale scopo.

Negoziazioni indirette sono l'unica opzione e, mentre gli Stati Uniti, stando a quanto si dice, hanno fatto progressi durante discussioni separate con le controparti libanesi e israeliane, un altro ostacolo ancora complica questo sforzo: Israele è uno dei tre paesi nella regione— insieme alla Siria e alla Turchia — che non ha né firmato né approvato la

Convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sul diritto del mare (UNCLOS), il meccanismo stesso su cui si basa la maggior parte dei governi per risolvere le controversie marittime.

Signore,

La popolazione della nostra regione merita la pace. Gli idrocarburi sotto i fondali del Mediterraneo orientale offrono una speranza a tutti noi per il raggiungimento di una nuova era di prosperità, un'era che rompa i cicli di povertà e violenza che non portano a nulla di buono. Le Nazioni Unite hanno un ruolo indispensabile da svolgere nel far sì che le risorse in questione siano un combustibile per lo sviluppo sociale ed economico e non una causa per un'altra guerra.

La diplomazia delle Nazioni Unite non sarebbe dovuta partire da zero. Cipro ha buone relazioni sia con il Libano sia con Israele e la maggior parte della delimitazione tra la sua Zona Economica Esclusiva e gli altri due è stata stabilita, ufficialmente o ufficiosamente. Questo lascia da definire solo la triplice frontiera meridionale, dove tutte e tre le zone economiche esclusive si incontrano, e questo è dove l'azione delle Nazioni Unite può avere un impatto veramente storico. Ciò può significare convincere uno o più governi di firmare la convenzione UNCLOS, negoziando una "zona neutra" per mantenere la pace fino al raggiungimento di un accordo definitivo e/o sorvegliando le linee di demarcazione per prevenire le violazioni da entrambe le parti, e nessuna di queste due ipotesi è al di fuori della competenza e della capacità delle Nazioni Unite.

Eccellenza,

So che si può percepire sia il potenziale per risultati positivi se le Nazioni Unite si impegneranno in questo processo sia il rischio di una nuova guerra, povertà e sofferenza se non lo faranno. Confido, inoltre, che possiate apprezzare l'opportunità per le Nazioni Unite di rispettare il



proprio atto costitutivo e per Lei di onorare la propria eredità, facendo buon uso dei Suoi uffici. Spero più di ogni altra cosa che questo possa avere successo, poichè se lo fa Lei possiamo farlo tutti.

di Patrizia Marin

10 Aprile 2016

## بارودي لـ «الشرق»: لاستكمال المتطلبات التشريعية لقطاع النفط والغاز



### أجرت الحوار ميريام بلعة

يبدو أن مركب «التنقيب عن النفط في لبنان» أضع بوصلته في البحر السياسي الهائج، فتارة تضربه أمواج التجاذبات حول مراسيمه وترسيم الحدود البحرية، وطوراً يقذف به التلهّي بالإستحقاقات المستجدة إلى جهة يضيع فيها الأمل في إمكان الإفادة من الفرصة الذهبية.

وفي انتظار الوعي السياسي لترجمة الحلم إلى حقيقة، يبقى الخبراء «المحرك الوحيد» لملف النفط، إذ دعا الخبير في قطاع النفط والغاز رودي بارودي الرئيس التنفيذي لشركة «الطاقة والبيئة القابضة» وهي شركة استشارية مستقلة مقرها قطر، السلطات اللبنانية إلى «العمل بجدية لحماية مصالحه الخاصة، بدءاً باستكمال المتطلبات التشريعية لقطاع النفط والغاز واستئناف الجهود لتحديد المنطقة الإقتصادية الخالصة، وقال لـ«الشرق»: نتمنى ألا تكون هذه العملية معقدة، للتأكد من أن لبنان لن يفوت نصيبه

العادل من الثروة النفطية، خصوصاً أن إسرائيل هي أحد ثلاث دول في المنطقة، إضافة إلى سوريا وتركيا، التي لم توقع ولم تصادق على اتفاق الأمم المتحدة الذي يرعى قانون البحار».

وشدد على «ضرورة إعادة إحياء المحادثات مع قبرص لتعيين الحدود البحرية، بما يوجب على الجانبين الطلب من الولايات المتحدة تفعيل مساعيها للمساعدة في تحديد النقطة الحدودية الثلاثية جنوبي لبنان، حيث تتقاطع المناطق الاقتصادية الخالصة مع إسرائيل».

أضاف: إن توحيد الإنتاج بين منطقتي امتياز نفطي المتاخمتين بين لبنان وقبرص من جهة، واستئناف العمل التشريعي اللبناني من جهة أخرى، يساهمان في تحسين الاستقرار الاقتصادي وتوفير المزيد من الاستقرار السياسي. وفي حال احتاجت بيروت إلى نيقوسيا فستجدها شريكاً يرغب في المساعدة على مختلف المستويات.

وقال بارودي رداً على سؤال، إن قبرص تسعى إلى «تحقيق مكاسب تاريخية تتخطى أبعاد اقتصادها وحتى حدودها الجغرافية»، معتبراً أنها «مركز الطاقة في المنطقة، وبالتالي كل خطوة تتخذها نحو تحقيق هذا الطموح، تزيد أيضاً من فرص الدول المجاورة لها في بناء قطاعات النفط والغاز فيها».

ونوّه في هذا السياق، بتقديم قبرص «نماذج إيجابية للدول الأخرى في المنطقة»، لافتاً إلى التقدم القبرصي المزدوج على صعيد عملية السلام وقطاع النفط والغاز وإطلاع الموظفين الحكوميين، أبناء وطنهم على كل مراحل التقدم بشفافية كاملة وواضحة».

وقال: «أثبتت قبرص بوضوح التزامها التعاون كوسيلة لصناعة الطاقة الإقليمية المتناغمة والتي من شأنها أن تضيء فوائد جمّة اقتصادياً واجتماعياً وكذلك أمنياً، على جميع الدول المشاركة وسكانها. ونحن جميعاً مدينون لقبرص، ويحتاج القادة في لبنان إلى إظهار المبادرة عينها، والإبتكار والمبادرة والاهتمام عينه بمصالح الأجيال المقبلة».

وجدد التأكيد أن «صناعة الطاقة النامية تقدّم وعوداً بمنح حافز إضافي هائل للقادة القبارصة اليونانيين والقبارصة الأتراك لمواصلة العمل بزخم على إعادة توحيد الجزيرة».

ورأى بارودي رداً على سؤال عن اختيار قبرص شركة «نيوز جيوسيستمز» الأميركية التي تتخذ من كاليفورنيا مقراً لها، لتكوين قاعدة

بيانات متطورة وحديثة وشبه أكيدة لمخزون النفط والغاز للبرّ القبرصي وشاطئه، أن «خريطة قبرص النفطية الجديدة ستضيف دليلاً جديداً على تواجد ودائع من الغاز والنفط في شرق البحر المتوسط، وبفضل مجموعة البيانات التي حصلت عليها «نيوز»، يبدو مستقبل لبنان واعداً في هذا المجال أكثر من أي وقت مضى».

واعتبر أن «اكتشاف شركة «ايني» الإيطالية حقل غاز عملاق في المياه المصرية والمتاخم لقطاع «توتال» البحري في قبرص، وآخر أخبار الاستكشافات الآتية من سوريا، مؤشرات مشجعة ذات دلالة على أهمية هذا القطاع في المنطقة، علماً أن الاتفاق الموقع بين نيوز والحكومة القبرصية يخوّل الشركة توسيع أعمالها الى المياه القبرصية إضافة الى عملها في البحر وسواحل الجزيرة».

وسئل بارودي عن السبل الآيلة إلى إنقاذ قطاع الكهرباء في لبنان، فقال: «إن معلمي الزهراني ودير عمار تم بناؤهما أساساً، في إطار تنفيذ خطة نهوض وطني وُضعت عام 1994، ليعملا على الغاز الطبيعي وليس على الديزل أوويل، بناءً على نصيحة من شركة كهرباء فرنسا، لما يؤمّنه استعمال الغاز الطبيعي في إنتاج الطاقة من وفر في كلفة الإنتاج، وتخفيف الضرر على البيئة. لكن المناكفات السياسية والمزاجيات الشخصية لبعض المسؤولين منذ العام 2002 عطلت المشروع، ما كبّد الخزينة مبالغ طائلة عن مشتقات نفطية».

وأضاف: «بما أن خط الغاز العربي الذي بدأ العمل على إنجاز بعض أجزائه، ونتيجة ما يجري في المنطقة، جعل من المستحيل في المدى المنظور استكمال والإفادة منه. وبما أن تشغيل معامل الكهرباء على الغاز الطبيعي بات متعذراً من دون وجود محطات تخزين، وتسييل الغاز الطبيعي بالقرب من معامل الإنتاج أمراً لا بد منه ولا بديل عنه، أصبح لزاماً على الدولة أن تبدأ بشراء أو استئجار أو إنشاء محطة عائمة لتخزين الغاز الطبيعي وتسييله لزوم معلمي الإنتاج في الزهراني ودير عمار، حيث تقام محطة عائمة في كل منهما ولو احتاج ذلك الى توسيع المرفأ أو إنشاء سدّ للأمواج لحماية المحطة من العوامل البحرية».

ورأى في الوقت نفسه، أن إنشاء المحطتين يؤدّي إلى وفر هائل في ثمن المحروقات، ما يؤدي بدوره إلى خفض الدعم لمؤسسة كهرباء لبنان وتخفيف نسبة الدين والفوائد المترتبة عليها، خصوصاً أن إمكانات الدولة - مؤسسة كهرباء لبنان، في مجال جباية مستحققاتها ومنع الإعتداء على شبكاتها لا تزال محدودة، ما يخفض قدرتها على لجم

العجز أو مواجهته بتفعيل الجباية.

واعتبر أنه «من الأفضل استئجار محطة عائمة في كل معمل، على أن يكون المورد صاحب خبرة عالمية في هذا المجال، ولديه القدرة على أن يورد الغاز الطبيعي بالإضافة الى المحطة في الوقت نفسه، لما في ذلك من وفر في الكلفة والإشراف والمراقبة، بحيث ينص دفتر الشروط الموحد على أن يتم التعاقد على طريقة مفتاح باليد، أي أن تحصل مؤسسة الكهرباء على الغاز الطبيعي الذي تحتاج إليه معاملها بشكل واضح ومحدد الكميات والكلفة، وهي الطريقة التي اعتمدها دول عدة بينها الكويت، ودبي والأردن».

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## Les réactions à la visite de Ban Ki-moon

La visite libanaise de Ban Ki-moon à Beyrouth n'a pas manqué de susciter nombre de réactions. Ali Osseirane, député de Zahrani et membre du bloc berryiste, a estimé, dans un communiqué, que la visite du secrétaire général des Nations unies était « mal à propos et venait à un moment inopportun ». « Il devrait plutôt se pencher sur les problèmes de la région qui se répercutent sur le Liban », a-t-il dit, regrettant que M. Ban n'ait pas trouvé de solution à la crise syrienne. « Il aurait mieux valu qu'il impose à Israël, lui et le Conseil de sécurité de l'Onu, la création d'un État palestinien », a-t-il encore noté.

De son côté, le président de la Ligue maronite, Antoine Klimos, a invité les Nations unies et la communauté internationale, dans un communiqué, à ne pas favoriser « l'implantation des réfugiés syriens au Liban », mais maintenir leur présence « provisoire ». « La seule aide demandée aux instances internationales est de trouver une solution rapide au conflit en Syrie afin que les réfugiés

puissent rentrer chez eux, mais aussi de mettre en place des campagnes de sensibilisation au sein des camps sauvages de réfugiés dans ce sens », a-t-il souligné.

Par ailleurs, dans une lettre ouverte au secrétaire général des Nations unies, le PDG d'Energy et Environment Holding, Roudi Baroudi, a invité l'Onu à jouer un rôle de paix dans la région au niveau de l'énergie. « Les peuples de notre région méritent de vivre en paix, écrit-il. Les hydrocarbures sous les fonds marins de la Méditerranée orientale offrent l'espoir que nous tous pourrions atteindre une nouvelle ère de prospérité, qui brise les cycles de la pauvreté et de la violence. L'Onu a un rôle indispensable à jouer en veillant à ce que les ressources en question soient un carburant pour le développement social et économique, et non pas une cause supplémentaire de guerre. »

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## **A vote of confidence in Cyprus' EEZ'**



The detection of carbonate layers in the southern part of Cyprus' Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which could hold pockets of natural gas, was a chief reason behind the government's decision to launch a third oil and gas licensing

round, Energy Minister Giorgos Lakkotrypis said on Thursday.

According to a notice published on Thursday in the EU's official journal, Cyprus is now inviting bids for exploration of hydrocarbons in offshore blocks 6, 8 and 10.

Applications may be submitted within 120 days of the date of publication of the notice, and the decision on the applications will be made by the cabinet "within six months from the date of submission."

The acreage included in the new licensing round is largely unexplored, Lakkotrypis told reporters at the presidential palace.

The areas are believed to contain carbonate layers in the bedrock, as in the case of Egypt's Zohr discovery.

"The creation and development of these carbonate structures are directly related to the existence of the Eratosthenes seamount within the Cyprus Exclusive Economic Zone," he noted.

And the interest expressed in recent months by energy companies, following the detection of these carbonate layers, was the other reason prompting the government to initiate a new exploration round.

Responding to questions, Lakkotrypis confirmed that foreign companies had conveyed interest in exploring other blocks beyond the three selected.

But after consideration the government decided to put up for auction only blocks 6, 8 and 10.

Should the licences be granted after negotiations, then Cyprus would have a total of seven offshore blocks under license.

Currently, blocks 2, 3, 9 and 12 are licensed.

Total had held the concession on Block 10, but relinquished it

last year after failing to identify targets. The block is located on the southern edge of Cyprus' EEZ and is in close proximity to Egypt's EEZ and the massive Zohr prospect.

Lakkotrypīs noted also that the exploration concession on Block 12, licensed to Texas-based Noble Energy, expires at the end of this May. As such, the license over that acreage – except for the 'Aphrodite' reservoir – will return to the Republic.

The minister confirmed moreover that during his recent visit to Russia, energy companies there expressed an interest in Cyprus' EEZ.

"We have had some contacts in the interim. Of course, whether or not the interest is tangible, this will become apparent once the deadline arrives for the submission of bids."

Asked whether energy companies would definitely be operating their onshore logistics bases from the port of Limassol, Lakkotrypīs demurred on the question, saying only that this is the government's intention.

For his part, government spokesman Nicos Christodoulides called the launch of a new exploration round "a highly important development, a vote of confidence in the EEZ of the Republic."

Cyprus' natural wealth belongs to the people of Cyprus, and following a settlement of the island's political problem, the totality of the population would benefit from this wealth, he added.

Asked whether the government expects Turkey to react to Cyprus' new exploration round, particularly in light of ongoing reunification talks here, Christodoulides said only that the Republic "shall not suspend exercising its sovereign rights due to the talks."

“The Republic’s energy plans are proceeding as normal,” he added.

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# إقتصاد: بارودي يطالب الامم المتحدة العمل لحل النزاع النفطي

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## 2nd Washington Oil&Gas Forum 2016 US





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# Energy Consumption Per Person, by Country, 2010



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# Ethnic Groups in the Middle East

