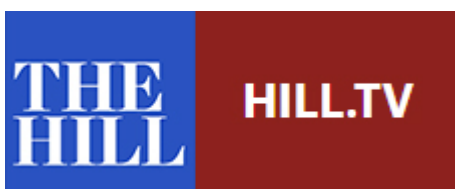


The Russia-Ukraine war and Europe's flawed quest for energy security



BY ROUDI BAROUDI, OPINION CONTRIBUTOR – 03/25/22 02:30 PM EDT
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VIEW OF THE HILL

Europe's hesitance over targeting Russia's energy industry to punish Moscow for its invasion of Ukraine has exposed the precariousness of the continent's energy supplies, with best solutions demanding a deeper understanding as to how the European situation got to where it is today.

The simple explanation is that Germany and several other European countries have become over-reliant on imports of Russian natural gas. But this is only partly true; numerous

other factors accentuate Europe's vulnerability, and while some amount to unfortunate timing, others stem from significant failings at the strategic decision-making level.

For one thing, several governments have decided to close their nuclear and coal power plants in recent years, which has only increased Europe's need for – and therefore dependence on – Russian gas. This is not to say that there were no compelling reasons for these decisions, and the coincidence of this post-nuclear period with the Russia-Ukraine crisis is at least partly bad luck, yet there is no denying the fact that the idling of so much output capacity has left Europe with few practical and viable alternatives. The real problem, though, was not the nuclear shutdowns phasing out local generating units themselves; rather, it was a failure to adequately prepare for the consequences by adding enough new capacity, especially renewables.

Also in Germany, and partly alongside the denuclearization process, two new terminals for receiving seaborne shipments of liquefied natural gas (LNG) have been delayed for more than a decade. This means that even if Europe were able to secure enough LNG to replace the piped gas it gets from Russia, it lacks sufficient regasification capacity to make full use of it.

Similarly, the proposed Nabucco pipeline – which would have carried Azerbaijani, Egyptian, Iraqi, and/or Turkmen gas from Turkey to Austria – was also subjected to repeated delays and eventual cancellation in 2013, further entrenching the importance of Russian gas and Russian pipelines.

Despite having missed these and other opportunities to make itself more flexible and more resilient by diversifying its sources, means, and routes of supply, Europe still has time to substantially improve its position, especially in the medium and long terms.

One promising option is a gas interconnector which would radically expand the pipeline capacity between Spain, with both undersea pipelines to Algeria and Morocco and a considerable unused regasification capacity, and France, from where the supplies in question could then be distributed to other points in Europe. Political and other concerns have slowed this proposal as well, so we can only hope that the crisis in Ukraine will help renew the focus in Madrid and Paris.

There are other steps Europe could take as well, some of them quite straightforward and requiring less of the cross-border agreement and cooperation that can take so long to reach and activate. One is to bolster the continent's ability to withstand delivery interruptions by increasing its storage capacity, whether for conventional gas in underground salt caverns or for the liquefied version in new or expanded LNG depots. Another is for the Germans, Belgians, and others to delay the closure of nuclear plants currently slated for decommissioning. A third is for the Dutch to expand their existing LNG receiving ports, and a fourth has got under way in the last few days as the Germans have started work on their own receiving facilities. A fifth is to work immediately on the East Med Leviathan gas field to connect via pipeline to Turkey and onward to Europe.

The situation can also be ameliorated from the outside. The United States, for example, has doubled its LNG exports to Europe, and Qatar – which met every single one of its delivery commitments despite the illegal two-and-half-year blockade imposed on it by some of its neighbors – should be able to increase its shipments, too, something that would restore confidence in supply markets. In addition to pipelined gas, Spain also receives electricity generated by solar farms in North Africa, and the scope for similar shared grids across the Euro-Mediterranean region is enormous.

Last, but certainly not least, Europe can best serve its own

interests – in every sense of the word – by approving its financial support on future oil and gas projects for the next few years and getting even more serious about renewables. The Euro-Med countries alone have enough offshore wind power potential to replace the entire global nuclear industry, and other technologies beckon as well – including solar, wave, tidal, and undersea geothermal.

All this to become independent of Russian gas and to move for peace, not war.

Roudi Baroudi is a senior fellow at the Transatlantic Leadership Network and the author of “Maritime Disputes in the Mediterranean: The Way Forward” a book distributed by the Brookings Institution Press. With more than 40 years of experience in fields including oil and gas, electricity, infrastructure and public policy, he currently serves as CEO of Energy and Environment Holding, an independent consultancy based in Doha, Qatar.

‘Liveable future’ on Earth at risk, UN climate report warns



A landmark UN report warned on Monday that time had nearly run out to ensure a “liveable future” for all, detailing a horrifying “atlas of human suffering” and warning that far worse was to come.

Species extinction, ecosystem collapse, insect-borne disease, deadly heatwaves and megastorms, water shortages, reduced crop yields – all are measurably worse due to rising temperatures, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) said.

In the last year alone, the world has seen a cascade of unprecedented floods, heatwaves and wildfires across four continents.

Such events will accelerate in coming decades even if the fossil fuel pollution driving climate change is rapidly brought to heel, the 195-nation IPCC warned.

As nations struggle to bend the curve of carbon dioxide emissions downward, they must also prepare for a climate onslaught that in some cases can no longer be avoided, the report made clear.

For UN chief Antonio Guterres, it stands as a “damning

indictment” of failed leadership that he described as nothing short of “criminal”.

“The world’s biggest polluters are guilty of arson of our only home,” he said.

Even Russia’s invasion of Ukraine cannot distract from the truths laid bare in the 3,600-page report and its summary for policymakers, said US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

“The international community must urgently continue to pursue ambitious climate action, even as we face other pressing global challenges,” he said in a written statement.

Svitlana Krakovska, who headed Ukraine’s delegation, spoke passionately at the conference’s final virtual plenary about the link between conflict and global warming.

‘Root’ of war and warming

“Human-induced climate change and the war on Ukraine have the same roots – fossil fuels – and our dependence on them,” she said.

Among the report’s key takeaways was the intertwined fates of human and natural systems.

It stressed that climate change cannot be tamed unless degraded forests and oceans that stock carbon are restored and protected; and the ecosystems on which life forms depend for clean water, air and soil will not survive intact in a world of runaway warming.

The report made clear that a viable future rests on a knife’s edge.

Some dire impacts are already irreversible, such as the likely demise of nearly all shallow water corals.

Other points-of-no-return lie just beyond the Paris

Agreement's aspirational target of capping global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels, the report warned.

The 2015 treaty enjoins nations to hold the increase in temperatures to "well below" 2°C, but recent science has left no doubt that a 1.5°C threshold is far safer.

Even in optimistic scenarios of rapid reductions in carbon pollution, projections of climate impacts are sobering.

Up to 14 per cent of land species face a "very high" risk of extinction with only 1.5°C of warming, the IPCC said, bolstering calls for conservation of 30 to 50pc of the world's land and ocean territory.

The threat grows with every fraction of a degree.

Adaptation

By 2050 there will be more than a billion people in coastal areas highly vulnerable to storm surges amplified by rising seas by 2050. Per usual, the poorest will often be the hardest hit.

An additional 410 million people will be exposed to water scarcity from severe drought at 2°C of warming, and up to 80m will be at risk of hunger by mid-century.

By 2100, around \$10 trillion of assets will be in flood-prone coastal areas in a moderate greenhouse gas emissions scenario, according to the report.

The IPCC assessment – the sixth since 1990 – highlights the need to cope with unavoidable climate impacts on almost every page.

Overall, the IPCC warns, global warming is outpacing our preparations for a climate-addled world.

“For people in Africa living on the front line of climate change, it is adapt or die,” said Peter Verkooijen, CEO of the Rotterdam-based Global Centre on Adaptation.

The report also spotlights irreversible and potentially catastrophic changes in the climate system known as tipping points, triggered at different thresholds of global heating.

These include the melting of ice sheets atop Greenland and the West Antarctic that could lift oceans 13 metres; the morphing of the Amazon basin from tropical forest to savannah; and the disruption of ocean currents that distribute heat across the globe.

“The cumulative scientific evidence is unequivocal: Climate change is a threat to human wellbeing and planetary health,” the report concluded.

Further delays in cutting carbon pollution and preparing for impacts already in the pipeline “will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all”.

بارودي: قرار بايدن لخفض أسعار النفط العالمية... ودول أخرى ستلجأ إلى احتياطاتها



المركزية- لفت الخبير الاقتصادي في شؤون الطاقة رودي بارودي إلى أن "القرار الذي اتخذته الرئيس الأميركي جو بايدن باستخدام جزء من احتياطي النفط الأميركي، "يهدف إلى خفض التضخم والمحافظة على الاسعار العالمية بشكل اقتصادي أكثر استدامة".

وأكد بارودي في مقابلة مع "الجزيرة" - إنكليزي، "استخدام ما يعدل 7% فقط من أصل مجموع الاحتياطي الأميركي الذي يعادل ٧١٤ مليون برميل". وكشف أن "واشنطن اتخذت هذا القرار للحد من تحكم دول "أوبك بلس" وروسيا بسعر النفط العالمي".

كذلك أكد أن "الصين، الهند، كوريا الجنوبية وبريطانيا سيبدأون باستخدام احتياطي النفط المتوفر لديهم، وذلك لدعم استقرار سوق النفط"، مشدداً على أن "الرئيس الأميركي لديه أسلحة وطرق اقتصادية أخرى ومنها الطلب من منتجي الغاز الصخري في الولايات المتحدة زيادة الإنتاج، والذي من الممكن أن يؤثر بشكل كبير على الأسعار العالمية".

US mediator said to give Israel, Lebanon deadline to reach maritime agreement



A US mediator has reportedly informed Israel and Lebanon that if they cannot agree to a compromise over a disputed maritime region, he will end his involvement in the talks.

US envoy Amos Hochstein, who visited Israel this week, suggested to top Israeli officials that they need to get the deal done before the March 2022 parliamentary election in Lebanon, the Axios news site quoted Israeli officials as saying on Wednesday.

Hochstein was also in Beirut last month as he continues his efforts to restart the stalled talks.

Israel and Lebanon have no diplomatic relations and are technically in a state of war. They each claim about 860 square kilometers (330 square miles) of the Mediterranean Sea

as being within their exclusive economic zones.

The Israel-born envoy to the US-mediated talks, a longtime close adviser to President Joe Biden, also told officials that he was not planning to resume the joint talks held at a UN base on the border. Instead, he would meet with each side independently and then offer a bridging proposal.

“Hochstein told us he is not going to present a proposal that both sides like, but the opposite – that both won’t like. But if three to four months from now he sees the parties are not willing to take the deal, he would drop the whole thing and won’t deal with this anymore,” a senior Israeli official told Axios.

Hochstein was looking to get both sides to make serious compromises, officials said, noting that both countries wanted to resolve the dispute despite tensions between them.

Lebanon has sunk deep into an economic and financial crisis that started in late 2019 – a culmination of decades of corruption and mismanagement by the political class. The small Mediterranean country is eager to resolve the border dispute with Israel, paving the way for potential lucrative oil and gas deals.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah last month warned Israel against unilaterally searching for natural gas in the disputed maritime region before any agreement between Lebanon and Israel is reached.

In a wide-ranging speech broadcast from an undisclosed location during a ceremony marking Prophet Muhammad’s birthday, Nasrallah said that while he would leave it up to the Lebanese government to negotiate an end to the dispute, his group would not tolerate Israeli searches in the disputed region.

Accusing Israel of casting a “greedy” eye over Lebanon’s

natural resources, the terror leader said Israel was “mistaken if it thought it could extract these resources from the disputed area before negotiations are completed.”

“The resistance is capable of acting and will do so against any Israeli actions in the disputed zone,” Nasrallah said, accusing Israel of giving a company the go-ahead to begin explorations.

Maritime borders deal between Greece, Italy comes into effect



ANKARA

A deal drawing maritime borders between Greece and Italy came

into effect on Monday, said Italian diplomatic sources.

The two countries exchanged the tools of ratification of the deal during an official visit by Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias to Rome, said Italy's Foreign Ministry in a statement.

During the meeting with Italian Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio, cooperation in the fields of energy and economy, and regional developments, particularly concerning Libya and the Eastern Mediterranean, were also addressed, the statement added.

According to Italian official news agency ANSA, Dendias accused Turkey of "violations in the Eastern Mediterranean" and threatening Greece.

Turkey, while seeking to defend its fair share of maritime territory in the Eastern Mediterranean, has decried recent provocative Greek moves such as the militarization of Aegean islands that are demilitarized by a treaty, navigational alerts (Navtex) that violate longstanding pacts, and illegal encroachment on Turkey's continental shelf.

Turkey, which has the longest continental coastline in the Eastern Mediterranean, has rejected the maritime boundary claims of Greece and the Greek Cypriot administration, stressing that these excessive claims violate the sovereign rights of both Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots.□□□□□□

Turkish leaders have repeatedly stressed that Ankara is in favor of resolving all outstanding problems in the region -- including maritime disputes -- through international law, good neighborly relations, dialogue, and negotiations.□□□□□□

Also, the implementation of the EU's National Recovery and Resilience Plan for handling the economic effects of the pandemic, cooperation against irregular migration, and EU's enlargement to the Western Balkans were discussed between the two ministers.

Dendias, on Tuesday, was received by the Vatican's Secretary of State Pietro Paroli.

In the meeting, bilateral and regional developments, ahead of Pope Francis' scheduled visit to Greece on Dec.4-6, were discussed, said the Greek Foreign Ministry.

Greece, a predominantly Orthodox country, has a minority of over 50,000 Catholics, excluding expatriates and migrants, who are mostly concentrated in islands in the Aegean and Ionian Sea.

La Cop26 di Glasgow: le linee guida per i Paesi del Mediterraneo



Il noto esperto a livello internazionale in campo energetico Roudi Baroudi, pone in evidenza una riflessione in concomitanza con l'imminente arrivo della conferenza sul cambiamento climatico delle Nazioni Unite (COP26) che si terrà quest'anno a Glasgow.

Baroudi definisce questo appuntamento memorabile e storico in particolare per i paesi del bacino del Mar Mediterraneo, Italia compresa. Fa osservare che l'aumento delle temperature e la crisi climatica globale è in atto e gli eventi dell'estate 2021 ne sono la testimonianza reale.

Il fenomeno degli incendi, per esempio, si manifesta con dimensioni e intensità insolite rispetto al passato ed anche nel caso di attività dolosa l'aridità circostante e le alte temperature hanno favorito la propagazione violenta nelle aree colpite generando numerose morti, danni alle proprietà e distruzioni dei terreni agricoli coltivati. In casi come quello della Turchia seguiti da forti inondazioni dovute a piogge torrenziali dopo pochi giorni.

Questi fenomeni non sono più eventi sporadici localizzati in determinate aree, ma costituiscono una vera e propria

testimonianza della catastrofe climatica in atto.

Questo ci impone di moltiplicare gli sforzi e sperare di poter invertire la tendenza prima che raggiunga un punto di non ritorno. Se non andremo in questa direzione, continua Baroudi:” la nostra specie dovrà affrontare un futuro sempre più complesso con più incendi, innalzamento del livello del mare, accelerazione dell’acidificazione degli oceani, calo degli stock ittici, tempeste più violente, siccità più lunghe e intense, raccolti compromessi, milioni di rifugiati climatici e fame di massa”.

Svariati paesi del Mediterraneo, specialmente appartenenti ad Asia ed Africa hanno già situazioni complesse dal punto di vista territoriale per via della posizione geografica (Sud Italia incluso), inoltre i paesi con meno disponibilità economica fanno ancora molta fatica nella conversione ad impianti con minor impatto ambientale.

Nonostante questo scenario apocalittico, incalza Baroudi, non tutto è perduto. L’Unione europea ha compiuto progressi importanti rispetto alla maggior parte del resto del mondo e sta adottando delle politiche più stringenti sulle emissioni.

Anche gli Stati Uniti stanno intensificando i propri sforzi dopo quattro anni di cambio rotta sotto l’amministrazione Trump. In tutto il mondo, finalmente, si sta avendo maggiore consapevolezza del problema in maniera più trasversale dal pubblico al privato.

Alla COP26, i leader ed i referenti politici dei paesi partecipanti dovrebbero lavorare costruttivamente ed ascoltare scienziati ed attivisti che chiedono un’azione più rapida ed efficace, inclusa una maggiore assistenza finanziaria per aiutare i paesi meno fortunati a unirsi seriamente alla lotta per il cambiamento climatico.

I programmi che i paesi del Mediterraneo porteranno a Glasgow saranno cruciali perché, nonostante la situazione in atto, la maggior parte di questi stati ha un vantaggio territoriale:

ampi spazi e condizioni quasi ideali per le turbine eoliche offshore. Uno studio recente, che utilizza una varietà di tecnologie per elaborare dati previsionali, stima il potenziale combinato di energia eolica di tutti i 23 paesi euro mediterranei (in modo alquanto prudente) a quasi 1,5 milioni di megawatt. Si consideri che l'intera industria nucleare mondiale ha una capacità di circa 400.000 MW, ovvero meno di un terzo di quella che il Mediterraneo potrebbe produrre solamente con impianti eolici. Senza calcolare l'impiego di altre tecnologie: l'idrocinetica sia fluviale che marina (onde e maree), geotermica (on e offshore) e solare (200.000-300.000 MW).

Questa strategia darebbe una propulsione allo sviluppo di molti paesi che oggi hanno uno scarso accesso all'energia elettrica a prezzi accessibili, inoltre l'indotto relativo alle costruzioni degli impianti darebbe nuovi posti di lavoro oltre a molteplici benefici: la possibilità di sostituire i vecchi impianti di produzione più inquinanti, ridurre gradualmente l'importazione di carburanti fossile, rivendere nella rete l'eccesso di produzione energetica ed investire il ricavato in infrastrutture, politiche sociali o ulteriori impianti green.

Uno sviluppo omogeneo delle rinnovabili favorirebbe la transizione progressiva dai combustibili fossili, riducendo le emissioni di carbonio che causano il cambiamento climatico e quindi facendo gli interessi di tutti, ovunque.

Queste proiezioni positive non si avvereranno mai per osmosi. Molti paesi nel Mediterraneo hanno bisogno di assistenza finanziaria e tecnica per mettere in pratica i progetti di conversione. L'accordo di Parigi includeva impegni economici da parte degli stati più ricchi per finanziare i paesi più bisognosi, ma molti governi non hanno rispettato l'accordo. Questo è controproducente, proprio come la mancata distribuzione del vaccino contro il COVID ai paesi del Sud del mondo, un errore imperdonabile che non solo determina la morte di persone innocenti, ma crea anche terreno fertile per nuove

varianti del virus. Se la transizione verso un'energia più pulita creasse difficoltà alle popolazioni già svantaggiate, potrebbe venire a mancare il sostegno popolare verso questo percorso, con conseguenze terribili per tutti noi. Se lasciato incontrollato, il cambiamento climatico potrebbe provocare morte e distruzione ovunque creando flussi migratori ingestibili.

Roudi Baroudi conclude esortando la COP26 a produrre nuovi programmi di finanziamento da parte dei paesi ricchi verso quelli più poveri senza creare situazioni di assistenzialismo. Ci sono moltissime risorse a disposizione e c'è poco tempo per agire, quindi gli stati finanziatori non possono permettersi di sbagliare. I prestiti agevolati andranno messi a disposizione per i paesi più virtuosi che garantiranno la finalizzazione dei progetti. L'unico modo per farlo è articolare una strategia coerente per eseguire progetti rilevanti e fattibili con tempi e budget ben definiti. In particolare, i governi regionali devono dissipare i timori giustificati che, i fondi destinati ai progetti per le energie rinnovabili o ad altri strumenti di de carbonizzazione, andranno invece a riempire le tasche di funzionari locali corrotti.

Queste sono le linee guida che deve seguire quest'anno la conferenza di Glasgow. La lotta ai cambiamenti climatici è ampiamente considerata come la sfida più importante che la nostra specie abbia mai affrontato e la capacità della regione di proteggersi e di esercitare il proprio peso sarà in bilico alla COP26. I paesi che si presentano con piani ben sviluppati per progetti concreti avranno la strada spianata per varie forme di finanziamento. Coloro che non lo faranno saranno inevitabilmente tagliati fuori.

How the US and Iran compete to fuel Lebanon



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Hezbollah has imported fuel from Iran to supply Lebanon, while the US wants to power Lebanon with Egyptian gas and Jordanian electricity. The energy race between the geopolitical rivals has implications for the region.

Lebanon has been mired in economic crisis since 2019. Recently, a severe fuel crisis has gripped the country and has exacerbated the situation considerably.

The fuel shortages hit so hard that a fuel crisis soon became a humanitarian crisis. Lebanese citizens found themselves lining up for hours at petrol stations to receive limited rations of fuel, the price of which has skyrocketed.

Generators, starved of diesel, provided fewer hours of electricity to houses and businesses. Even hospitals were deprived of power.

With the government struggling to manage the crisis, Hassan Nasrallah, the political leader of the Iran-backed Shiite

militant group Hezbollah, announced in August that Iranian fuel would be brought into Lebanon.

The first two shipments arrived via Syria on September 16 and 17. Several videos and pictures posted on social media showed people celebrating the arrival of the fuel convoys. A third shipment is expected to arrive this week.

The delivery was not officially approved by the government. The trucks entered via an illegal crossing which violates US sanctions against Iran. So far, the US has not tried to block the shipments.

US counterproposal to contain Iran's influence

The US didn't sit back. Following Nasrallah's announcement, the US ambassador to Lebanon, Dorothy Shea, revealed that the United States was working closely with the governments of Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, along with the World Bank, to find sustainable solutions for Lebanon's fuel and energy needs.

On September 8, the US-backed effort to satisfy Lebanon's energy needs took place in Amman, Jordan, where ministries from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria outlined a road map to pipe Egyptian natural gas to Lebanon via Jordan and Syria through the Arab Gas Pipeline (AGP). Another part of the plan involves providing electric power to Lebanon from the Jordanian grid.

Although the US proposals would not alone be enough to satisfy market demand, Roudi Baroudi, chief executive of the consultancy Energy and Environment Holding, told DW that the proposals were good ideas as they could increase the supply of electricity to the country.

He explained that, though the AGP is ready for use, the

electric cables passing through Damascus were heavily damaged during the Syrian civil war and needed to be repaired. "The gas from Egypt will be sufficient for 8-10 hours per day. Electricity from Jordan and Syria would add 2-3 hours," he said.

Iran's new foreign affairs policy and Syria's comeback

Technical issues apart, the competition between the US and Iran to help Lebanon in the energy sector has wider implications for the region.

In Lebanon, the Iranian fuel shipment cemented Hezbollah's powerful image. The new Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati said Iranian fuel imports constituted a breach of Lebanon's sovereignty, but he didn't follow with any actions.

For Iran, shipping fuel to Lebanon is a sign of a new vision of its foreign policy, according to Sina Toossi, a senior research analyst at the National Iranian American Council (NIAC). He told DW that Iran wanted to become a regional power and neutralize the effects of imposed sanctions by increasing trades with its neighbors.

"New Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's foreign policy strategy focuses on the region and increasing regional economic interconnectivity and interdependence. However, if the US doesn't enforce sanctions, it may be a sign that Biden has a good intention to get the nuclear deal talks with Iran back on track," he said.

Conversely, the United States is trying to contain Iran's influence in the region by backing the proposals to provide natural gas and electricity to Lebanon. However, it found itself in an awkward situation. By involving Syria in the plan, which already expressed its availability, the US would

break its own sanctions imposed on Bashar Assad's government through the 2019 Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act.

Chris Abi-Nassif, Lebanon program director at the Middle East Institute, told DW that the involvement of Assad's government in the plan might be perceived as the US reaching out to Syria.

"Syria, which had effectively been taken out of the Arab world equation, has been suddenly put back in the picture," he said. Furthermore, Syria may take not only a political advantage by letting gas and electricity pass through its territory but also profits, according to Abi-Nassif.

Fueling Lebanon doesn't solve the crisis

Lebanon has had an issue in the energy sector since the end of the civil war in 1990. For decades, the political class has developed no long-term plans in the energy sector to satisfy market demand.

The Iran-Hezbollah initiative to supply fuel won't be enough to satisfy the country's demand for a long time, although Lebanese may breathe a sigh of relief in the immediate term.

Meanwhile, the US proposals are still being negotiated. It may take several months before they make any difference.

Those proposals may relieve the crisis, but it won't resolve the issue of paying for gas and electricity, according to Abi-Nassif.

"The fundamental question is how Lebanon will pay for natural gas and electricity," he said. "To answer this question, Lebanon should focus on how to settle the debt crisis, restructure the banking system, and how to distribute losses. This is the key to unlock the long-term prospect not only for

the energy sector but for any other single sector in Lebanon as well.”

لو استفاد لبنان من خط الغاز العربي لوفّر 5 مليارات دولار... بارودي لـ "النهار": إبعاد السياسة عن قطاع الطاقة مفتاح الحل



طرأت في الأيام الأخيرة معطيات إيجابية تعطي ال#لبنانيين بارقة أمل بالنسبة إلى التخفيف من ساعات التقنين الكهربائي القياسي، مع وصول الفيول #العراقي إلى لبنان والذي قد يساهم في تأمين حتى 6 ساعات من التغذية على الشبكة، لتبقى الأنظار إلى مسار استرجار الغاز المصري إلى معمل دير عمار وكذلك استرجار الكهرباء الأردنية.

حصول لبنان على الطاقة الكهربائية من مصادر متعددة وتأمينها على نحو مستدام هو خطوة أولى من أجل وضع البلاد على طريق النهوض وتأمين الاستقرار نظرا إلى أهمية الطاقة في تشغيل العديد من المرافق والقطاعات الحيوية، فيما التدخل السياسي في هذا القطاع هو الذي أدى إلى ما وصلت إليه الأمور. اليوم، تبذل الجهود من أجل استرجار الغاز من مصر والكهرباء من الأردن، ما يحتم على الجهات والدول المعنية تسهيل هذه العملية التي ستعطي لبنان دفعا قويا في ظل الظروف الصعبة التي يمر بها، وما يعيد إلى الواجهة أهمية خط #الغاز العربي الذي انكبت الدول المعنية على إعادة إصلاحه وتعزيز بنيته التحتية لاستخدامه في استرجار الغاز المصري عبر الاردن و#سوريا وصولا إلى شمال لبنان.

نشأت فكرة الخط كنتيجة لتوسيع التعاون الثنائي بين الدول العربية في شرق البحر المتوسط وشمال افريقيا، وذلك منذ اواخر تسعينات القرن الماضي. ففي حين كان لبنان وسوريا يحضّران لمشروع خط الغاز الطبيعي الذي يربط البلدين، كانت الاردن ومصر في طور البدء بتنفيذ الخط المصري - الاردني مرورا بخليج العقبة، وتزامن ذلك مع الاستعداد لاطلاق المشروع الاورو- متوسطي لربط دول حوض المتوسط بشبكة غاز طبيعي تمتد لاحقا إلى اوروبا. وفي عام 2001، شارك لبنان في الاجتماعات التمهيدية لمشروع نقل الغاز الطبيعي وتسويقه وتصديره إلى دول الحوض الشرقي للمتوسط، وكانت مشاركة لبنان في العديد من الاجتماعات على مستوى تمثيل رئاسة الحكومة والتمثيل الوزاري والتقني. وقد سعت الاجتماعات المتلاحقة إلى التحضير لاتفاق انشاء الهيئة العربية للغاز وتأسيس الشركة العربية لنقل الغاز الطبيعي وتسويقه. وبعدها أقر مشروع إنشاء الشركة تمت المصادقة عليه في كل من الاردن ومصر وسوريا ولبنان حيث اقره المجلس النيابي في العام 2005 بموجب القانون 683.

لقد منعت المناكفات السياسية وعدم اجراء الانتخابات الرئاسية في مواعيدها الدستورية كما الفراغ الحكومي في السنوات الماضية اللبنانيين من الاستفادة من خط الغاز العربي الذي كان يمكن ان يحلّ معظم مشاكل انتاج الكهرباء بحسب الخبير في شؤون الطاقة رودي بارودي، لو تمّ وصل خط الغاز العربي بمعامل انتاج الطاقة الاخرى في الزهراني والجية الجديد والزوق الجديد وصور وبعلبك، خصوصا ان هذه المعامل يمكنها انتاج الطاقة الكهربائية بواسطة الغاز. فلو استفاد لبنان من خط الغاز العربي منذ 18 عاما، لكان وفّر على خزينته حوالي 5 مليارات دولار، في ما لو فرضنا ان سعر برميل النفط

يرأوح ما بين 50 و60 دولارا اميركيا، ولكان لبنان نعِم بوقود صديق للبيئة طوال السنوات الماضية، ما يؤدي حتماً إلى انخفاض التكاليف المالية للتشغيل والصيانة. وأكد بارودي انه "لو استفاد لبنان يومها من تلك الشراكة ومن خيرات الانبوب العربي لكانت معظم مشاكله الكهربائية حُلّت، اذ انه كان سيستفيد طوال تلك السنوات سواء من اسعار الغاز المصري التنافسية او من ارباح الشركة العربية لنقل الغاز وتسويقه بصفته شريكا اساسيا تصل نسبة ارباحه إلى 25% من الارباح العامة. كذلك، كان ليستفيد من رسم الترانزيت".

خط الغاز السوري - اللبناني

بدأ تنفيذ هذا المشروع خلال شهر آذار 2003، وهو عبارة عن انبوب للغاز قياس 24 انش يمتد من سوريا إلى محطة البداوي وينقل الغاز السوري إلى المحطة المذكورة (راجع الخريطة المرفقة). وبحسب بارودي يشمل المشروع صيانة وتشغيل وادارة هذا الخط، في حين ان اهميته تكمن في انه كان معدا يومها لينقل الغاز السوري بسعر مشجع حدده القانون الرقم 509 الذي اقره البرلمان اللبناني في العام 2003 (الاجازة للحكومة ابرام اتفاقية بيع الغاز من الشركة السورية للنفط). وبالفعل، استفاد معمل دير عمار عبر هذا الخط من الغاز المصري والسوري وانما لفترات متقطعة، وتوقف لاسباب عديدة. ويعتبر بارودي ان سعر الغاز أصبح منافسا جدا مما يؤمن للخزينة وفرا ماليا كبيرا يمكن الحصول عليه في ما لو تم تحويل معامل انتاج الطاقة في دير عمار، الزهراني، الجية، والزوق للعمل على الغاز الطبيعي كما يظهر الجدول التالي، وذلك بحسب الاسعار المختلفة لبرميل النفط. ولا بد من التذكير بأن الكميات المتفق عليها والعائدة لمعملٍ دير عمار والزهراني تراوح ما بين مليون ومليون ونصف مليون يوميا .

الوفّر المتوقع سنويا (بملايين الدولارات الاميركية)	كلفة الغاز الطبيعي (بملايين الدولارات الاميركية)	كلفة كهرباء لبنان من الفيول اويل والغاز اويل* (بملايين الدولارات الاميركية)	سعر برميل البرنت (دولار اميركي)
228\$	542\$	770\$	50\$

*استنادا إلى استهلاك معامل الطاقة وفقا لتقرير الانتاج الصادر عن مؤسسة كهرباء لبنان

هذا الجدول يشمل الوفر الناتج عن تحويل العمل من الغاز اويل والفيول اويل إلى الغاز الطبيعي في البداوي، الزوق، الجية، والزهراني. أما سعر الغاز المستعمل في هذا النموذج فهو وفقا للقانون الرقم 509 الموقع بين لبنان والشركة السورية للنفط وسعر الغاز اويل المتبع هو 136% من سعر برميل النفط بينما سعر الفيول اويل المتبع هو 88% من سعر برميل النفط. وفي حال أضيفت قيمة الفوائد من الوفر البيئي وإطالة حياة المعامل والتوفير في صيانة وعمل المعامل قد تتخطى حدود التوفير الـ 250 مليون دولار سنويا. ولا بد من الإشارة إلى ان معدل عدد ساعات العمل للمعامل وفقا لتقرير الانتاج لمؤسسة كهرباء لبنان يقدر بـ 55%. وإذا ما تحسن اداء العمل فيها (خصوصا في الزهراني ودير عمار) إلى 75% سيرتفع الوفر إلى أكثر من 350 مليون دولار سنويا.

مميزات هذه الطاقة النظيفة

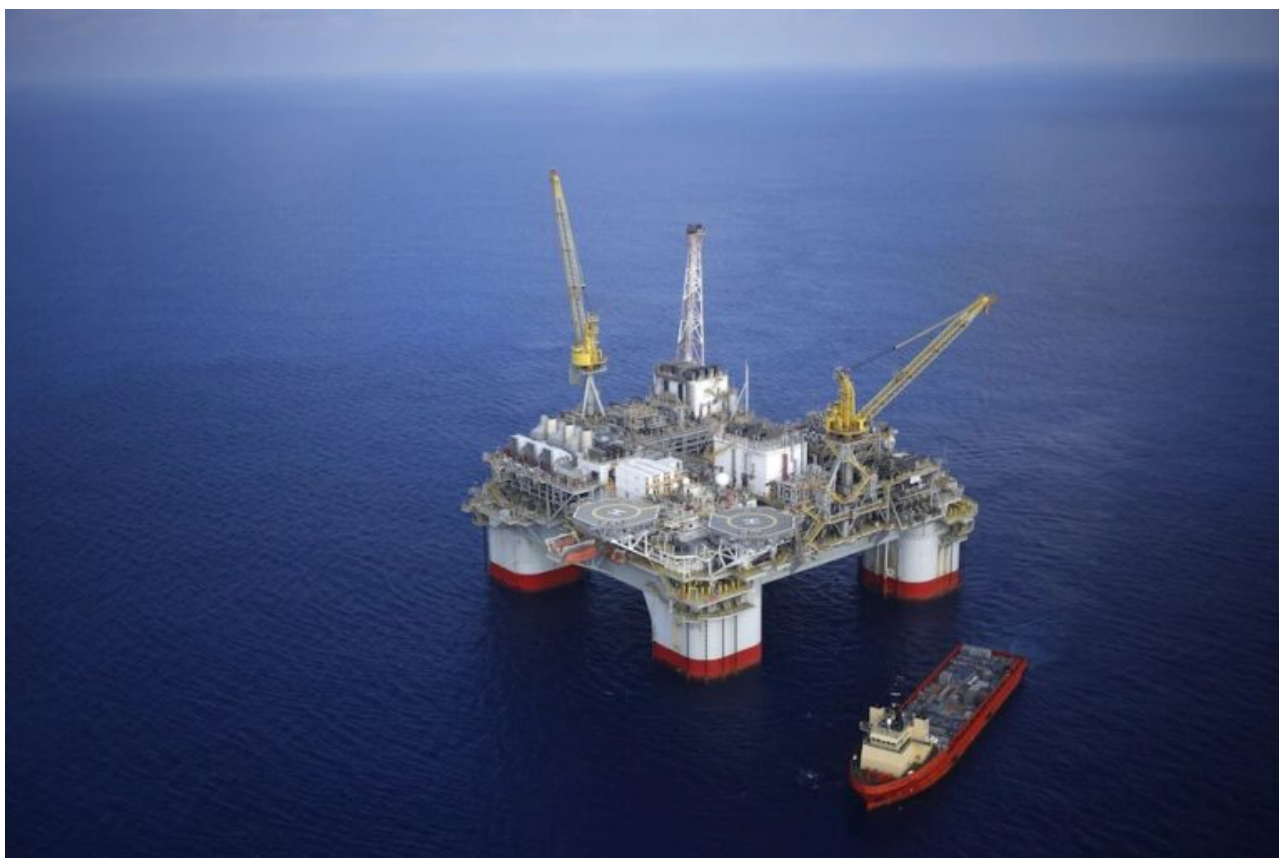
بالانتقال إلى الموضوع البيئي، فالمحافظة على البيئة في لبنان لم تعد ترفا. لذلك لا بد من التوقف عند الوفر البيئي المتوقع من استعمال الغاز الطبيعي، خصوصا ان معامل انتاج الطاقة الحالية تنبعث منها كميات كبيرة من الغازات الملوثة، وهي بمعظمها ناتجة عن عمليات حرق الفيول وغيره من المحروقات الاحفورية لتوليد الطاقة الكهربائية. ويؤكد بارودي ان اهمية استعمال الغاز الطبيعي في معامل الانتاج تتعدى الوفر المباشر لتشمل حوافز اخرى تساعد في التخلص من أعباء مالية كبيرة ناتجة عن استعمال وقود غير نظيف،

اضافة إلى كلفة النقل والتوزيع والخسائر التقنية ومشاكل الصيانة وعمل الوحدات. لذلك ثمة حاجة حقيقية للتحويل إلى استعمال الغاز الطبيعي في معظم معامل الانتاج في لبنان، لأنه يؤدي إلى خفض المشاكل التقنية والحد من أعبائها المالية، ونذكر من المشاكل ما يتعلق بموضوع صيانة المعامل والاساخ والضرر البيئي الناتج عن احتراق الفيول. من هنا، يمكن القول ان الفترة التي تفصل مراحل الصيانة للعديد من المعدات والآلات تكون أطول، وبالتالي فان ذلك يطيل عمر المعمل لجهة استعماله لتوليد الكهرباء بما لا يقل عن 5 إلى 7 سنوات. ويساهم استعمال الغاز الطبيعي في الحد من هذه الملوثات بشكل كبير مما يؤدي إلى تخفيف الضرر على البيئة وعلى الصحة العامة، ويكون هذا القطاع قد ثبت دوره الريادي في المحافظة على مصادر البيئة اللبنانية. وسوف يشجع التحول إلى الغاز الطبيعي على انخفاض الانبعاثات الآتية:

- 100% 1. من انبعاثات الكربون.
- 60 % 2. من انبعاثات ثاني أوكسيد الكربون.
- 70 % 3. من انبعاثات أوكسيد النيتروجين.

منعت الحكومات السابقة لبنان من الاستفادة من خط الربط الكهربائي السداسي (مصر، الاردن، العراق، سوريا، لبنان وليبيا) وبالتالي توفير سنوي قدره 250 مليون دولار طوال السنوات الماضية، علماً أن محطة مجدل عنجر قد انجزت الاعمال فيها عام 2006 وتستطيع أن تستوعب 400 ميغاواط يمكن ربطها بالشبكة اللبنانية. ويعتبر بارودي ان المطلوب من الحكومة الجديدة هو "عدم تضييع الفرصة من جديد والاستفادة من كل الفرص والامكانيات لتحسين وزيادة انتاج الطاقة الكهربائية سواء عبر خط الغاز العربي والانتهاء من تنفيذ وصلة جنوب دمشق إلى الزهراني بأسرع وقت ممكن، كما هو ممكن في الخريطة المرفقة او عبر البدء بتطوير انتاج الطاقات المتجددة، خصوصا بواسطة الشمس، نظراً إلى طبيعة لبنان ومناخه الذي يمكن ان يعطي نحو 2000 ميغاواط، وما يؤمن انتاجاً نظيفاً ومستداماً ويوفر على الخزينة الكثير من الاموال لبنان بحاجة اليها سواء في بناء معامل جديدة وفي تطوير شبكتي النقل والتوزيع".

How U.S. Presidents Use the Strategic Petroleum Reserve



As U.S. president, Joe Biden can tap the nation's emergency oil stockpile to make up for supply shortages – be they disruptions to crude flows such as in Louisiana this week after Hurricane Ida, or price spikes caused by geopolitical instability in the Middle East. The tool at his disposal is the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, set up in the aftermath of the Arab oil embargo in the 1970s as a national energy safety net. It's the world's largest supply of emergency crude, stored in deep and heavily guarded underground salt caverns along the U.S. Gulf Coast.

1. How much oil is in reserve?

The reserve stood at 621.3 million barrels as of Aug. 20,

enough to replace more than half a year's worth of U.S. crude net imports. Current inventory is about 87% of its maximum authorized storage capacity.

2. In what circumstances can presidents release stockpiled oil?

It's pretty much the president's prerogative. But the 1975 law that established the reserve says a president can order a full drawdown in the event of a "severe energy supply interruption" that threatens national security or the economy. A limited drawdown (up to 30 million barrels) can be ordered in the event of "a domestic or international energy supply shortage of significant scope or duration."

3. Have presidents tapped the reserve before?

Yes. In 2011, President Barack Obama released 30 million barrels as part of a joint effort with other nations to counter supply disruptions from Libya. In 2005, President George W. Bush released 11 million barrels in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. And in 1991, under President George H.W. Bush, 17 million barrels were released during the first Gulf War. Test releases take place from time to time, as well as limited releases in the form of swaps. In 2017, the Energy Department authorized the release of 5 million barrels to Gulf Coast refineries when Hurricane Harvey wreaked havoc on the region. Such arrangements are designed to address short-term emergency needs, and the crude is repaid, in kind, at a future date.

4. What's happening in the wake of Hurricane Ida?

Exxon Mobil Corp. is starting its huge Baton Rouge refinery and needs a large amount of crude to process, and fast. Major disruptions to nearby pipelines and production facilities in the wake of the storm have spurred the oil giant to ask for up to 1.5 million barrels of oil from the reserve to temporarily replace its usual supply sources. The Department of Energy is

encouraging refiners to prioritize making products such as gasoline, which is badly needed in the area for cars and generators.

5. What does a release entail?

The maximum drawdown capability is 4.4 million barrels a day, according to the Energy Department's website, and it takes 13 days for SPR oil to reach the open market after a presidential decision. But the mere announcement that the SPR is being deployed could have an immediate, if short-lived, effect on oil prices.

6. What's the outlook for the U.S. stockpile?

The domestic shale boom has allowed the U.S. to join the ranks of the world's biggest oil producers, lending weight to arguments that the emergency reserve is past its sell-by date. But in recent months shale production has stalled, demand has increased and imports have also gone up. In the past the reserve has been used to pay government bills ranging from roads to deficit reduction and drugs, and current plans are for the stockpile to be cut almost in half over several years. But periodic use of the reserve after natural disasters may be the most effective rebuttal to the case for doing away with it.

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Η κλιματική κρίση δίνει σε

Ελλάδα και Τουρκία την ευκαιρία για «ιστορικούς συμβιβασμούς»



Ελλάδα και Τουρκία έχουν τα πάντα να κερδίσουν και τίποτα ή σχετικά λίγα να χάσουν συνεργαζόμενοι σε κάθε ευκαιρία, αλλά ειδικά στην ενέργεια

Η Ελλάδα και η Τουρκία έχουν μια από τις πιο περίπλοκες σχέσεις του κόσμου. Όλοι γνωρίζουμε την ιστορία, αν και πολλές από τις λεπτομέρειες αμφισβητούνται. Ωστόσο, υπάρχουν ορισμένα αδιαμφισβήτητα γεγονότα. Δύο πρώην μακροχρόνιοι εχθροί συγκεντρώθηκαν ως σύμμαχοι από τον Ψυχρό Πόλεμο, όταν και οι δύο εντάχθηκαν στο ΝΑΤΟ, αλλά γενικά παρέμειναν σε διαφωνίες για έναν μακρύ κατάλογο θεμάτων.

Το βασικό μάθημα από αυτήν την απλή σύνοψη είναι ότι η Ελλάδα και η Τουρκία εντάχθηκαν στην Ατλαντική συμμαχία για τον ίδιο βασικό λόγο: ο καθένας θεωρούσε τη διαμάχη τους ως μια

μικρότερη απειλή από αυτήν που έθεσε η Σοβιετική Ένωση, η οποία ήταν δυνητικά υπαρξιακή. Στο τέλος της ημέρας, και παρά τις παλιές δυσaréσκειες και τις συνεχιζόμενες εντάσεις, οι διαδοχικές κυβερνήσεις – συμπεριλαμβανομένου της χούντας – και των δύο χωρών τήρησαν την ίδια λογική ανάλυση για δεκαετίες.

Και οι δύο εξακολουθούν να είναι μέλη του NATO, αλλά η σοβιετική απειλή αντικαθίσταται μόνο εν μέρει από μια πολύ πιο αδύναμη Ρωσία. Σε κάποιο βαθμό, αυτό οδήγησε σε επανέναρξη της ελληνοτουρκικής τριβής, ειδικά στα θαλάσσια σύνορά τους στη Μεσόγειο.

Διακυβεύονται πολλά περισσότερα από την υπερηφάνεια ή την επικράτεια

Και αυτή τη φορά, διακυβεύονται πολλά περισσότερα από την υπερηφάνεια ή την επικράτεια. Δεδομένου ότι έχουν ανακαλυφθεί τεράστιες ποσότητες φυσικού αερίου ανοικτής θάλασσας σε πολλά μέρη της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου, η διασυνοριακή διαμάχη μπορεί να περιλαμβάνει πόρους που θα μπορούσαν να προσφέρουν ιστορικά πλεονεκτήματα σε όποιον τα ελέγχει.

Για άλλη μια φορά, ακούγονται σαν λογικοί υπολογισμοί. Αλλά είναι πραγματικά; Θα επιτρέψω στα μεγάλα αποθέματα φυσικού αερίου τα οποία έχουν τη δυνατότητα να βοηθήσουν οποιαδήποτε χώρα να εξασφαλίσει ένα καλύτερο μέλλον για τον λαό της.

Η εξοικονόμηση και τα έσοδα θα επιτρέψουν άνευ προηγουμένου επενδύσεις στην εκπαίδευση, την υγειονομική περίθαλψη, τις μεταφορές και άλλες υποδομές, δημιουργώντας περισσότερες και καλύτερες θέσεις εργασίας και αναγκάζοντας αμέτρητους ανθρώπους από τη φτώχεια. Ακόμη και τα τέλη διαμετακόμισης από τη φιλοξενία ενός διεθνούς αγωγού μπορούν να παρέχουν σημαντικό εισόδημα, και όσο περισσότερο διασχίζει ο αγωγός, τόσο υψηλότερα είναι τα τέλη.

Αλλά θα έλεγα ότι, όπως συνέβη κατά τον Ψυχρό Πόλεμο, τόσο η

Ελλάδα όσο και η Τουρκία θα έπρεπε να λάβουν περισσότερο υπόψη τις μεγαλύτερες – στην πραγματικότητα, πολύ μεγαλύτερες – εκτιμήσεις.

Θανάσιμη απειλή

Και όλα αυτά έχουν να κάνουν με την κλιματική αλλαγή. Αυτή η πρόκληση αποτελεί θανάσιμη απειλή, όχι μόνο για τους Έλληνες και τους Τούρκους, αλλά και για τον ίδιο τον ανθρώπινο πολιτισμό. Και σε αντίθεση με τη Σοβιετική Ένωση, αυτή δεν είναι μια πολιτική-στρατιωτική δύναμη που μπορεί να αποφευχθεί, να υποτιμηθεί.

Ούτε μπορούμε να το περιμένουμε και να ελπίζουμε ότι, όπως και η ΕΣΣΔ, η κλιματική αλλαγή θα διαλυθεί από τα δικά της ελαττώματα. Όχι, θα σώσουμε τον πλανήτη μας δουλεύοντας μαζί για να αποκαταστήσουμε τη ζημιά που έχουμε κάνει με την άντληση ατελείωτων ρευμάτων άνθρακα στην ατμόσφαιρα.

Μπορούμε να το κάνουμε μόνο μειώνοντας δραστικά τις εκπομπές και αυτό μπορεί να επιτευχθεί μόνο με τη μετάβαση σε ανανεώσιμες πηγές ενέργειας και καθαρότερα, πιο πράσινα καύσιμα. Και είτε αρέσει είτε όχι, καθώς οι μεγάλες Μεσογειακές δυνάμεις, η Ελλάδα και η Τουρκία έχουν τεράστιους ρόλους να διαδραματίσουν σε αυτήν τη διαδικασία – και ως εκ τούτου τεράστιες ευθύνες. Όπως και στο NATO, και οι δύο θα αναμένεται να τραβήξουν τα αντίστοιχα βάρη τους.

Ο χρόνος είναι σωστός για μια νέα προσπάθεια

Προηγούμενες απόπειρες συμφιλίωσης ήταν πάντα ελλιπείς ή εκτροχιασμένες, αλλά υπάρχει λόγος να ελπίζουμε ότι ο χρόνος είναι σωστός για μια νέα προσπάθεια και ότι ορισμένοι από τους βασικούς παίκτες βρίσκονται στο σωστό δρόμο.

Η σύνοδος κορυφής του NATO την περασμένη εβδομάδα, για

παράδειγμα, είδε τον πρόεδρο των ΗΠΑ Τζο Μπάιντεν να σημειώνει πολύ διαφορετικές σημειώσεις από τον προκάτοχό του, Ντόναλντ Τραμπ, τονίζοντας τη δυνατότητα της συμμαχίας να επηρεάσει μια ευρεία ποικιλία γεωπολιτικών θεμάτων.

Οι συναντήσεις του στο περιθώριο της συνόδου κορυφής περιελάμβαναν μια συνάντηση με τον Τούρκο ομόλογό του, Ρετζέπ Ταγίπ Ερντογάν, ο οποίος αργότερα δήλωσε ότι άνοιξε μια «νέα εποχή» εποίκοδομητικών δεσμών. Εάν αυτό αποδειχθεί αλήθεια και η Άγκυρα θέλει πραγματικά να επισκευάσει τις σχέσεις της με την Ουάσιγκτον, θα μπορούσε να έχει θετικές επιπτώσεις, όχι μόνο για την ελληνοτουρκική συμφιλίωση, αλλά και για μια ειρηνική επίλυση του Κυπριακού.

Ως γείτονες σε αυτόν τον χώρο και de facto εταίροι στην εκστρατεία για τη μείωση των εκπομπών, η Ελλάδα και η Τουρκία θα μπορούσαν να μεγιστοποιήσουν την απόδοση των προσπαθειών τους, τόσο ατομικά όσο και σε συνεργασία.

Δεδομένης της σημασίας της πληροφορίας και του ρυθμού με τον οποίο αυξάνεται η ικανότητά μας να τις συλλέγουμε λόγω της τεχνολογίας, θα μπορούσαν να ξεκινήσουν να ανταλλάσσουν δεδομένα.

Για σχεδόν οτιδήποτε έχει κατασκευαστεί, εγκατασταθεί ή λειτουργεί στη θάλασσα, η εκ των προτέρων γνώση των καιρικών συνθηκών, παλίρροια, ρεύματα, θερμοκρασίες νερού, επίπεδα αλατότητας κ.λπ., μπορεί να είναι καθοριστικής σημασίας για τον σχεδιασμό, την απόδοση και την προστασία τόσο των ανθρώπων όσο και των περιβάλλον.

Στην τελική ανάλυση, τόσο η Ελλάδα όσο και η Τουρκία έχουν τα πάντα να κερδίσουν, και τίποτα ή σχετικά λίγο να χάσουν, συνεργαζόμενοι σε κάθε ευκαιρία, αλλά ειδικά σε διάφορες μορφές ενέργειας. Όπως και με τις αντίστοιχες αποφάσεις τους να ενταχθούν στο ΝΑΤΟ, αυτό απαιτεί σαφή ανάλυση και ρεαλιστική χάραξη πολιτικής, για την επίτευξη, την προώθηση, την υπεράσπιση και την εφαρμογή ορισμένων ιστορικών

συμβιβασμών.