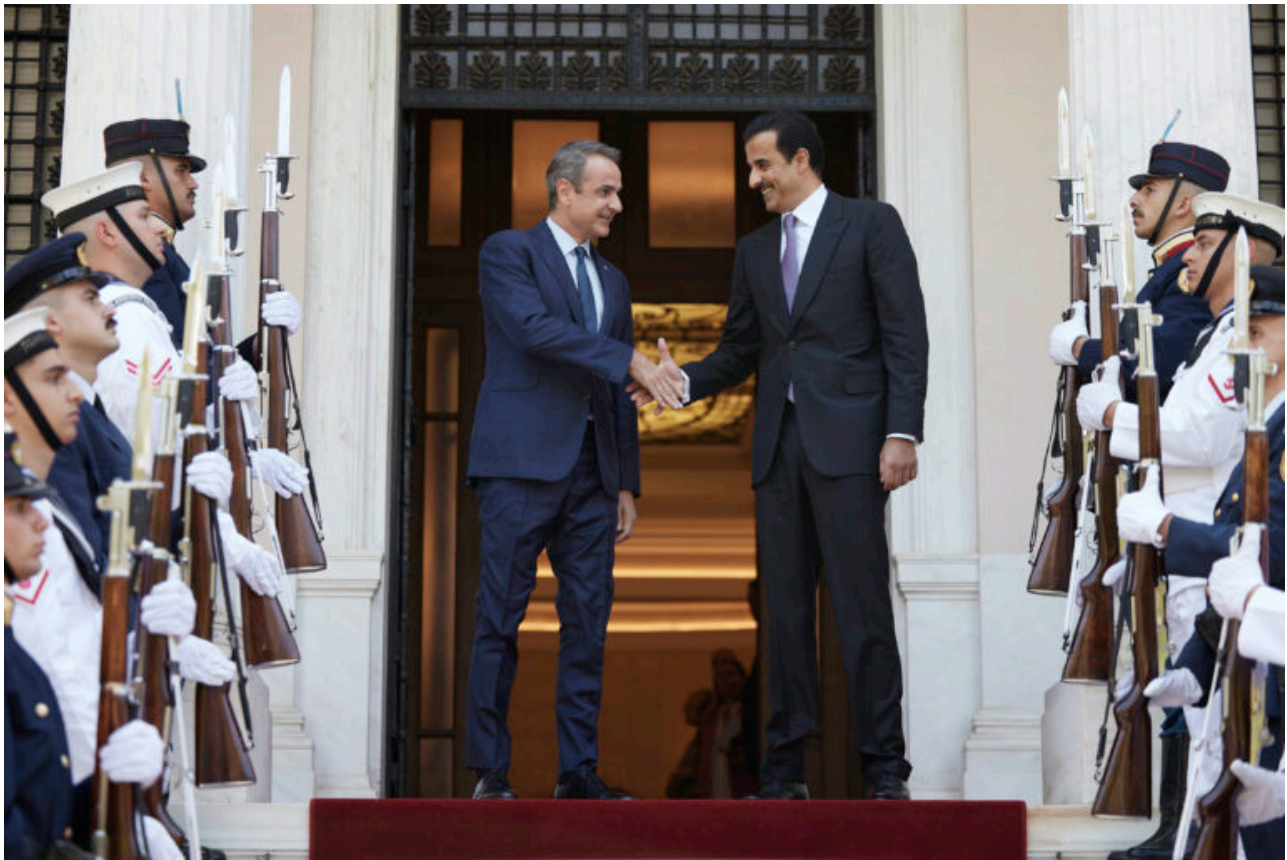


# EMIR IN GREECE AND CYPRUS



Political 04.06.24

Interview by ALEXIA TASOULI

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

POLITICAL.GR NEWSPAPER

**Athens, Friday 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2024:** Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad AlThani paid official visits to Cyprus and Greece this week, meeting with senior officials from both countries as part of efforts to expand cooperation. International energy expert Roudi Baroudi, CEO of Dohabased independent consultancy Energy and Environment Holding, sat down to answer a few questions about the outcome and significance of the emir's mission.

**Question:** Overall, how successful were HH the emir's visits to Greece and Cyprus?

Answer: Both visits appear to have been very fruitful. HH the emir and his delegation held constructive talks with their counterparts in both countries, and all sides came away with clearer understandings of where the already strong relationships should go next, and how they can get there. Several important first steps were taken toward identifying likely areas for further cooperation, and now both sides have the information they need to come up with proposals for the next steps on several fronts.

**Q: From your perspective, what are the main takeaways from HH the emir's trip?**

A: There are several elements at play here, multiple processes unfolding according to their own timelines, but all interrelated in some ways. The first thing to consider is that both visits constitute reaffirmations of Qatar's traditional diplomatic strategy, much of which revolves around having stable and friendly relations with as many counterparts as possible. That might sound a little basic, but it's really not: many governments "pick sides" in various international disputes, which often amounts to letting other countries decide your foreign policy for you. By contrast, the Qatari model seeks instead to be on good terms with all sides in most disputes, and the value of that approach has been on display for years: Doha has successfully used its good offices as a mediator in the past, and more recently it has done the same for ceasefire talks and other negotiations between Israel and Hamas.

This same philosophy also informs Qatar's stances in the Mediterranean, where it looks for the warmest possible relations with Greece and Cyprus while simultaneously maintaining close ties with Türkiye, with which both Athens and Nicosia have been at odds for decades. I should mention, too, that Cyprus follows a similar path, maintaining friendly

relations with both Israel and Lebanon, for example.

Both Cyprus and Greece also would like to play central roles in the development and buildout of facilities aimed at carrying energy to the European mainland. This is a core part of their respective plans to grow and develop their respective economies, and the necessary investment and expertise will require strong partnerships.

**Q: So how do these priorities tie in with the emir's visit?**

A: In several ways, really. First, HH the emir's goodwill visit is a reconnection: the COVID pandemic threw a lot of international issues into hibernation as governments everywhere spent a lot of time looking inward for several years. By visiting now, he's demonstrating in general that he values Qatar's relationships with both Cyprus and Greece. The reengagement also bodes well for particulars, and there are several opportunities for cooperation because the parties can help one another. Both Greece and Cyprus want to be part of plans to open new channels for natural gas into Europe, whether it's Eastern Mediterranean gas or from further afield. For this they could find no better partner than Qatar, which, in addition to its own worldleading LNG industry, has also been acquiring stakes in energy assets around the world. But both countries also want investment in other sectors, too, and once again, both the Qatar Investment Authority, the country's sovereign fund, and various private investors are on the hunt for moneymaking ventures.

**Q: What does the emir's trip mean for Greece, in particular?**

A: To me the time looks ripe for more cooperation. The period since 2007/2008 has been very difficult, but the current government under Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis has done

wonders, not just to stabilize the Greek economy and restore hope to the population, but also to help Greece regain its rightful place at the European table. The country is now looking to build on this foundation by fully embracing cutting-edge sectors like digital connectivity and cleantech, but also by reinvigorating its traditional shipping expertise by becoming a major logistics center and by getting more out of its hospitality sector, too. The long recession is over, and some asset classes look very attractive to Qatari investors – and others, as well – especially given the stronger, cleaner governance and leadership on which Mitsotakis has built his reputation.

**Q: What about Cyprus?**

A: Another European land of opportunity. All other things being equal, if the world operated according to logic instead of politics, Cyprus would already be a major energy hub. Its location makes it the ideal base for the Eastern Med's burgeoning offshore gas industry, which also includes strategic ports, telecoms, and other support services. Many analysts see real potential in several sectors, including ports, banking, and a host of technologies. The increased economic activity will also introduce more people to the beaches and other attractions that make the island's tourism industry so popular. Another ingredient is leadership: President Nikos Christodoulides has been in office for less than a year, but the former diplomat and foreign minister has already shown himself to be both a highly competent Head of State and a stern defender of his country's economic development & interests.

And all this is not to mention the shipping of the gas itself, for Cyprus is not just part of the European Union: it is also

very much an East Mediterranean country, so it stands to reason that it should become a gateway through which some of the world's newest gas producers can sell their wares into the world's largest gas market. Whether it's a pipeline to Greece, an LNG plant to supply customers in Asia and East Africa, or both, it's a no-brainer that Cyprus is the place to start the journey. To me, this is Cyprus' destiny, and if it's further Qatari investment that makes it happen, so much the better. Remember, too, that QatarEnergy is already involved in Cyprus' gas industry, partnering with ExxonMobil to explore two offshore blocks. The Qataris know the LNG business like no one else, and their robust & steady reliability as partners is unchallenged: in 2017-2021, despite an illegal blockade imposed by some of their neighbors, they continued to process and ship at the highest rates to keep supplying LNG to all of their customers around the world, helping to calm world markets during a very vulnerable period.

***“Baroudi, left, with Mitsotakis at the 2019 EUArab World Summit in Athens, before the latter became Greece's prime minister. According to Baroudi, Mitsotakis has done much to speed his country's recovery.”***



Finally, the role played by Qatar and its leaders has captured the attention of the international community due to the wise policies of the Ruler of the Gulf state. His efforts have been lauded and appreciated by East and West alike, ranging from visits of goodwill by the Emir to regional countries, to forging relations based on mutual respect and cooperation. It also has been noted that visits by the Emir tend to manifest high levels of support in mediation, bringing peace, providing materials or otherwise, as and when needed.

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# QatarEnergy to acquire two new exploration blocks offshore Egypt



QatarEnergy has signed a farm-in agreement with ExxonMobil to acquire a 40% participating interest in two exploration blocks offshore Egypt.

Under the terms of the agreement, which is subject to customary approvals by the government of Egypt, QatarEnergy will acquire a 40% working interest in each of the “Cairo” and

“Masry” Offshore Concession Agreements, while ExxonMobil (the Operator) will retain the remaining 60% working interest.

Commenting on the signing of this agreement, HE Minister of State for Energy Affairs, the President and CEO of QatarEnergy Eng. Saad bin Sherida Al Kaabi said: “I am pleased with our entry into the Cairo and Masry offshore exploration blocks as they expand QatarEnergy’s presence in the Arab Republic of Egypt and extend our ambitious exploration program in-country.”

“We look forward to working with our valued long-term strategic partner ExxonMobil, as well as with the Egyptian Natural Gas Holding Company (EGAS) and the Egyptian Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, in this promising and prospective region. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Egyptian authorities and our partners for their valuable support and cooperation,” His Excellency added.

The Cairo and Masry offshore exploration blocks were awarded to ExxonMobil in January 2023, and cover an area of approximately 11,400 square kilometers in water depths of 2,000 to 3,000 meters.

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## **Ras Laffan petchem complex to reinforce qatar’s position in global petrochemical industry**





Ras Laffan petrochemical complex to reinforce Qatar's position in global petrochemical industry.

Qatar's strong position in the global petrochemical industry will be further enhanced with the \$6bn Ras Laffan Petrochemical Complex, one of the largest in the world, will start production by the end of 2026.

By then, Qatar's overall petrochemical production capacity is estimated to touch 14mn tonnes a year.

The Ras Laffan Petrochemical Complex is Qatar Energy's largest investment ever in Qatar's petrochemical sector, and marks an important milestone in the country's downstream expansion strategy.

The petrochemical complex will not only facilitate further expansion in Qatar's downstream and petrochemical sectors, but will also reinforce the country's integrated position as a major global player in the upstream, LNG and downstream sectors.

The Ras Laffan Petrochemicals complex consists of an ethane cracker with a capacity of 2.1mn tonnes of ethylene per year. The 435-acre project site also includes two polyethylene

trains with a combined output of 1.7mn tonnes per year of high-density polyethylene (HDPE) polymer products. His Highness the Amir Sheikh 'Thmim bin Hamad al-Thani laid the foundation stone for the Ras Laffan Petrochemical Complex on February 19.

QatarEnergy has joined hands with Chevron Phillips Chemical Company (CPChem) on the project and created a joint venture, in which QatarEnergy will own a 70% equity share, and CPChem 30% stake.

In a few years, the Ras Laffan petrochemicals complex will help meet the rising global demand for high-density polyethylene, when the largest ethane cracker in the Middle East and one of the largest in the world begins production.

Polyethylene is used in the production of durable goods like pipe for natural gas and water delivery and recreational products such as kayaks and coolers. It is also used in packaging applications to protect and preserve food and keep medical supplies sterile.

The facility will be constructed with modern, energy-saving technology and use ethane for feedstock, which along with other measures, is expected to result in lower greenhouse gas emissions than similar global facilities.

The integrated olefins and polyethylene facility will be utilising "state-of-the-art design and technology" during its construction and operation to promote energy efficiency.

It is important to stress the unique environmental attributes of this world-scale complex. It will have lower waste and greenhouse gas emissions, when compared with similar global facilities.

The Ras Laffan Petrochemicals Complex will be utilising "state-of-the-art design and technology" during its construction and operation to promote energy efficiency.

The world-class construction, operation, and technology

standards planned at the complex are all designed to ensure energy savings, and significant reduction of emissions and hydrocarbon waste compared with similar global facilities. HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi said: “Our two companies (Qatar Energy and Chevron Phillips Chemical Company) are making sure we buy and implement the best technology available to reduce emissions. In the last 20 years or so, there has been a huge leap in emissions reduction and energy use. Wherever we can recycle, we will;’ Ras Laffan Petrochemical Complex will also have multiplier effects on Qatar’s economy as it is expected to generate significant economic benefits for the country including increased tax revenue and foreign investment.

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## **QatarEnergy drills 20+ appraisal wells past 10 years; confirms huge increase in NF gas reserves**

The drilling of more than 20 appraisal wells in the past 10 years using state-of-the-art technologies has confirmed significant increase in North Field (NF) gas reserves, to more than 2,000 trillion cubic feet, said HE the Minister of State for Energy affairs, Saad Sherida al-Kaabi.

Addressing a press conference at the QatarEnergy headquarters yesterday, al-Kaabi said, “I want to specifically mention the tireless work over the past two decades to evaluate the giant North Field and unlock its

potential, especially in sectors that were not covered extensively by previous drilling and evaluation work.”

Most recently, QatarEnergy has focused its efforts and attention on determining how far west the North Field extends in order to evaluate the production potential from those areas.

“We have continued geological and engineering studies and have drilled a number of appraisal wells in that area.

“I am pleased to announce today that, praise be to God, these great efforts have confirmed, through technical tests of the appraisal wells, the extension of the North Field’s productive layers further towards the west, which means the ability to produce significant quantities of gas from this new sector.

“Recent studies have shown that the North Field contains huge additional gas quantities in the North Field estimated at 240tn cubic feet, which raises Qatar’s gas reserves from 1,760tn cubic feet to more than 2,000tn cubic feet, and the condensates reserves from 70 to more than 80bn barrels, in addition to large quantities of liquefied petroleum gas, ethane, and helium.”

Al-Kaabi noted, “These are very important results of great dimensions that will take Qatar’s gas industry to new horizons, as they will enable us to begin developing a new LNG project from the North Field’s western sector with a production capacity of about 16 MTPY.

“As such, Qatar’s total LNG production will reach about 142MTPY when this new expansion is completed before the end of this decade. This represents an increase of almost 85% compared to current production levels. With the completion of this project, Qatar’s total hydrocarbon production will exceed 7.25mn barrels of oil equivalent per day.”

The minister revealed that QatarEnergy will immediately commence the basic engineering works necessary to ensure that the planned progress is achieved according to the approved schedule for this new project, which will be called the ‘North Field West’.

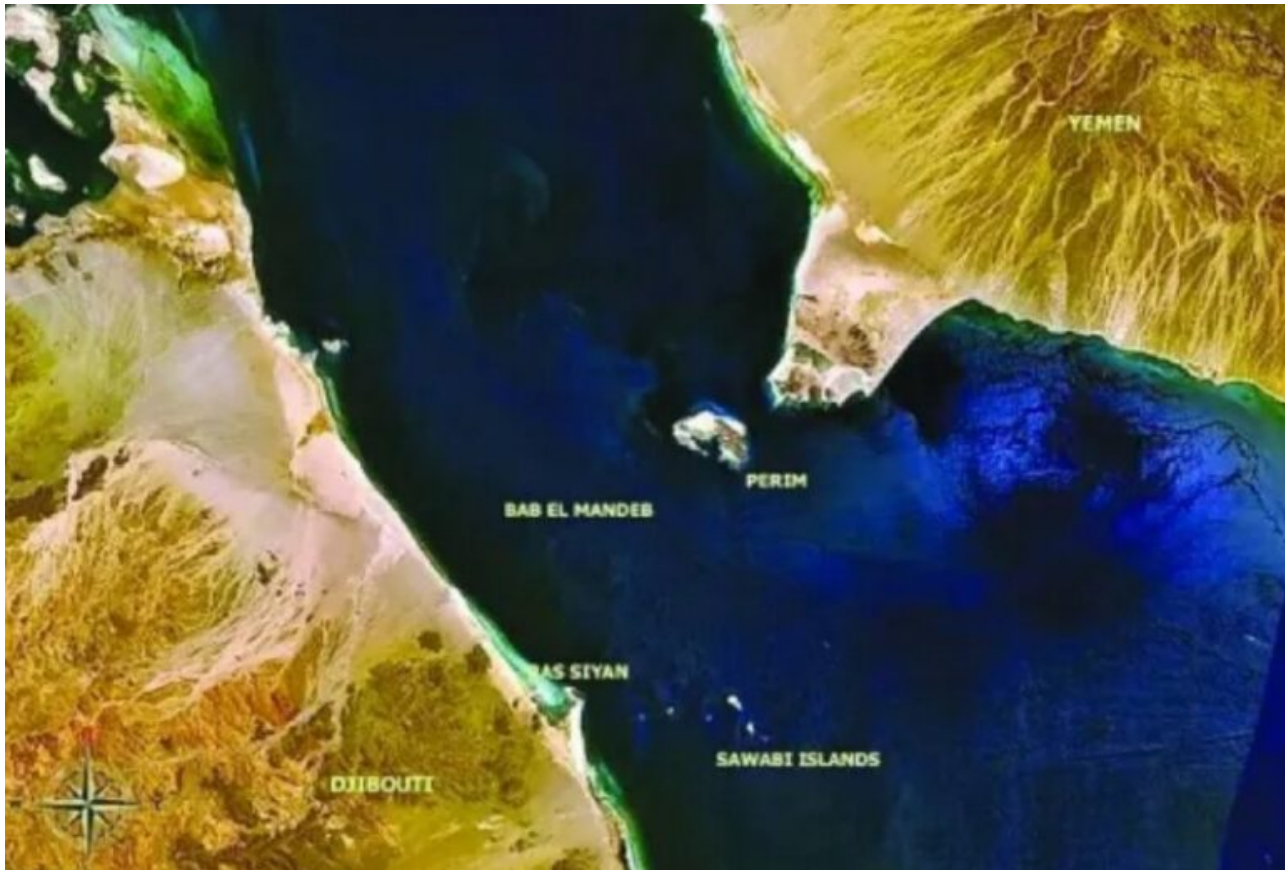
“These expansion project, which we are working to implement, aim to achieve optimal utilisation and management of our natural resources with the aim of contributing to what our wise leadership aspires to in terms of ensuring the economic and social well-being of current future generations of Qatar as articulated by the Qatar National Vision 2030.

“At the same time, these projects reaffirm QatarEnergy’s commitment to reinforce its global leadership in the production and supply of LNG and live up to its commitment to provide an economic, safe and reliable energy source, giving priority to environmental sustainability for a more prosperous and brighter future.”

Minister al-Kaabi also expressed his sincere thanks and gratitude to His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani for his wise leadership and guidance, and the unlimited support of Qatar’s energy sector.

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## **The War of the Straits: Impact on the World Energy Market**



By Roudi Baroudi, TLN Senior Fellow

The recent significant disruptions in shipping through the Strait of Bab el Mandeb, situated between Yemen and Djibouti, underscore the geopolitical fragility of the waterway akin to that of the more widely acknowledged Strait of Hormuz. Among the six globally sensitive passages, including the Bosphorus, the Panama Canal and Malacca, the Middle East region boasts three critical and strategic maritime routes: the Suez Canal, Bab el Mandeb in the south of the Red Sea, and the Strait of Hormuz.

These passages witness the transit of not only crude oil and petroleum products but also liquefied natural gas (LNG). Bab el Mandeb, with its unique characteristic as a transit route for both northbound and southbound traffic, plays a pivotal role. Approximately 12 percent of total seaborne quantities traded to Europe, the U.S. and key Asian markets, including China, India and Singapore, pass through the Bab el Mandeb Strait. Protecting the unimpeded flow of energy trade on a global scale is a vital commitment, essential for maintaining

it sustainable, affordable and securing supply to the world.

Reflecting on the 1960s, when the Suez Canal faced disruptions during and after the 1967 war, several nations, notably Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, collectively financed the construction of the SUMED pipeline. This double pipeline, stretching 320 kilometers from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean – passing entirely through Egypt, was instrumental in ensuring a continuous flow of approximately 2.5 million barrels of crude oil to Europe.

Saudi Aramco subsequently erected a dual pipeline from the Abqaiq Oil Field (in the east of the Kingdom) to the Yanbu Industrial Port (in the west), capable of transporting 5 to 7 million barrels per day. This strategic deterrent pipeline was a precautionary measure in case of a complete Strait of Hormuz closure. These initiatives not only protect the free trade of oil and gas but also underscore the significance of securing the unimpeded shipping of hydrocarbon products for reliable and secure energy trade.

In a similar vein, the U.S. has previously faced similar challenges and responded strategically. During the Tankers War, then-President Ronald Reagan initially ordered Kuwaiti tankers to be escorted, eventually extending the protection to all commercial ships navigating in and out of the Strait of Hormuz. This broad security measure included a 24-hour air surveillance conducted by AWACS planes.

Applying lessons learned, similar measures could be implemented in Bab el Mandeb, considering its geographical similarity to the Strait of Hormuz, with both having narrow coast-to-coast widths at specific points. The minimum width of the Strait of Hormuz is 21 nautical miles, while Bab el Mandeb measures around 19 miles.

The significance of energy transit choke points through narrow channels cannot be overstated. As one-half of the world's crude oil supply relies on maritime transportation, protecting



the free flow of oil and gas through maritime shipping routes is crucial for global energy price stability and security.

Dr. Roudi Baroudi, currently serves as CEO of Energy and Environment Holding, an independent consultancy based on Doha, has written extensively on the region, including “Maritime Boundaries in the Mediterranean: The Way Forward”, a 2021 book that called for the very sort of creative diplomacy used to reach the Lebanon-Israel agreement. His latest book – “Climate and Energy in the Mediterranean: What the Blue Economy Means for a Greener Future” (published by the TLN this year and distributed by Eurospan). Baroudi is also a Senior Fellow at the Transatlantic Leadership Network, a Washington, DC-based Think tank. He is a recipient of TLN’s 2023 “Leadership Award” for his ongoing work to promote peace and mutual cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean.

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**Qatar suggests three-point agenda for equitable, secure and sustainable energy transition**



Qatar has suggested three point-agenda, which includes greater investment in energy efficiency and low carbon innovation and coordinated policies and incentives, for equitable, secure and sustainable energy transition, which not only protects earth but also propels economic growth.

This suggestion was made by HE Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi, Minister of State for Energy Affairs, at the ministerial session of the 17th Gulf Petrochemicals and Chemicals Association (GPCA) forum in the presence of Abdulaziz bin Salman al-Saud, Minister of Energy, Saudi Arabia; and Salim bin Nasser bin Said al-Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, Oman.

Hamad Rashid al-Mohannadi, former general manager, Qatar Petrochemicals Company (QAPCO), was chosen for the fifth GPCA legacy award in recognition of extraordinary contributions to foster and strengthen the chemical industry.

The forum featured an exhibition that showcased new projects, industry journey, youth pavilion, sustainability district, cultural majlis and publications.

Highlighting that secure, equitable sustainable energy transition will not only help protect the planet but also provide economic growth; al-Kaabi said “to achieve this goal, we need to remain focused on three important areas that are essential in energy transitioning.”

The first and foremost, according to him, was the greater

investment in energy efficiency and low carbon innovation. This includes renewable energy integration, carbon capture and sequestration, low carbon solutions for reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and the carbon intensity in the chemical manufacturing, he said.

Other areas include optimising resources use, waste reduction, waste management and developing circular economies through improving recycling and the reuse of materials.

"We need coordinated policies and incentives to support the petrochemical industry's success," al-Kaabi said.

Terming the third enabler as awareness; he said it was not fair to put the onus on energy producers alone as there was a need for the real story to be told within workforce, across societies and among consumers about the critical role chemical industries plays in bettering lives worldwide.

In Qatar, the growth and evolution of petrochemical industry has been on a steady path of success, al-Kaabi said, adding the country is building the world's largest blue ammonia plant with annual 1.2mn tonnes capacity.

"This plant will be most sustainable facility of its kind. As part of this project, we are implementing CCS technologies to capture and sequester 1.2mn tonnes of carbon dioxide. Furthermore, the electricity for this project comes from a solar power plant currently under construction," he said.

He reminded that QatarEnergy in partnership with Chevron Phillips recently announced the start of the construction of two ethane crackers with a capacity of more than 2mn tonnes per annum each, one in Qatar and one in the US. The expected start is before the end of 2026, he added.

The Saudi oil minister said the demand for petrochemicals is expected to grow by more than 50% by 20240 with demand for basic chemicals such as ethylene and propylene slated to expand more than 60%, quoting market report and analysts.

The sector is also advancing through innovative technologies to maximise the yield of crude oil, he added.

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# **QatarEnergy integrates marketing activities of QatarEnergy LNG**



QatarEnergy has integrated all marketing and marketing-related activities formerly managed by QatarEnergy LNG (previously Qatargas).

This is a major move towards consolidating QatarEnergy's position as a global energy leader and an important milestone to enhance the effectiveness of LNG (liquefied natural gas) marketing and sales from Qatar.

"Today's announcement is another important milestone that firmly positions QatarEnergy on the road to becoming one of the best energy companies in the world. This strategic step will enable us to deliver an unparalleled value proposition that is the backbone of our global reputation as a reliable and trustworthy energy provider," said HE Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi, the Minister of State for Energy Affairs, also the

President and CEO of QatarEnergy

With this integration, QatarEnergy leverages a combined set of technical, commercial, and financial capabilities to create an enhanced centre of excellence for the marketing and sale of all energy products exported from Qatar.

The move places QatarEnergy in a unique position to deliver unparalleled service and value to its customers and stakeholders, hence, reinforcing QatarEnergy's commitment to delivering excellence.

With this integration, QatarEnergy will offer an even more diversified and integrated portfolio of products and services, ensuring a seamless and enhanced customer experience. It will also be the sole point of contact for Qatar's existing and prospective energy customers globally.

"We all look forward to their continued commitment and dedication that will further strengthen Qatar's global LNG offering and generate value from a unified customer and stakeholder interface," al-Kaabi said.

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## **Regional Energy Expert Roudi Baroudi Earns Award from Washington Think Tank**





## **Transatlantic Leadership Network Recognizes Author for Contributions to Peaceful Development in Eastern Mediterranean**

WASHINGTON, DC November 9, 2023: Doha-based Lebanese author Roudi Baroudi was one of two people presented with the 2023 Transatlantic Leadership Award at a ceremony in Washington this week.

Although circumstances relating to the conflict in the Gaza Strip prevented Baroudi from attending the event, both he and Joshua Volz – the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Europe, Eurasia, Africa, and the Middle East and the Office of International Affairs at the US Department of Energy – were recognized by the Transatlantic Leadership Network (TLN). Each was cited at a gala dinner on Monday for his “valuable contribution in building a peaceful and prosperous Eastern Mediterranean” as part of the TLN’s 2nd Annual Conference on Freedom of the Media.

“I was deeply honored to be named a recipient of this prestigious award, and I will always be grateful for the many ways in which the TLN has supported my work for several years now,” Baroudi said. “I also look forward to working together in the future so that one day, our descendants can know the benefits of peace and coexistence. It is precisely in difficult and trying times that cooler heads must be able and willing to look at the reasons for current bloodshed and recrimination, then envision pathways to a better future.”

Baroudi, who serves as CEO of independent consultancy Energy and Environment Holding in Doha, is a long-time champion of dialogue, cooperation, and practical solutions to both the global climate crisis and recurrent tensions in the East Med. A regular speaker at regional energy and policy conferences, Baroudi’s insights are also avidly sought by local and international media, as well as governments, major energy companies, and investors.

Having advised both public and private sector actors on a wide variety of energy issues, Baroudi is widely credited with bringing unique perspective to all manner of policy discussions. He is the author of several books, including “Maritime Disputes in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Way Forward” (2021), and “Climate and Energy in the Mediterranean: What the Blue Economy Means for a Greener Future” (2022). Together with Notre-Dame University – Louaize, Baroudi has also published a study of the US-brokered October 2022 Maritime Boundary Agreement between Lebanon and Israel, and is currently preparing another volume on Lebanon’s prospects for similar deals with Cyprus and Syria.

The TLN describes itself as “a nonpartisan, independent, international network of practitioners, private sector leaders and policy analysts dedicated to strengthening and reorienting transatlantic relations to the rapidly changing dynamics of a globalizing world.”



Monday's ceremony was attended by a broad cross-section of high-profile figures, including senior officials from the Departments of Energy and State, numerous members of Washington's extensive diplomatic corps, and representatives of both international organizations and various media outlets.

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## Transport minister leads team to Tbilisi Belt and Road Forum



Qatar is participating with a delegation headed by HE the Minister of Transport and Communications Jassim Seif Ahmed al-Sulaiti in the Tbilisi Belt and Road Forum, which was inaugurated on Tuesday in Tbilisi, Georgia, under the theme: "Partnership for Global Impact".

Inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Georgia, Giorgi Gakharia, on Tuesday, the forum saw the attendance of over 2,000 participants from 60 countries, including heads of states, ministers, diplomats and representatives of international and business organisations.

In his opening speech, Gakharia stressed the importance of the new Silk Road in modern economic integration and globalisation, saying that the participation in the initiative is among the top priorities of the Georgian government.

Georgia was one of the first countries applauding the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to create new trade corridors between Europe and Asia and improve existing ones, he said.

The Tbilisi Silk Road Forum, he said, is “an important opportunity” and a platform on which the countries involved in the BRI, international organisations and the private sector discuss regional economic challenges and explore ways to overcome the challenges and share experience.

The forum is being held for the third time in Tbilisi.

It is opened by the Prime Minister of Georgia and organised by the Georgian ministries of foreign affairs, economy and sustainable development and supported by China and the Asian Development Bank.

The mission of the forum is to serve as an international platform for multilateral high-level dialogue among senior policymakers, businesses and community leaders to discuss important issues on trade and connectivity, examine challenges facing countries along the New Silk Road connecting East and West, and find common solutions that have a positive impact on the region and the global economy.

Day 1 provides opportunities to discuss a full spectrum of issues related to trade, artificial intelligence (AI),

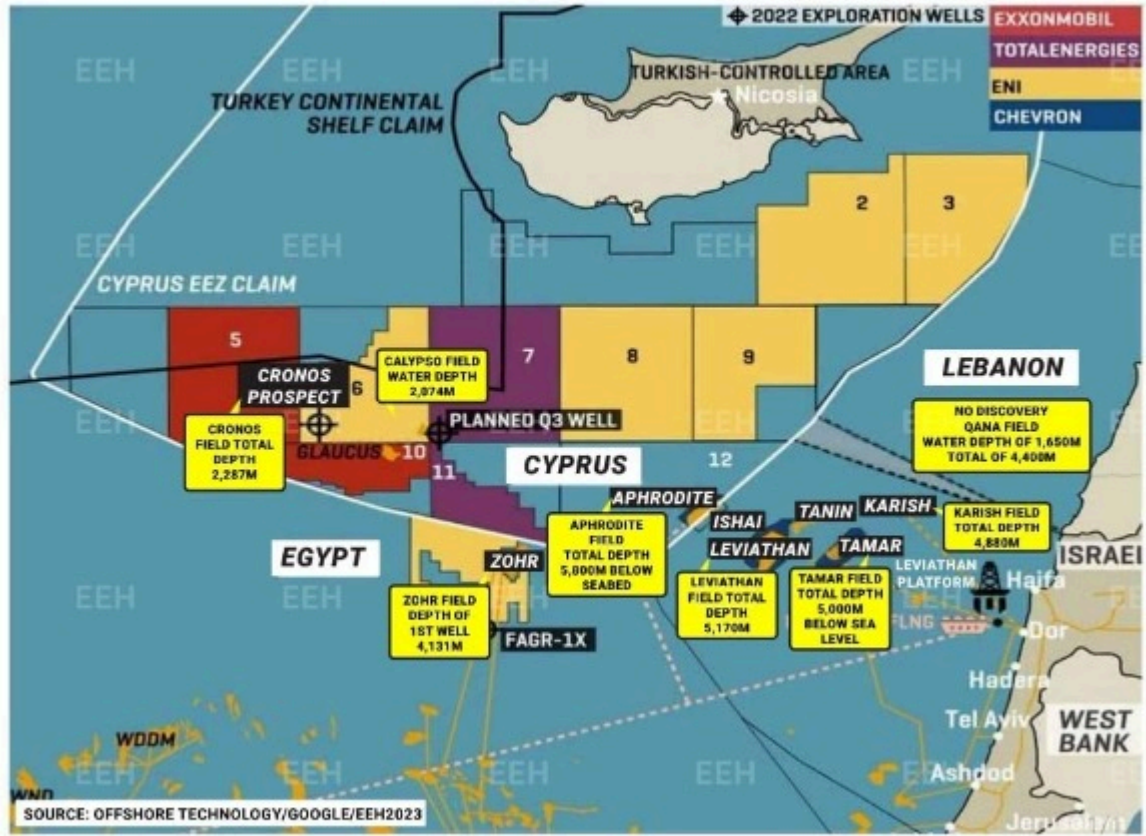
transport and energy in separate panel discussions, and Day 2 focuses on the private sector and investment opportunities in Georgia.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Gakharia met HE al-Sulaiti in Tbilisi on Tuesday. The meeting reviewed bilateral relations between Qatar and Georgia in the fields of transportation, mobility and communications and means of further enhancing them, in addition to discussing a number of topics of common interest.

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**بارودي مُصرّ على التفاؤل  
وينشر الخارطة: اكتشاف الغاز لا  
يكون دائماً من خلال حفر البئر  
الاول**

## EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN GAS PLAY: AVERAGE OF SEAWATER DEPTH FOR GAS DISCOVERIES WELLS



بارودي مٌصرّ على التفاؤل وينشر الخارطة: اكتشاف الغاز لا يكون دائماً من خلال حفر البئر الاول

الدراسات والأبحاث تؤكد ان احتمالات اكتشاف الغاز في المياه اللبنانية مرتفعة جداً

”خاص“ اخبار اليوم

أكد الخبير في شؤون الطاقة رودي بارودي أن القصة لم تنته مع عدم اكتشاف الغاز في البئر الاول إذ أنه من المهم جداً معرفة أن كل بلوك بحري يجب تقسيمه إلى عدد من الآبار ومن الطبيعي جداً أن تقوم شركات الاستكشاف بحفر آبار عدة قبل اكتشاف البئر الرئيسي الذي يحتوي على مخزون تجاري من الغاز .

و في حديث الى وكالة ”أخبار اليوم“، اوضح بارودي إنه لم ييأس من عدم اكتشاف الغاز في البئر الأول، ذلك أن أكبر حقل للغاز في البحر المتوسط الذي هو حقل ”طهر“ والذي يقع في منطقة بلوك شرق في مصر، ويمتد على الحدود بين مصر وقبرص. كانت حقوق استغلال هذا

الحقل تعود لشركة شل لمدة 15 عاماً ، وخلال هذه الفترة قامت الشركة بحفر العديد من الآبار ولكنها لم تنجح في العثور على أي كميات من الغاز حتى قامت ببيع حقوق الاستكشاف لشركة إيني الإيطالية في عام 2015، التي بدورها حفرت بئراً واحداً على عمق 5100 متر لتجد أكبر مخزون من الغاز في شرق المتوسط والمقدر بـ 850 مليار متر مكعب.

ورأى بارودي أن هذا الأمر يشير إلى أن اكتشاف الغاز لا يكون دائماً من خلال حفر البئر الأول. وقد تكرر هذا الأمر مع حقول الغاز في قبرص إذ إنه لم تكتشف أي كمية من الغاز التجاري في البئر الأول، علماً أن حقل أفروديت في قبرص والقريب من لبنان احتاجت شركة نوبل لحفر بئر على عمق 5800 متر لكي تجد الغاز، والخريطة المرفقة تبين الأعماق في البحر في كل من قبرص واسرائيل ومصر للحقول المستكشفة ومنها: كاريش (٤٨٨٠ متر) ، تمار (٥٠٠٠ متر) ، لفثيان (٥١٧٠ متر) ، افروديت (٥٨٠٠ متر) ، كرونوس (٢٢٨٧ متر) ، طُهر (٤١٣١ متر) ، (كاليبسو (٢٠٧٤ متر).

من هنا من غير الجائز علمياً القول بأنه لا يوجد كميات من الغاز التجاري في البلوك 9 إذ أن عملية الاستكشاف لم تشمل لغاية تاريخه إلا بئراً واحداً وعلى عمق فقط 3500 متر.

أما عن وجود مؤامرة تقوم بها شركات التنقيب، فقال بارودي: من المؤسف أن بعض المحللين وخبراء النفط يتحدثون عن مؤامرة يقوم بها الكونسورتيوم المكون من شركات عالمية وهي إيني، توتال، وقطر للطاقة وهي من الشركات العملاقة في مجال الطاقة والتي لا تدخل في البازار السياسي ولديها مصالح في كل بلاد العالم.

واضاف: علينا أن نستفيد من وجودها في لبنان بدل اتهامها ورمي الشائعات عليها. ولكن من الممكن أن يؤثر الوضع العام الحالي، وخصوصاً أن الحرب دائرة على حدودنا أن تقوم الشركات بتعليق أنشطتها مؤقتاً ريثما تنجلي الصورة.

وتابع: الاتفاق المبرم بين الدولة اللبنانية والكونسورتيوم المكلف بالاستكشاف ينص على أن تقوم الشركات بحفر اثنين من آبار الاستكشاف قبل أن يتخذ قرار بشأن وجود الغاز أو عدمه. من هنا، فأن بث الأجواء السلبية وفكرة المؤامرة لا تفيد لبنان بشيء، بل على العكس علينا المثابرة بالعمل للحفاظ على حقوقنا.

وختم: كما من واجب الحكومة والمجلس النيابي المباشرة فوراً بالاصلاحيات المالية والاقتصادية المطلوبة من لبنان لكي نستطيع أن

نواكب عمليات الاستكشاف، فلا تذهب الثروة النفطية الموعودة في نهر الفساد الجارف الذي نعاني منه.