

Opec+ gets scant relief from vaccine as ministers meet



Bloomberg/London

Oil markets may be cheering the prospects of a coronavirus vaccine, but Opec+ can't celebrate. Crude prices have rallied to a 10-week high on hopes that Pfizer Inc and BioNTech SE's breakthrough could soon revive the flights, car journeys and other economic activity that underpin fuel consumption.

Nonetheless, the alliance of producers is discussing a delay of the supply boost they'd hoped to make in January. Oil demand is currently suffering a fresh blow from a resurgence of the pandemic.

Ministers are focused on a postponement of three to six months, according to delegates familiar with the talks who asked not to be identified. They'll hold an interim meeting on Tuesday to review the market, then make a final decision in a further two weeks.

Frightening pullback

"This is the wrong time to be increasing crude supply," Bob

McNally, president of consultant Rapidan Energy Group and a former White House official, said in a Bloomberg television interview. "They really almost have no choice now but to postpone. The demand pullback in Europe is frightening."

While the vaccine progress relieves some of the pressure on the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, it won't provide a significant boost to demand until the second half of 2021 next year, according to the International Energy Agency in Paris. Economic fallout from the latest wave of lockdowns will linger, Opec said in a report. The 23-nation alliance had intended to ease some of the unprecedented supply curbs introduced in May to offset the collapse in demand, restoring 2mn barrels a day of output at the start of next year. They made a similar increase over the summer as the global economy recovered, and hoped that the trend would continue.

But in recent weeks Opec+ members have acknowledged those aspirations look unfeasible. Instead, the producers look set to keep about 7.7mn barrels a day – roughly 8% of global supply – off-line for a little longer.

Critical cut

Deferring the supply boost – and thus supporting prices – may be critical for Opec+ nations, many of which need oil prices far above the current level of \$43 a barrel in order to cover government spending. It would also throw a lifeline to the wider industry, from majors like Exxon Mobil Corp to independent companies in the US shale patch.

Saudi Arabian energy minister said on November 9 the producers can "tweak this agreement" as required. Algeria, which holds Opec's rotating presidency, and group secretary-general Mohammad Barkindo made similar remarks.

Even Russia, usually reluctant to forego oil sales, has signaled support. President Vladimir Putin said on October 22 that delay was an option, and even gestured at the possibility of making deeper production cuts if necessary. Further curbs don't appear needed so far, delegates say. "The lockdowns in Europe and what that will mean for demand will be very much on

their mind,” Daniel Yergin, vice chairman at IHS Markit, said in a Bloomberg Television interview. “The easiest thing for them to do, and as President Putin signalled, is to roll it over.”

While the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee that convenes on Tuesday won't set policy, Riyadh and Moscow may give some insight into their thinking before the main ministerial meetings on November 30 to December 1.

Supply headache

Faltering demand isn't the only headache for the alliance, which is also having to reckon with a surprising increase in supply from one of its own members.

Libya, which is exempt from the agreement to restrain production, has revived output to the highest level in almost a year after a truce in its civil war. The North African nation tripled supply to 450,000 barrels a day last month, and is now pumping above 1 million a day.

The case for extending curbs, though persuasive, could still run into opposition.

One flash-point may be the millions of barrels of outstanding cuts still due from some members, which were supposed to be completed by the end of the year.

Opec+ nations that flouted their output quotas in the initial months of the agreement, such as Iraq and Nigeria, have been tasked with “compensation cuts.” After making some tentative efforts at these, Baghdad defiantly ramped exports back up last month.

GECF ministers upbeat on

natural gas outlook despite pandemic



GECF

The full promise of natural gas will unfold once the world is past the coronavirus pandemic, upbeat energy ministers of the leading gas exporting countries said at a recent GECF 'Ministerial Roundtable' held virtually

The full promise of natural gas will unfold once the world is past the coronavirus pandemic, upbeat energy ministers of the leading gas exporting countries said at a GECF Ministerial Roundtable held recently.

Natural gas is available in abundance, flexible enough to reach far-flung corners of the globe and less polluting to the environment.

As a sideline event to the 22nd Ministerial Meeting held under the auspices of Algeria recently, the virtual dialogue aimed to confront the array of challenges brought on by Covid-19 and the opportunities that are expected to propel natural gas to the top of the global energy mix by 2050.

The gathering of policymakers from the 20-member grouping featured two separate themes of short- and long-term perspectives, with the first session held under the title of "Natural gas in a post-Covid-19 world: A short-term view", and the second entitled "Natural gas: a transition fuel or a

destination?”

The first session was moderated by Stuart Elliot (S&P Global Platts) while Dr Bassam Fattouh (Oxford Institute for Energy Studies) was the second session moderator.

In his opening speech, Abdelmadjid Attar, Minister of Energy of Algeria, said, “I wish to underline the important role of natural gas in satisfying world energy needs. Natural gas is widely available. It is clean. It improves air quality, emits much less carbon dioxide than coal. It is flexible. These qualities of natural gas are recognised by many, if not all”

Attar, whose country is regarded as a pioneer in LNG with the first liquefaction plant commissioning in Arzew, Algeria in 1964, considered access to modern energy and protection of environment as two pressing issues.

“We need to ensure that the pandemic will not hinder progress on these two challenges. I wish to encourage the gas industry to strengthen its efforts in dealing with the issue of methane emission. This is important for natural gas to play a more important role in the energy transition that the world has engaged in,” explained Attar, while adding that Algeria’s vast gas resource will witness \$20bn worth of investment in the next years.

GECF secretary general Yury Sentyurin advanced these comments by noting that natural gas is an energy option that achieves a harmonious balance between the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainable development.

“GECF members are committed to strengthen global energy security as reliable suppliers of natural gas in order to meet the world’s growing energy demand. They showcased remarkable determination in their fulfilment of all contractual obligations to the customers. This indicates confidence in the strength of their economies and abilities to absorb major economic crises, notwithstanding numerous challenges and decline in revenues,” Sentyurin noted.

GECF’s Global Gas Outlook 2050 shows natural gas is growing at its fastest-ever rate and will become the largest global primary energy source by mid-century, from 23% today to 28% 2050.

Long-term demand is expected to grow by a remarkable 50%, from 3,950bn cubic metres (bcm) in 2019 to 5,920bcm in 2050.

Asia Pacific, North America, and the Middle East will carry

more than 75% of this expected spur in demand. Whilst the future looks promising, the short-term outlook seems dotted with perils for an industry being troubled by oversupply, bulging inventory, and now an economic recession. Experts at the Roundtable noted that in 2020, for the first time in more than a decade, global gas consumption was expected to decline by 2 – 3.5% from the 2019 level. This slump in gas consumption has been driven by a combination of notable events, including above-normal temperatures in the northern hemisphere, weaker gas demand from the power, commercial, and industrial sectors due to lockdown measures, and weaker economic growth. Next year, global gas demand is expected to grow between 1.5 – 4%, but will depend mainly on the extent of lockdown measures associated with the resurgence of the pandemic, the recovery in gas demand lost due to Covid-19, as well as the weather condition in the upcoming winter. For the medium term, sustained growth in developing Asian countries, particularly China and India, are expected to contribute to an uptick in gas consumption in the coming years.

Mediterranean crisis calls for ‘civilized solution’, energy expert tells EU-Arab gathering



'Do we want the benefits of our own rightful shares more than we want to deny the same benefits to our neighbors?'

ATHENS, Greece: The latest legal and technological tools can resolve rival claims in the Mediterranean without anyone firing a shot, a veteran of the region's energy industry told a conference in Athens on Monday.

"We have both the legal mechanisms and the high-precision mapping technologies to draw up fair and equitable boundaries at sea," Roudi Baroudi said in a speech to the 5th European Union Arab World Summit. "That means that countries in the Mediterranean region can settle their differences amicably, setting aside the costly and ultimately self-defeating ways of war."

Appearing via Zoom from Doha, Qatar, Baroudi said the region had a long history of spawning great civilizations, but that each of these had squandered their good fortune by make war on their neighbors.

Thanks to huge deposits of natural gas having been found beneath the Mediterranean, he noted, "the region faces another

crossroads”, largely because “the vast majority of maritime boundaries in the Mediterranean remain unresolved.” With neighboring states laying claim to the same undersea real estate, Baroudi said the resulting “patchwork of claims and counter-claims” only served to hamper all parties by jeopardizing their respective offshore oil and gas activities.

With more than four decades in the business – including significant experience in both the public and private sectors – Baroudi has become a leading proponent of the East Med’s emergence as a major energy producer. Having long argued that safe and responsible exploitation of the resource in question would allow regional countries to make historic gains, both at home and abroad, his most recent interventions have focused on how to draw fair and equitable boundaries at sea. In fact, his book “Maritime Disputes in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Way Forward” is widely regarded as the most authoritative guide to the current situation.

Currently serving as CEO of Energy and Environment Holding, an independent consultancy based in Doha, Baroudi said all parties need to be honest with themselves by answering single question: “do we want the benefits of our own rightful shares more than we want to deny the same benefits to our neighbors?”

Those that want to focus on getting their share, he argued, need to put their faith in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

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

He also is the author of “Maritime Disputes in the Eastern Mediterranean: the Way Forward”, published earlier this year by the Transatlantic Leadership Network and distributed by the Brookings Institution Press.

5th EU- Arab World Summit – Maritime Borders in the Mediterranean: the Cradle of Civilization Deserves a Civilized Solution



FOR TURKEY AND GREECE, SHARED

TRAGEDY COULD SAVE LIVES IN THE LONG RUN



By Roudi Baroudi

The deadly earthquake that struck Greece and Turkey on Friday has brought out the best in the two countries' leaders, who have exchanged not only condolences, but also offers of assistance.

Like other natural disasters, this one showed no regard for national borders. Most of the casualties and damage took place in the Turkish city of Izmir, but the epicenter was located beneath the seabed in Greek waters, and the two Greek youths who perished did so on the island of Samos, which lies less than 2 kilometers off the Turkish coast. Far from discriminating between the two neighbors, then, the quake was a (literally) jarring reminder that their fates are inextricably intertwined.

And yet, the mutual goodwill expressed by Turkish President

Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis owed most of its newsworthiness to the acrimony which has otherwise defined their relationship of late: most of their recent exchanges have involved accusations and even thinly veiled threats over rival territorial claims at sea.

The dispute is not new, but in recent years its urgency has grown exponentially due to discoveries of enormous oil and (mostly) gas deposits in the Eastern Mediterranean. Far from eliciting offers to exchange resources and expertise – in a deepwater setting that will require massive upfront investment and world-class technical capabilities – the two sides have approached the matter as zero-sum game. Each is behaving as though any gains it achieves can only come by inflicting equal-size losses on the other, but given the realities of the dispute, nothing could be further from the truth.

Already, the mere fact of their having not progressed to negotiate a maritime border treaty – one allowing both parties to get on with the businesses of exploration and development in their respective zones, and perhaps in some joint areas as well – is costing a lot of money, and not just in terms of time lost to unnecessary delay. The absence of an agreement also means that whenever the Turks send their seismic research vessel, the Oruc Reis, to study the seabed in disputed waters, they also have to bear the cost of an armed escort. They may take solace in the fact that the Greek are also paying heavily to monitor their activities, but there are no winners in such a contest. Both countries are only ensuring that whoever eventually finds, extracts, and sells the resources in question, the venture will have been less profitable than it should have been.

Similar obstacles apply to just about any scenario in which Athens and Ankara fail to delineate a mutually acceptable border and try to act unilaterally. Investors loath uncertainty, so any offshore blocks they auction off will fetch less money than they would if the dispute were settled.

Underwriters are equally suspicious of oil and gas operations in potential war zones, which means that even if insurance can be obtained for ships, drilling rigs, and any other equipment, the price is likely to be exorbitant – and this is not to mention the cost of liability coverage relating to life and limb, environmental consequences, etc.

Why would anyone opt for such a murky, risky, and uncertain venture when a much clearer, safer, and surer one is so close at hand? From any conventional business perspective, the far superior route is to negotiate a mutually beneficial solution that gives both parties the ability to make plans and implement them without fear of delay or interference.

A generation or two ago, there might have been an excuse for one or both countries to question the advisability of an early settlement, but not anymore: not when the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) sets out clear standards for the fair and equitable resolution of maritime boundary disputes; not when satellite imagery and data processing technologies allow virtually all nation-states to obtain high-precision maps ahead of time; not when we have such an extensive background of previous cases and established precedent to indicate in advance what an eventual settlement will look like.

If they have not already done so, both countries can commission a company like Fugro to carry out a Law of the Sea study and, within a few weeks, know within a few centimeters where their maritime boundaries should lie. If there are compelling reasons to alter the legal or data inputs that produce these results, they can negotiate swaps and/or designate certain areas for joint management or even shared sovereignty. Whatever the solution, it will be better than the bellicose rhetoric and high-seas brinkmanship on which they have recently relied.

Right now the priority has to be on search and rescue, saving

any lives that can still be saved, taking care of those made homeless by the quake, and determining the full extent of the damage caused by the quake. Nothing should delay this process.

Once the danger has passed and the vulnerable have been secured, however, Greece and Turkey should follow their own example in this post-quake period by moving to defuse tensions and start talking about how to resolve their differences quickly, practically, and peacefully. Why waste any more time, expend any more resources, or risk any more lives when a negotiated solution is so easily obtainable?

Roudi Baroudi, a four-decade veteran of the energy business and CEO of Doha-based Energy and Environment Holding, is the author of “Maritime Disputes in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Way Forward”, published by the Transatlantic Leadership Network and distributed by the Brookings Institution Press.



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

He also is the author of “Maritime Disputes in the Eastern Mediterranean: the Way Forward”, published earlier this year by the Transatlantic Leadership Network and distributed by the Brookings Institution Press.

ترسيم الحدود البحرية ينطلق وبارودي لـ"النهار": الاجتهادات الدولية تساعدنا للحصول على كامل الحقوق



يشهد مقر "اليونيفيل" في الناقورة اليوم إنطلاق الجلسة الافتتاحية للمفاوضات بين الجانبين اللبناني والاسرائيلي حول الحدود البحرية، والتي يستضيفها المنسق الخاص للأمم المتحدة في لبنان يان كوبيتش في حضور الوفدين اللبناني والاسرائيلي. كما يشارك في الجلسة مساعد وزير الخارجية الأميركي لشؤون الشرق الأدنى ديفيد شنكر على ان ينضم اليها ايضا السفير جون ديروشر، الذي سيكون الوسيط الأميركي لهذه المفاوضات.

بعد انتظار دام اكثر من عشر سنين، ينتظر ان تبدأ مفاوضات ترسيم الحدود البحرية بين لبنان واسرائيل. وهذا المشهد في حال كتبت له نهاية سعيدة سيستفيد منه لبنان في مجالات اقتصادية ووطنية مختلفة. ولن تكون المفاوضات سهلة بل يمكن وصفها بالصعبة والجادة، هذا ما يؤكد الخبير الدولي في شؤون النفط والغاز رودي بارودي في حديث لـ"النهار"، مشددا على "ضرورة التفاف الجميع حول الوفد اللبناني" الذي يضم العميد الركن الطيار بسام ياسين رئيسا، العقيد الركن البحري مازن بصبوص، عضو هيئة ادارة قطاع البترول وسام شباط، والخبير في القانون الدولي نجيب مسيحي الذي يعمل مع قيادة الجيش

في المواضيع المتعلقة بالخرائط، المطلوب هو تأمين الدعم الكامل للجيش اللبناني في هذه المفاوضات، خصوصا ان التوصل الى اتفاق سيكون انتصارا لكل اللبنانيين كونه يؤدي حتما الى تسريع الاستفادة من الثروات النفطية والغازية الكامنة في عمق البحر، كما يسهل التفاوض مع الجانب القبرصي للتوصل إلى اتفاق نهائي معه أيضا. ويعتبر بارودي ان "الجهود التي بذلها رئيس مجلس النواب نبيه بري طوال السنوات الماضية لوضع اطار صلب للمفاوضات هو جهد اساسي وله اثر ايجابي على لبنان، وبالتالي فإن اي جدل حول ما قام به الرئيس بري لن يساعد في المفاوضات بل على العكس سوف يحرم لبنان اوراقا رابحة هو بأمس الحاجة اليها".

ويضيف ان "الحل السلمي سواء عبر المفاوضات المباشرة او غير المباشرة، كما هي الحال بين لبنان واسرائيل، للنزاعات الحدودية البحرية يساعد البلدان الساحلية على الاستفادة من الموارد البحرية"، لافتا إلى أن "أدوات الحل بسيطة ومتاحة بسهولة وهناك سوابق واجتهادات كثيرة تدل على ذلك". ويشير الى دور للولايات المتحدة الأميركية في هذا المجال، ويقول إنه "نظرا الى حال الحرب بين لبنان واسرائيل لعبت الادارة الاميركية دورا كبيرا طوال السنوات الماضية لوضع اطار ناجح ومفيد للبدء بالمفاوضات، خصوصا انها الدولة الوحيدة التي تستطيع ان تكون صلة وصل بين الطرفين"، مشددا على الدور الأساسي للأمم المتحدة، ومعتبرا أنه "في المسائل المشابهة تتبنى الحكومات المعنية بشكل كلي المبدأ الأساسي للأمم المتحدة والنظام الدولي برمته والذي تم العمل عليه منذ الحرب العالمية الثانية: أي الحل السلمي للنزاعات. بمجرد اقرار هذا المبدأ سيكون هناك مزيج منطقي من القانون والعلوم والتكنولوجيا يجعل ترسيم الحدود ولا سيما منها البحرية عملية بسيطة وسهلة يستفيد منها جميع الأطراف. فاتفاقية الأمم المتحدة لقانون البحار وتأثيرها المتزايد جعل من قواعدها ومعاييرها أساسا لجميع المفاوضات والاتفاقات البحرية، كما ان التقدم الذي أحرز أخيرا في مجال العلم والتكنولوجيا لا سيما مجال رسم الخرائط الدقيقة، وسع نطاق المبادئ التوجيهية لاتفاقية الأمم المتحدة لقانون البحار لايجاد تسوية للمنازعات التي تستند إليها". وفي هذا السياق، يؤكد بارودي انه "عند اتباع الدول الساحلية المبادئ والممارسات المنصوص عليها في اتفاقية الأمم المتحدة لقانون البحار، فعليها ان تلتزم أيضا قواعد وأنظمة محددة وان تستند إلى الجوانب العلمية والقانونية لتنفيذ هذه الإجراءات بموجب المبادئ التوجيهية الرسمية المحددة من قبل الأمم المتحدة".

تفاصيل تقنية...

انطلاقا من هذا الواقع وبالعودة الى ترسيم الحدود البحرية بين لبنان واسرائيل، يلاحظ بارودي ان لبنان "اعتمد من اجل البدء بالترسيم 61 مترا في البحر بدءا من نقطة رأس الناقورة، بينما اعتمدت اسرائيل 37 مترا في البحر، فعلميا كلاهما خطأ في البدء

بالترسيم من خط بحري offshore اذ عليهما اعتماد خط الناقورة البري (LT) الفاصل بين البلدين". وفي حال رفضت اسرائيل الاعتراف بحقوق لبنان فان الاجتهادات الدولية تعطي لبنان حقه الكامل، خصوصا اذا ما اعتمد الوفد المفاوضات على النقاط الآتية:

القضايا المماثلة في التجارب السابقة التي ارتكزت على القانون الدولي، وتؤكد ان لبنان سيُمنحُ معظم حقوقه، ومن القضايا التي اصدرت محكمة العدل الدولية أحكاما بها:

قرار محكمة العدل الدولية في قضية ميانمار ضد بنغلادش (12 آذار 2012).

قرار محكمة العدل الدولية في قضية ليبيا ضد تونس (24 شباط 1982).
قرار محكمة العدل الدولية في قضية نيكاراغوا ضد هندوراس (8 تشرين الاول 2007).

مما لا شك فيه ان هذه الاجتهادات تعطي الجيش اللبناني الحجة القانونية والحق الكامل للمطالبة بترسيم الحدود البحرية وفقا للمصالح والحقوق اللبنانية".

ومن المؤكد أن القرارات لا تقيم وزنا للجزر الصغيرة في أي معادلة، ولا تعتبر قادرة على دفع او ازاحة أي خط بحري واحد مقابل الخط الآخر وفقا لاجتهادات محكمة العدل الدولية، فكما هو واضح في الخريطة المرفقة، فإن الصخور والجزر الصغيرة لا تؤخذ في الاعتبار عند ترسيم الحدود، بحسب بارودي، وهذا ما اكده ايضا بيان لقيادة الجيش بان المفاوضات لن تعطي اهمية لهذه الصخور من اجل ترسيم الحدود. أما الخط المشترك الجانبي الذي لدى لبنان مع إسرائيل ويقارب 71 ميلا بحريا، فبمجرد أن ينتهي النزاع الحدودي البحري مع إسرائيل، سيتعزز تلقائياً موقف لبنان لناحية توقيع اتفاق نهائي لترسيم الحدود بين لبنان وقبرص والتي تبلغ حوالى 96 ميلا بحريا، وبين لبنان وسوريا.

يؤكد بارودي في حديثه ان ترسيم الحدود اللبنانية "سيعزز فرص لبنان الاقتصادية، اذ ان الاكتشافات الأخيرة اكدت وجود كميات كبيرة من النفط والغاز، أما في حال عدم اعتماد الحل العادل والمنصف فسوف يؤدي ذلك ليس إلى إبطاء تنمية الموارد فحسب، بل سيزيد خطر وقوع حرب نحن في غنى عنها". وفي توضيحه لمنافع نجاح الترسيم واستغلال الثروات يقول: "ان الدول التي ستنتج الغاز ستعرف عائدات كبيرة من الإنتاج والمصادرات، وحتى الدول غير المنتجة ستستفيد من استضافة مرافق المعالجة أو النقل، وفي أفضل السيناريوات، قد تنضم البلدان الأكثر حظاً إلى خطة إقليمية لتقاسم العائدات، وستسمح هذه التحسينات المالية باستثمارات طال انتظارها في التعليم والرعاية الصحية والنقل والبيئة والمياه النظيفة والحد من الفقر اضافة الى استقرار سياسي".

ويتمنى بارودي النجاح للوفد المفاوضات وأن يعيد الى لبنان حقوقه المعترف بها دوليا، خصوصا ان الوضع الاقتصادي الضاغط على اللبنانيين قد يعرف تحولا ايجابيا في حال استطاع لبنان ترسيم

حدوده واقناع شركات النفط العالمية بانه بات يؤمّن بيئة آمنة لكي تتمكن من العمل واستكشاف ثرواته النفطية البحرية كما هي حال معظم الدول المجاورة.

maurice.matta@annahar.com.lb

Twitter: @mauricemattta

بارودي يشدّد على التسوية السلمية لحل النزاع على مياه شرق المتوسط

تحت عنوان "شرق المتوسط مياه هادئة، مشتعلة، جامدة"، تحدّث الخبير في شؤون الطاقة رودي بارودي على قناة "الجزيرة" عبر تقنية الفيديو، عن العوامل التي تدعو الأفرقاء في شرق المتوسط إلى التعاون وتسوية النزاعات، فأكد توفير الحلول السلمية للنزاعات حول الحدود البحرية، وأشار إلى أن "الولايات المتحدة قبل 75 سنة وبقيّة النظام الدولي الذي تم تأسيسه بعد الحرب العالمية الثانية ونظام الأمم المتحدة، كله تم تصميمه من أجل جعل النزاعات المسلحة شيئاً من الماضي وتنظيم العلاقات ما بين الدول... إذاً الدول قد تدخل في فرضية عدم اتفاق لكن من دون السقوط في عمليات العنف بين الدول. لذلك هناك اتفاقات ومعاهدات من أجل السلم والأمن الجماعي"، مؤكداً أن "الأطراف كافة تتقيّد بكل الالتزامات القائمة من أجل حل نزاعاتها بشكل سلمي".

وقال في السياق: اليونان وتركيا دولتان جارتان ولديهما الكثير من النقاط المشتركة، كما تعانين من النزاعات القائمة، أما الأراضي التي جرى الحديث عنها، قد تكون تغيّرت بسبب اتفاقات عدة كاتفاقية جنيف، وكذلك بعض المجموعات السكانية ربما تم منعها...

وأضاف: الأمور ليست مثالية، فالنظم القائمة في العالم فيها الكثير من نقاط الضعف لكن الوضع هو أفضل بكثير مما كان عليه تاريخياً عندما ننظر إلى الماضي حيث أن الغلبة للأقوى عندما يستغل القوي الضعيف، لذلك هذا النظام موجود لأننا نريد حل هذه المشاكل، لكنه الالتزام به ليس بالطريقة المطلوبة.

وأوضح أن "المشكلات والنزاعات المتعلقة بالحدود البحرية طالما كوَّنت إشكالية خصوصاً أن ليس هناك حكومة تريد النظر إليها على أن تتخلى عن أي جزء من أراضيها والتي ينظر إليها الشعب على أنها جزء من أراضيهم. من هنا، بإمكان الخبراء والمختصين بالخرائط أن يلتقوا سويًا للنظر إلى مثل هذه الأمور ويتفقوا على المكان الذي يتم فيه رسم هذه الحدود".

وأشار إلى أن الحدود البحرية هي أكثر تعقيداً وتبدأ من الحدود البرية، وقال: الأمم المتحدة طوّرت آلية لحل هذه النزاعات المتعلقة بمثل هذه القضايا وكل من تركيا واليونان والدول الأخرى كانت حاضرة، البعض وقّع والبعض الآخر لن يوقّع، وتتضمّن قواعدَ كيفية ترسيم الحدود البحرية والجرف القاري والحدود الأخرى. وغالبية الأعضاء في الأمم المتحدة والدول المنضوية وقّعت وصادقت على هذه الاتفاقية حتى في حالات تم حلّها بأطر غير ثنائية أو معاهدات، فإن المبادئ ذاتها تنطبق على هذه الدول.

وذكر بأن "النزاعات الجارية والتي تم النظر فيها إما مع محكمة العدل الدولية أو من خلال غرف التحكيم، كلها تركّز على المعايير والمبادئ المتعلقة باتفاقية قانون البحار، بما في ذلك على الدول التي ليست طرفاً في هذه الاتفاقية".

وتابع بارودي: عندما يتعرّف الناس على هذه الاتفاقية، يقولون "إذا كان الأمر كذلك، لماذا لم يصادق العالم على هذه الاتفاقية؟ ولماذا لم يتم تعريف كل الحدود؟"، الجواب على هذا السؤال المهم، أن السبب الأساسي هو أن تكنولوجيا التقاط الصور والحوسبة عالجت كل المخالفات المتعلقة بها هذه الاتفاقية والدراسات التي بُنيت عليها، حتى أن هذه القدرات والإمكانات كانت مكلفة بالنسبة إلى الجميع، لكنها كانت متاحة للحكومات الثرية.

وعن القوى لاتي تملك التأثير في دفع الأفرقاء المتنازعة إلى تسوية الخلافات ما بينها، قال: هناك 21 دولة في منطقة المتوسط الأوروبي وكلنا نستحق أن نعيش بسلام، فقد سئمتنا الحروب... ويجب التفكير ما هو الأفضل بالنسبة إلى شعوبنا وأجيالنا وأطفالنا. على الأقل إن لم نتمكن من الاجتماع سويًا، فالولايات المتحدة مستعدة بالتأكيد للمساعدة وكذلك الاتحاد الأوروبي، والأمم المتحدة، وكذلك المملكة المتحدة بما أنها خرجت من الاتحاد الأوروبي فتستطيع بالتالي لعب دور الوسيط الحيادي، ولكن الأهم هو احترام القانون.

الأمر الأهم هو أن الأقوى لا يحترم القانون وعلى سبيل المثال إسرائيل. جلّ ما في الأمر أن علينا أن نتحاور بعيداً من السياسة. لنترك للسياسيين النزاع... ولندع الشعوب تعيش، ولندع اقتصاد عمق البحار الذي يمكنه إنقاذ الشعوب. فهم بأمرّ الحاجة إلى أنظمة الرعاية الصحية والتعليم والأمن والكهرباء والهاتف بأسعار مقبولة ولتتركنا الدول الأجنبية في حالنا. يجب أن نعمل من أجل السلام ولدينا الآليات الضرورية اللازمة، وعلى سبيل المثال إن تركيا واليونان لديهما كل العلماء والخبراء وأفضل الدكاترة أصحاب الخبرة كي يجلسوا ويتصافحوا ويتوصلوا إلى اتفاق، خصوصاً أن أبناء الدولتين عاشوا داخل أراضي بعضهما البعض لسنوات، لماذا لا يقدرّون الآن على تكرار التجربة.

وعن ترسيم الحدود بين لبنان وإسرائيل، قال بارودي: لسوء الحظ، مرّت الدولة اللبنانية بمطبات وحروب... إلخ، وصدر عن مجلس الأمن ما يُسمّى الخط الأزرق وهو لا يصل إلى المنطقة البحرية... هناك منطقة نزاع تمتد على 872 كلم² بحسب العلماء والخبراء، ووفق قرارات الأمم المتحدة يحصل لبنان على ما لا يقل عن الثلثين، لأن إسرائيل استخدمت بعض الصخور وقامت باحتساب بعض حدوده البحرية. والولايات المتحدة مستعدة لمساعدتنا في هذا الموضوع، وتريد اعتماد الوساطة الجيدة، الأمر الذي يساهم في حل المشكلة.

ولفت إلى أن الـ"بلوك 9" غني بالموارد "ويساعدنا على العيش بسلام ومن شأنه أن يقضي على الفقر".

وعن شكل التسوية التي تراعي موازين القوى ومصالح مختلف الأطراف في شرق المتوسط، قال: حين تُحل المشكلة بين تركيا واليونان ينسحب بالطريقة نفسها على قبرص بجزءٍ منها، وتتوحد الجزيرة.

وختم: إذا كان شرق المتوسط يعيش بسلام بدون أي نزاعات أو عنف، فقبرص قريبة جداً من الساحل التركي... المطلوب النضج واحترام القانون والتناغم من أجل إبعاد الحرب، هذا كل ما نحتاج إليه.

Oil recovery waits for international flying to return



Jet fuel consumption remains the hardest-hit section of the global oil market as passengers avoid air travel because of the pandemic and government travel restrictions.

The specific problems of the jet market explain why refinery margins for closely related distillates such as diesel are being hit much harder than benchmark oil prices.

Jet fuel's travails have helped push distillate margins to their lowest levels for more than a decade and are undercutting refinery demand for crude.

Sustained recovery in distillate margins and crude oil prices will therefore depend on a wider resumption of cross-border aviation.

But an early resumption of long-haul flights is looking less likely than a few months ago, given the resurgence of

coronavirus cases in many parts of the world.

So an upturn in jet consumption, and with it distillate margins and crude oil prices, depends on one or more of three factors: early deployment of an effective COVID-19 vaccine; alternative methods of infection control (such as rapid testing or improved contact tracing and isolation); or lifting air travel restrictions with or without a vaccine.

Quarantines and other infection controls have mostly been imposed on a national or occasionally continental basis, and on potentially infective passengers rather than manufactured products.

As a result, passenger aviation has been hit much harder than freight, and within the passenger sector, long-haul intercontinental flights have been more severely affected than short-haul and domestic services.

Domestic markets rebound

Globally, air freight tonne-kilometres were down just 18 per cent in June compared with passenger revenue-kilometres down 87 per cent, according to the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

In Hong Kong, which has adopted some of the strictest quarantine requirements, air cargo volumes were down just 2 per cent in August from a year earlier while passenger numbers, excluding transit passengers, were down 99 per cent.

On the passenger side, countries with a large domestic market, including the United States and China, have seen a stronger rebound than countries that depend on international departures and arrivals such as Britain.

China's passenger aviation volume was down by about 40 per cent in August compared with the same month a year earlier, based on passenger-kilometres flown, according to the National

Bureau of Statistics.

By contrast, Heathrow airport reported passenger numbers were down by 69 per cent in August for domestic and short-haul flights within Europe, and down by 92 per cent for long-haul flights outside Europe.

Business-related travel has been hit harder than leisure journeys as a result of the cancellation of conferences and in-person customer visits.

Most aviation experts expect business travel to recover more slowly than leisure journeys over the next 12 to 24 months, mirroring the experience after previous business cycle downturns.

The recession's lingering effects will encourage corporate managers to focus on cost control even once coronavirus restrictions are lifted, and discouraging discretionary flights is the easiest target for short-term savings.

Jet fuel consumption takes off

Global jet fuel consumption was about 8 million barrels a day in 2019, or about 8 per cent of global petroleum consumption, according to BP.

But it has been one of the fastest-growing sections of the market over the past decade, with consumption growing by almost 2.7 per cent a year between 2009 and 2019, compared with 1.6 per cent for all petroleum products.

While jet consumption remains a relatively small component of the total petroleum market, it is much larger compared with the market for other similar middle distillates.

In 2019, jet fuel accounted for 22 per cent of worldwide consumption of middle distillates, a group of fuels which also includes diesel, heating oil, gasoil and kerosene, and

totalled about 36 million barrels a day.

The pandemic-driven slump in aviation, especially fuel-hungry long-haul passenger aviation, has cut jet consumption by more than half.

Even with its domestic market, jet fuel consumption in the US is still down by more than 55 per cent compared with levels from a year ago, according to weekly estimates from the US Energy Information Administration.

Jet fuel, with strict quality specifications, is normally a premium product and makes a big contribution to refinery margins and profitability.

Following the pandemic, however, refiners have been forced to dump unwanted jet fuel into the broader and less-profitable pool for other middle distillates.

The diversion of surplus jet fuel has contributed to oversupply and bloated stocks of other middle distillates and is weighing on refining margins.

In turn, oversupply of distillates and poor margins are incentivising refineries to limit their crude purchases and processing, holding back wider recovery in the oil market.

Countries seen needing to invest \$55tn to reach emissions target



Global economies will need to invest as much as \$55tn through the middle of the century to meet an emissions goal and contain warming of the planet, according to a report by a group of executives from energy-intensive companies including ArcelorMittal SA, BP Plc and Royal Dutch Shell Plc. Reaching the net-zero carbon emissions target by 2050 will require large-scale electrification of industries, buildings, and transport, as well as the use of hydrogen and biofuels in areas that can't be electrified, according to the Energy Transitions Commission. Using less energy to produce more and recycling material will aid the efforts. Building renewable power plants will take up a bulk of the estimated investment.

More frequent and severe natural calamities across the world have heightened the need to contain climate change and end the use of coal and other fossil fuels while expanding clean energy. That's forcing some of the biggest fossil fuel users to recast their energy mix and adopt greener sources of power. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said in a 2018 report that reaching net-zero CO₂ emissions by mid-century will be key to limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Humanity is on course to miss that mark, with the World Meteorological Organization saying

there is a 20% chance that global temperatures will breach the limit in at least one of the next five years. The decarbonization strategy will involve phasing out of coal-fired plants, according to the report. Those that remain should be used as a peaking or a seasonal back-up to renewable power and should be retrofitted with carbon capture and storage. The report highlighted some challenges on the way. China, the world's biggest coal user, "is not yet on a clear path towards a net-zero economy and new coal investments are continuing despite evidence that renewables are now highly competitive on a new-build basis in most of China's provinces," it said. The nation can become a fully developed, rich economy with net-zero emissions by 2050 by rapidly deploying renewable power projects and reducing its dependence on coal, according to the report. The country needs to double annual investments in solar and as much as quadruple investments in wind energy, along with accelerating the use of clean energy in industries and residential heating. India, the second-biggest coal user, is likely to see consumption of the fuel peak between 2027 and 2030, before gradually sliding down, Ajay Mathur, a co-chair at Energy Transitions Commission, said in a phone interview.

Iraq's rising crude sales signal further lag on Opec+ quota



Bloomberg/London

Iraq is exporting more crude so far in September than it shipped last month, a sign that the country is falling further behind in efforts to comply with its Opec+ production limit.

A long-time laggard, Iraq already owes its partners in the producers' group compensation cuts to make up for pumping too much in past months. With these extra reductions that Iraq promised for August and September, its production goal would be about 3.4mn barrels a day.

In the first 15 days of September, Iraqi exports alone reached 3.26mn barrels a day, 8% higher than last month's daily average, according to tanker tracking data compiled by Bloomberg. Adding as much as 650,000 barrels a day of crude to account for Iraqi refinery use would put Opec's second-biggest producer well over its production limit.

Sixty years on from its founding, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries is restricting output with other major producers to try to revive the oil market from the Covid-19 demand crisis. Leaders of the Opec+ coalition were chairing a monitoring meeting yesterday to make sure group members toe the line, so the timing of data suggested rising exports from Iraq is awkward.

Earlier this month, Iraq said it might need more time to implement its promised additional production cuts.

Iraq pumped 3.72mn barrels a day in August, according to a Bloomberg survey. Iraq's oil ministry and its state oil marketer didn't immediately respond to requests for comment.

Crude prices have slipped since the end of August on concern that coronavirus flare-ups will slow a recovery in demand and that Opec+ compliance may be slipping.

Opec was already facing compliance questions concerning the UAE, which pumped at least 100,000 barrels a day more than it should have in August. Tanker tracking can shed light on how much oil a country is producing. However, countries may sell barrels from storage, and those don't count toward output limits. Producers also sometimes mix other petroleum products into the crude they ship, inflating their export numbers.

The daily average provided by preliminary tanker tracking may also change over the month because shipments are not always spread uniformly over the period.

After reviving crude prices from an unprecedented collapse over the spring, Opec+ is seeing the recovery stall and fuel demand falter as the deadly pandemic surges once again.

The peak holiday driving season has passed in the US, yet rush-hour traffic is still sparse and crude inventories stubbornly high. In India, the third-biggest consumer, transport-fuel sales remained 20% below year-ago levels last month. Even in China, where refiners binged on crude at the height of the crisis, buying has slowed.