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# Modern Geopolitics of Eastern Mediterranean Hydrocarbons in an Age of Energy Transformation

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# Preface

This monograph is written as an exercise in rational behaviour in support of regional cooperation in order to monetize hydrocarbon wealth in the East Mediterranean, a potential that could be realized if concerned stakeholders in the region and beyond acted rationally. That is a big ‘if’, as will become self-evident in the pages below. For, often in the East Mediterranean region passions run high and determine policy. People of the Middle East, including political leaders, often act emotionally. Self-interest and cooperative decision-making, the essential ingredients of rational behaviour, may become a casualty to passion and pride. In the case of hydrocarbons, shared wealth from regional cooperation amongst rational actors may be just around the corner, yet excessive nationalism or irrational behaviour may win the day.

Our monograph is a sequel to an earlier one we authored, *THE SOUTHERN ENERGY CORRIDOR: TURKEY'S ROLE IN EUROPEAN ENERGY SECURITY* (Springer 2018) which was also written from a rational behaviour perspective. Each monograph is relatively brief, but the two complement each other so much, we believe they can be read as one study of the geopolitics of energy, from drilling and discovery to monetizing and marketing options. There are, of course, significant differences between the two monographs: The first one focused on European energy security, supply diversification through the Southern Energy Corridor, and the Turkish role in this Corridor.

This one is narrower in scope, more limited geographically and in terms of policy target. We write in the age of Energy Transformation when fossil fuels are being replaced by renewable energy and we concentrate on the welfare of the Eastern Mediterranean people: We see the Arabs, Greeks, Israelis, Kurds and Turks as the principal stakeholders and we wish to explore the prospect of shared wealth for them from hydrocarbons recently discovered in the region. These people share a good deal of history, for better or worse, and even more significantly, geography has determined that they must also have a common future, hopefully a peaceful and prosperous one. Location Theory and economic rationality are our major analytical tools.

Pragmatism is a big part of our approach: We strongly believe that enemies of today can become partners in future, even if they do not become the closest friends based on mutual interest. Part of our optimism is derived from the pragmatic steps that can be taken by nations with differences, for example, Egypt and Israel, or Greece and Turkey, as we shall see in this study. As well, we believe external stakeholders can be catalyst, especially as investors, contributing toward the realization of hydrocarbon wealth: Private sector and political actors from the EU, the USA, Russia and elsewhere are involved as stakeholders in a variety of capacities. Even if, in the shorter run, some of these political actors themselves, such as those in the EU, may play politics in the name of solidarity, we believe in the longer run rational behaviour will prevail. Investors in the private sector can be expected to act with market realism and take the initial steps towards regional energy cooperation. In the global hydrocarbon market, corporate actors are obliged to heed the bottom-line and decide in conformity with location economics and least-cost principles.

Yet, we realize that rational behaviour is not enough to convert hydrocarbons from potential to reality. There are delicate matters of national ambitions and rivalries where passion and ethno-nationalism may conflict with rationality. There is far too much pride in the Middle East. It takes patience and delicate diplomacy for cooler heads to emerge, from shuttle diplomacy to behind-the-scene negotiations. These non-market determinants mirror complex interplay of strategic issues and geopolitics with different, often conflicting stakes in hydrocarbons. Evidently hydrocarbon actors are not only political decision-makers, but also energy, shipping and construction companies, investors, financiers and developers with technical skills and know-how. For these reasons, we, as the authors, adopt a general framework of modern geopolitics for a more comprehensive study of the hydrocarbon resources in the territorial waters of a region that extends from Egypt, through Israel, Lebanon, Syria, the Iraqi Kurdish region (KRG), to Turkey and the island of Cyprus. For short, we call this region, the Eastern Mediterranean.

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# Acknowledgements

This study has been written in Ottawa, Canada and North Cyprus. In both countries, we have had discussions with, and inputs from many colleagues and researchers, including Greek and Turkish Cypriots and Turkish and Greek. From a great variety of authors and analysts, we have utilized the latest facts and figures, acknowledging their works in the relevant passages throughout the study. However, it must be stated that some cited sources are dated and have only historical value. Current and future conditions are bound to be significantly different. After all, geopolitics is dynamic and constantly evolving. In regards to copyrights, we have searched far and wide to acquire permissions from authors and publishers for citations and material used. We thank them all collectively.

We would like to express our gratitude to researchers with whom we exchanged ideas at various academic workshops and conferences. We wish to name a few colleagues with gratitude. Professor Andre Plourde, Dean of the Faculty of Public Affairs, Carleton University was very generous with his time, read our manuscript and made helpful comments. We are also grateful for comments from Iyad Dakka, Fellow of the Centre in Modern Turkish Studies, Carleton University.

We are especially thankful to two peers in North Cyprus, both with extensive knowledge on hydrocarbon diplomacy. Both of them read our manuscript. Rafet Akgunay of the Middle East Technical University, Kalkanli, Northern Cyprus and Ergün Olgun, the former Undersecretary of President of TRNC and a Negotiator in the UN Cyprus talks. We also thank Prof. Ercan Uygur of the International Final University, Girne, the Turkish Ambassador of Nicosia Mr Ali Murat Başçeri and Prof. Kudret Özersay, Minister of Foreign Affairs, TRNC. We appreciate their contributions. Of course all opinions in our study belong to us entirely. Ozay would also like to record his appreciation of comments by his Greek-Cypriot classmate Charis Khimis, a businessman in the energy sector.

In the final preparation of the monograph we received technical support from our editors at Springer, particularly Anthony Doyle and Amudha Vijayarangan and wish to thank them. In particular, we appreciated their patience and willingness to give us extension to incorporate new developments affecting hydrocarbons of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Last but not least, we wish to thank our wives, Karen Mehmet and Saskia Yorucu, for their support and patience. We also express the usual academic caveat that all opinions in this study are fully and entirely the authors' responsibility.

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# Abbreviations

AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
Bbl/d/1K	Thousands of barrels per day
bcm	Billions of cubic meter
BOTAŞ	Boru hatları ile Petrol Taşıma Anonim Şirketi (Oil and Gas Importing and Transmitting Public Company of Turkey)
BP	British Petroleum Company
BTC	Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline
BTE	Baku Tbilisi Erzurum Pipeline
CCS	Carbon Capture Storage
CS	Continental Shelf (Continental Shelves)
EaP	EU's Eastern Partnership
EEA	European Environmental Agency
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	Energy Information Agency
EMP	East Mediterranean Pipeline (in short EastMed)
EMRA	Energy Market Regulation Authority
EPİAŞ	Energy Piyasaları İşletme Anonim Şirketi (Administration of Energy Markets Public Company)
ETS	Emission Trading System
EU	European Union
FLNG	Floating liquefied natural gas
FSA	Free Syrian Army
FSRU	Floating Storage Regasification Unit
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GSA	Gas Sales Agreement
GW	Gigawatts
IEA	International Energy Association
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

KDPS	Kurdish Democratic Party of Syria
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
LNG	Liquefied Natural gas
MBtu	Millions of British Thermal Units
mcm	Millions of cubic meters
MEG	Magrep-Europe Gas Pipeline
MENR	Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources
mtoe	Million tons of equivalent
Mtpa	Million tonnes per annum
MWH	Mega Watt Hours
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEEAP	National Energy Efficiency Action Plan
NG	Natural gas
NREAP	National Renewable Energy Action Plan
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PCI	Project for Common Interest
PKK	Kurdistan Workers Party
PYD	Democratic Union Party
SDF	Syrian Democratic Forces
SEC	Southern Energy Corridor
TANAP	Trans Anatolian Pipeline
TAP	Trans Adriatic Pipeline
TC	Turkish Cypriot
Tcf	Trillions of cubic feet (equivalent to 28.3168 bcm)
tcn	Trillions of cubic meters
Toe	Tonnes of equivalents
TPAO	Türk Petrolleri Anonim Ortaklığı (Turkish Petroleum Public Company)
TRNC	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	UN Convention on the Law of the Sea—1982
WEC	World Energy Council
YEKA	Yenilenebilir Enerji Kaynakları Alanı (Renewable Energy Resource Area)
YPG	Peoples Protection Units

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