THE TRANS-ADRIATIC NATURAL GAS PIPELINE (TAP)

Alev KILIÇ

In the daily bulletin of Center for Eurasian Studies dated 2 October 2012, it was expressed in a news item that an agreement was signed between Italy, Albania and Greece on 27 September 2012 in New York by their representatives who were present there for the UN GA meeting, according full political support to the natural gas pipeline which would extend from Greece to Italy. This private sector project, well known as the Trans-Adriatic pipeline (TAP), is of interest not only to these three countries, but also to Switzerland which has a need for TAP sources to compensate at the transition period for the nuclear energy gap (currently 45% of the total energy generation) since it has decided not to construct new nuclear power plants. The importance the EU attaches to the project has been indicated by EU Energy Commissioner G. Oettingers statement that he welcomes the agreement.

As is known, the source of the gas to be transferred through the pipeline is Azerbaijan (Iran could also be added to this when the political conditions permit). Azeri gas reaches Turkey through the Baku-Tblisi-Erzurum pipeline to be transferred to Greece through Turkeys existing national pipeline.

It is possible that this cooperation, to start with the TAP project, will also trigger other possibilities and sources due to Turkeys vocation as an energy crossroad. For instance, President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus D. Eroğlus suggestion made on 29 September to the UN General Secretary and through him, to the Greek side, for the natural gas from and around the island of Cyprus to be transferred across Turkey through a pipeline, could be enriched with a water pipeline which could be constructed perhaps in a parallel manner which undoubtedly would decrease the costs.

At a period in which Turkey targets the year of 2071, a matching approach and project could also be envisaged for the Qatari natural gas resources to be channeled through Turkey, enriched with projects encompassing other countries on its route.

About the Author :

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Süleyman Nazif Sok. No: 12/B Daire 3-4 06550 Çankaya-ANKARA / TÜRKİYE
Tel: +90 (312) 438 50 23-24 • **Fax**: +90 (312) 438 50 26
@avimorgtr
https://www.facebook.com/avrasyaincelemelerimerkezi
E-Mail: info@avim.org.tr
http://avim.org.tr

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