

Turkey's Unique Energy Corridor Role at the Center of Eurasia in the 21st Century

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Abstract

This paper aims to examine Turkey's sui generis energy role at the center of Eurasia in the 21st century. With the start of using oil and natural gas in the industry and also elsewhere, drilling, processing and transporting these resources have become an important issue between demanders and suppliers. In Eurasia, although eastern part of the continent is rich in terms of oil and gas, western part of the continent lacks significant volume of hydrocarbons. In terms of energy security perspective, both producers and demanders prioritize the uninterrupted transportation of hydrocarbons. This situation necessitates the presence of transit countries. Nowadays, the new world order has been shaping in the perspective of regional instabilities. In addition, center of gravity of the continent has been changing. Turkey is at the center of these developments and continent as an energy corridor. Hence, the existing and projected oil and natural gas pipeline projects will be beneficial for either Turkey or energy supplier/demander countries.

Keywords: Turkey, Energy Security, Eurasia, Energy Corridor, Russian Federation, Iran, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Eastern Mediterranean.

21. Yüzyılda Türkiye'nin Avrasya'nın Merkezindeki Eşsiz Enerji Koridoru Rolü

Öz

Bu makalenin amacı, Türkiye'nin 21. yüzyılda Avrasya'nın merkezindeki eşsiz enerji koridoru rolünün incelenmesidir. Petrolün ve doğalgazın, endüstrinin yanı sıra diğer alanlarda da kullanılmaya başlanmasıyla birlikte, bu kaynakların çıkartılması, işlenmesi ve taşınması, tedarikçiler ve bunları talep edenler arasında önemli bir konu haline gelmiştir. Avrasya'da, kıtanın doğusu petrol ve doğalgaz bakımından zengin olmasına rağmen, kıtanın batısında önemli miktarda hidrokarbon rezervleri bulunmamaktadır. Enerji güvenliği perspektifi bağlamında, hem tüketiciler hem de talep edenler,

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hidrokarbon kaynaklarının kesintisiz taşınmasını öncelemektedirler. Bu durum, transit ülkelerin varlığını zorunlu kılmaktadır. Günümüzde yeni dünya düzeni, bölgesel istikrarsızlıklar temelinde şekillenmektedir. Buna ilaveten kıtanın çekim merkezi de değişmektedir. Türkiye bir enerji koridoru olarak bu gelişmelerin ve kıtanın merkezindedir. Nihayetinde, mevcut ve proje halindeki petrol ve doğalgaz boru hattı projeleri, hem Türkiye hem de enerji tedarikçisi ve talep eden ülkeler için faydalı olacaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Türkiye, Enerji Güvenliği, Avrasya, Enerji Koridoru, Rusya Federasyonu, İran, Azerbaycan, Irak, Doğu Akdeniz.

Introduction

After the discovery of oil and gas in the Eastern Eurasia in 19th century, this region's vitality has increased. Because most industrialized Western Eurasian countries need hydrocarbons for sustaining their economic systems. On the other hand, the Eastern Eurasian countries possess abundant oil and gas in which they have been targeting to the export of these resources to the world's energy-hungry markets to get necessary revenues for bringing stability as well as prosperity to them. Some newly-independent Eurasian states' hydrocarbons in post-1991 namely Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan have attracted the world's attention. Most industrialized West Eurasian states' increasing dependence on foreign energy suppliers such as Moscow and Middle East occasionally creates great problems because the latter sometimes uses energy as a political pressure tool to make their terms accepted by the other countries heavily dependent on the continuous flow of hydrocarbons. In that manner, the energy-dependent countries have preferred to develop alternative pipeline projects for the uninterrupted transportation of hydrocarbons to them, necessitating the energy transit countries. Having close multi-dimensional relations with both with the energy producers in Eastern Eurasia and the energy-hungry countries in Western Eurasia makes Ankara a unique one. Ankara has been prioritizing linking the Eurasia's two different parts via pipelines and therefore bringing stability and prosperity to Eastern Eurasia since 1991.

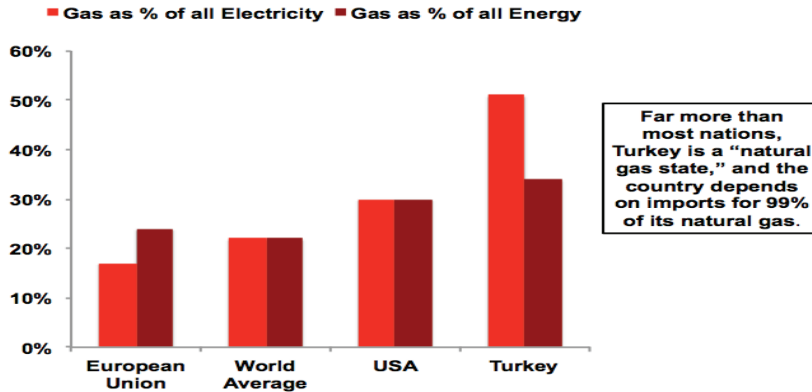
Within that context, Ankara's exclusive energy corridor position at the center of Eurasia in the 21st century will be examined in this paper. Firstly, Turkey's energy security policies will be discussed. Secondly, Turkey's unique energy transit role at the center of Eurasia will be elaborated by examining its affiliations with Azerbaijan, Russian Federation, Iran, Iraq and the Eastern Mediterranean.

Energy Security Dimension in Turkish Eurasianism

Turkey imports roughly 70 percent of its energy from outside suppliers which per annum cost approximately 60 billion dollars. Therefore Turkey can easily be defined as energy dependent country (Güney, 2015: 38-39). Within the context of current energy security demands, Ankara

has to develop policies for meeting its energy demands from a reliable, environmentally friendly source at a reasonable cost and without facing any disruption.

Figure 1: Natural Gas Use in terms of Electricity Generation and as Energy Source in EU, USA, Turkey and World Average



Source: (Clemente, 2016)

One of the most important developments is Turkey's chairmanship of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Energy Club in 2017 as a non-SCO country in the organization. Fundamentally, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's speech that referred to SCO to be a significant alternative to EU has had a huge influence on Russia and China. Afterwards, they gave a green light to Ankara to be energy club's chairmanship. As it is known that Turkey has been a "dialogue partner" of the SCO and has been a member of the SCO Energy Club with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, India, Iran, Mongolia, Pakistan, Belarus and Sri Lanka. The SCO Energy Club mainly aims to resolve issues as (Hürriyet Daily News, 2016);

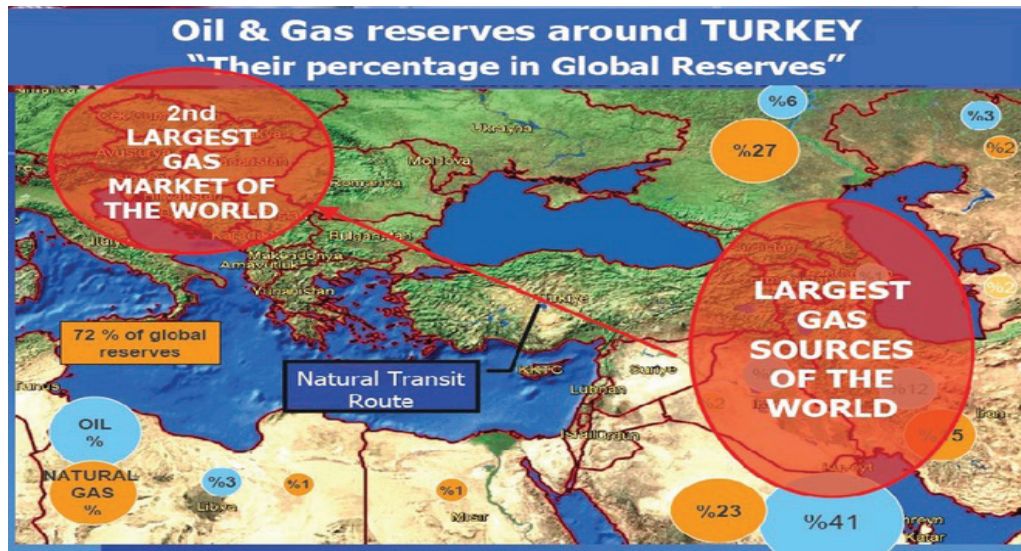
1. Coordinating energy strategies and programs for SCO member states, observers and partners,
2. Determining and implementing collective energy security measures,
3. Enhancing a system of transport, energy, and communications,
4. Developing united economic structure to implement member countries' energy strategies,
5. Coordinating investment plans of member states.

Importantly, the SCO Energy Club includes some of the largest energy producers of the world, China and India in the same structure. The indispensable aim of the SCO Energy Club is deepening and intensifying energy cooperation among member states. Moreover, bolstering energy security and enhancing energy strategies have been critical issues of the energy club (Daily Sabah, 2016a). According to upturning the number of importing states and reducing import rates and also trying to be an energy transit way as well as energy terminal form external dimensions of Turkey's

energy strategy (Kısacık and Kaya, 2015: 44-45). European countries intend to seek alternative energy suppliers to reduce its gas dependency on Russia. Within this standpoint, Turkey has been emerging as one of the most chief energy corridors in the existing Eurasian geopolitics. There are some reasons enabling Ankara a very unique country namely its multidimensional connections with the most of Eurasian countries and also its sui generis geographic location in a great closeness to the regions where more than 70 percent of world’s proven hydrocarbons situate. Moreover Ankara has also been working on developing new oil and gas pipeline projects as well as trying to resolve the energy related problems between supplier and demander countries.

Turkey’s Critical Energy Transit Bridge Role within Eurasia in the 21st Century

Figure 2: Oil and Natural Gas Reserves in Turkey’s Neighbourhood and Their Percentage in Global Reserves



Market Realist

Source: Ministry of Energy And Natural Resources Turkey

Source: Market Realist

Turkey-Azerbaijan energy relations have started with the signing of “Contract of the Century” in 1994 envisaging the development of Shah Deniz Oil and Gas Field (Erkan, Kısacık and Sevimli, 2015: 140-141). After gaining its independence in 1991 and with Shah Sea Project, Baku has targeted to be one of the most central energy suppliers for both the EU and Turkey. Augmenting the supply volume of gas from Baku will be beneficial for Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP). In TANAP, Ankara has the opportunity to play both the roles of a transit and an importer of Baku gas in which BOTAŞ’s share is 30 percent. Other than this, by involving into

this project, BOTAŞ acquires the chance to increase its experience in terms of running such huge projects (Ibrahimov, 2015: 90).

TANAP will be beneficial for constituting closer and win-win affiliations among Turkey-Azerbaijan-Georgia. Ankara intends to transport Ashgabat gas to European markets via TANAP (Ibrahimov, 2015: 91-92). Ashgabat and Ankara settled a memorandum concerning the gas exportation to Europe during Turkish President Erdoğan's visit to Ashgabat at the beginning of November 2014 (Latypov, 2014). In this case, Ankara will therefore underwrite toward the European energy security through constituting a new carrying route for Caspian gas resources to energy-hungry European markets. Thus, TANAP will correspondingly be valuable for Ankara's intention to be converted into one of Eurasia's energy hubs. When we come to Southern Gas Corridor's (SGC) Baku section, a critically significant development would happen on 30 September 2016 (Cagatay, 2016). The Memorandum of Understanding for TANAP was approved by the Azerbaijan National Assembly (ANA). ANA stated that, the endorsement of agreements signed among several countries aside from MoU between Ankara and Baku signed on 26 May 2014 concerning TANAP has been declared. It is projected that TANAP's total cost will be approximately \$9.2 Billion. Valeh Alasgarov, the Deputy Speaker of ANA, underscored that Ankara has even now achieved very necessary state processes concerning TANAP (Cagatay, 2016). In Turkish section of this project, the Turkish Grand National Assembly had already approved the TANAP Agreement (T.C. Başbakanlık Kanunlar ve Kararlar Genel Müdürlüğü-Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, 2014).

Following a gas agreement signed in 1984, the pipeline constructed in 1987 has been the first energy-related project between Ankara and Moscow. By this agreement Russia has commercially committed to send gas to Turkey for 25 years and also Turkey has committed to import this gas via Western Line with the yearly capacity of 6 bcm (Gül and Yesevi, 2015: 218-219). Then the two countries have developed on Blue Stream, operational since 2002. Here in that context, one has to argue Ukraine's role in European energy security. More than 75 percent of Russian gas transported to Europe is realized over Ukraine. Following the 2006 and 2009 gas crises between Moscow and Kyiv, Moscow has decided to develop alternative gas transportation projects bypassing Ukraine (Caşın, 2015: 723). South Stream would emerge in that context. The protocol enabling the passing of this line from Turkey's exclusive economic zone in the Black Sea was contracted between Putin and Erdoğan on 6 August 2009 with Silvio Berlusconi. When the Ankara-Moscow agreement on 29 December 2011 allowed the passing of this new line from Black Sea, this 63 bcm-line project envisaging costing 20-25 billion Euros was able to be realized (Caşın and Derman, 2016: 396).

In November 2013 Ukraine Crisis, the protests of pro-Europeans in Ukraine would spread into the other parts of Ukraine and in March 2014, would be resulted with the annexation of Crimea to the Russia. Western world has been sanctioning Kremlin after that. When facing with the European veto on South Stream, Putin would decide to cancel it and instead to build a new gas pipeline with Turkey during his visit to Ankara on 1 December 2014. Named as Turkish Stream, this project would be 63 bcm. 10 bcm of this capacity would be reserved to Turkey and rest

of it would be transported between the Turkey-Greece borders. Ankara and Moscow has been confronting on Syria since 2011 (Kısacık and Kaya, 2016: 106-107). On 24 November 2015, a Russian SU-24 war plane flying over the Turkish-Syrian border violated the Turkish airspace for 17 seconds. Though warned by Turkish jets several times, Russian plane continued its violation and then was downed by Turkish war planes. After that, Kremlin would blame Turkey owing to this event plus would pursue embargoes in innumerable fields and the suspension of Turkish Stream and Akkuyu Power Plant (TASS-Russian News Agency, 2015). While the crisis between Ankara and Moscow were on-going with the mutual punitive assertions and Russian embargoes toward Turkey, a key initiative would come from Turkey for resolving this question on 24 June 2016. Turkish President Erdoğan remarked that, “As the President of Republic of Turkey, I would like to inform the family of the deceased Russian pilot that I share their pain and to offer my condolences to them. May they excuse us. We had no wish or intention to down a plane of the Russian Federation... Russia and Turkey have agreed to take necessary steps without delay to improve bilateral relations, specifically noting regional crises and the fight against terrorism” (The Moscow Times, 2016).

Within the context of Turkish Stream, a central development would happen on 14 September 2016 by the affirmation of Gazprom for getting its first license from Ankara on the construction of this project’s subsea section. Gazprom Head Aleksei Miller stated that, “the first phase for the realization of the energy project, collaboration with the company’s Turkish counterparts has been going smoothly and efficiently” (Daily Sabah, 2016b).

On 10 October 2016, the energy ministers of Turkey and Russian Federation, Berat Albayrak and Alexandr Novak, signed an agreement regarding the Turkish Stream’s construction. In the signing ceremony, President Erdoğan indicated that “this agreement will be helpful for the normalization of these two countries’ strategic relationship and added that negotiations for the finalization of this project will be made between two countries’ energy ministries”. Vladimir Putin would remark that “Moscow abandoned all the sanctions over Turkish products and these two countries reached a deal concerning the discount for the gas prices to Turkey” (Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, 2016).

Turkish Stream will include two parallel lines, each of them 15.75 bcm yearly. This pipeline will be connected to the current Trans-Balkan Pipeline transporting gas via Ukraine and also Eastern Balkans to İstanbul at Lüleburgaz (Başboğa, 2016). After that, Gazprom has declared that it will be funding the construction of this pipeline’s offshore section. Alexei Miller identified that they will launch the construction of this pipeline’s offshore section to Turkey as of 2018 (Abay, 2016). For him, this project will not be a challenging of European markets together with Nord Stream II pointing to bring gas to Northern Europe. In this project, BOTAŞ will be constructing the onshore infrastructure system, supplying gas to Turkish domestic market. BOTAŞ and Gazprom will be establishing a joint venture on the basis of par (Vestnik Kavkaza, 2016). In the aftermath of Turkey-Russian Federation Intergovernmental Commission, Alexander Novak would mention that, “The completion date is the end of 2019. Now there is a lot of preparatory work, first survey,

feasibility study and project documentation, then laying the pipeline will start directly. This work will begin in 2017” (Sputnik International, 2016).

The General Assembly of Turkish Grand National Chamber ratified the Turkish Stream Project that will be transporting the Russian gas to Turkey over Black Sea on 1 December 2016. When the turnout remained in 223 in the General Assembly, it was agreed by 210 votes, 7 rejections and 6 abstaining (Milliyet, 2016). After this approval by the Turkish Grand National Assembly, the bill on the Intergovernmental Government Agreement of Turkish Stream would come into the effect on 6 December 2016 by the approval of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of Turkey and the publication in the Turkish Official Gazette (TASS–Russian News Agency, 2016).

In line with the becoming operational of Turkish Stream, the remarks of Andrey Karlov, the Ambassador of Russian Federation to Ankara, assassinated on 19 December 2016 in Ankara did state that, “ Russia wants to see Turkey as a natural gas transit hub, and to this end it supports the Turk Stream natural gas project. We expect the construction of the pipeline to start next year and the first gas to arrive in 2019... The first line will have a capacity to meet Turkey’s natural gas needs and the other line can transfer gas to third countries in southern Europe in accordance with the agreement, or it can be used to meet Turkey’s growing domestic demand” (Sengul, 2016).

Regarding the implementation of Turkish Stream, on 20 January 2017, the Intergovernmental Governmental Agreement was ratified by the State Duma, the lower chamber of the Russian Parliament. Following this, it was approved by the Federation Council, the upper chamber, on 1 February 2017 (Sputnik International, 2017). After these approvals of Russian Parliament, “The Federal Law on Ratification of the Agreement on the Turkish Stream Pipeline Project between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Turkey” was signed by President Putin on 7 February 2017 (President of Russia, 2017).

Iraq is one of energy suppliers of Turkey, starting with Kirkuk-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline in 1977. Although it has had the initial capacity of 1 million barrel per day, especially after 2003 Iraq Invasion, its capacity has been decreased year by year due to the increasing terrorist attacks as a result of political instabilities in this country (Rudaw, 2016). Following the provision of relative stability in hydrocarbon-rich Northern Iraq, Erbil has established partnerships with energy companies of foreign countries including Turkey for drilling and export of this region’s hydrocarbons to the world markets (Küçükcan, 2015: 453). But the disagreements between Erbil and Baghdad on the sharing of oil income, the continuing threat by the ISIL to the territorial integrity of Iraq and also terrorist attacks organized by the PKK to the pipeline network of this country prevents the development of new pipeline projects including Iraq’s gorgeous hydrocarbons (Rosario, 2016).

Although Turkey and Iran they have not been into direct confrontation with each other since 1639, they have experienced serious problems between them specifically after 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran such as the fear of regime exportation strategy of Iran to the neighbouring countries and Tehran’s support to PKK for a while. But especially coming into the power of AK Party on 3 November 2002 in Turkey, the relations have started to get better. Because Ankara

thinks that establishing good and multidimensional relations with Tehran might create “Win-Win” opportunities for both countries. Tehran is the second most important hydrocarbons supplier of Turkey (Kısacık, 2014). But Iran occasionally stops gas flows to Turkey by alleging high domestic demand in Iran. And also there are problems in “Take or Pay” contracts between these two countries, brought by Ankara before the international arbitration mechanism in recent years. Especially after the beginning of rapprochement between Iran and the Western world on the resolution of nuclear program crisis with April 2015 Lausanne Agreement, Ankara and Tehran have been discussing on a new pipeline project envisioning transporting Iran’s gas to Europe via SGC. But this will become rational after the lifting of sanctions over Iran along with the advancement of the huge gas resources of Tehran (Kalehsar, 2015: 431-433).

Ankara can propose the most economically viable export way for Leviathan and Aphrodite gas in the Eastern Mediterranean. Leviathan gas resources may possibly be included in the European markets via SGC (Kısacık and Kaya, 2015: 63-64). The Israeli-Turkish pipeline represents exceptionally outstanding to Ankara within the milieu of both for political and economic evaluations. Leviathan gas might be helping Ankara to decrease its ever-increasing dependence on expensive Russian gas and volatile Iranian gas. An Israel-Turkey pipeline might also increase Ankara’s geostrategic significance as a central partner of Brussels’s endeavours to diversify its gas suppliers and to end the oil-based system through the initiation of free-market trading occurring at the hubs. Political and trade based impediments prevent the East-Med gas to perform the game changer role in international markets (Kısacık and Kaya, 2015: 64-65). The second well penetrated by Noble Energy into Aphrodite publicizes that the field might contain no more than predicted. A pipeline through Turkey has been considered by the developers and the Tel-Aviv as the most beneficial as well as economically suitable. In that context, Turkish firms are proposing to build and fund the pipeline which might also bring potential benefits for the Greek Cypriots. When considered on the resolution of Cyprus Issue, offshore maritime regions have been elaborated within the context of joint federal authority. The Turkish Cypriots have proposed potential future income sharing; nonetheless no agreement has been settled even to negotiate on this issue. The main regions positioned at the southern part of the island, evaluated to hold gas resources, might situate within the Greek Cyprus. Ankara has already unilaterally drawn its maritime borders with Lefkoşe, positioned mostly at the northern section of the island. Technically, this will be considered as a valid case between Ankara and an independent Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (Roberts, 2016).

A critical development on the potential commercialization of Israeli gas would come about on 27 June 2016. On this date, Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the President of Republic of Turkey, would publicize that they have settled on the normalization of Ankara-Tel Aviv relations (Liebermann and Labott, 2016). One day later, Feridun Sinirlioğlu, the then Undersecretary of Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Dore Gold, Foreign Ministry Director General of Israel, in Rome would officially sign the deal. The deal consists of:

- \$20 million compensation fund for Turkish families,
- a subsequent reappearance of ambassadors,
- preliminary discussions regarding a potential gas pipeline,
- all criminal or civil assertions contrary to Israeli military personnel and the State of Israel after the 2010 Israeli raid on a Gaza-bound Turkish aid flotilla will be ended by Ankara,
- Gaza Strip Blockade continues however Ankara can provide humanitarian assistance via Israel's Ashdod Port (Barak, 2016).

Concerning the talks on a probable Turkish-Israeli gas pipeline, Berat Albayrak and Yuval Steinitz, the energy ministers of Turkey and Israel, negotiated over it on 13 October 2016. Steinitz would share that, "Two countries agreed to establish immediately a dialogue to examine the possibility and the feasibility of the natural gas pipeline project. Israel was considering other pipeline projects but said the "Turkish option" was an "important" one. His country would also welcome the participation of Turkish businesses in the exploration of future gas fields... Improved relations would benefit both the Turkish and Israeli people" (Daily Herald, 2016).

Conclusion

After the official fall of USSR in December 1991, one of the countries that gained its independence was Azerbaijan. Baku is very seriously evaluated as a critically momentous supplier for the European energy security due to having huge hydrocarbons. In the post-1994, Shah Sea field represents the chief interest field for both the regional and Western-centered energy companies. In that sense, there have been developing several pipeline projects for the transportation of Baku's hydrocarbons to West. Within that context, Turkey-Azerbaijan relations have come into the agenda. Turkey was among one of the countries recognizing Azerbaijan's independence. These two states define their relationship as "ONE NATION, TWO STATES". With the becoming operational of BTC Oil and South Caucasus Gas Pipelines, their relations have entered into a new phase, paving the way for projects in numerous fields. TANAP has the top priority, forming one of the main pillars of SGC, foreseen to decrease both Europe and Turkey's ever-increasing dependence on Moscow to a certain extent. Although, Ankara-Baku relations have had problems in 2009 and 2010 due to the former's rapprochement initiatives with Yerevan, they have overcome this period. With the advancement of new inter-regional energy and transportation-centered projects, Turkey-Azerbaijan-Georgia is determined to continue close relationships defined as "Win-Win" situation among them which is/will be vital for Eurasian energy security.

As the relationship between centuries' long Turkey and Russian Federation can be viewed as the history of "Rapprochement and Hostility", energy has been one of the hotspots since 1984. Since that time, Kremlin has been Turkey's top energy supplier. Also together with the increasing of bilateral contacts between Moscow and Ankara in several fields, Ankara has been defining this as "Mutual Interdependency". But Turkey and Russia have been disagreeing on Ukraine and Syria since 2011. Turkey declares that it will never recognize Crimea's invasion by Moscow. Also Turkey

is positioned at the anti-Assad Bloc. The crisis between Ankara and Moscow over Syria were resulted with the downing of Russian jet by Turkish jets on 24 November 2015. Although Turkey was the right party in terms of international law through the implementation of engagement rules, Moscow would blame Ankara for this event and apply embargoes toward Ankara in several fields until June 2016. In contrast, recent rapprochement initiatives between Moscow and Ankara since June 2016 should be thoroughly watched for the regional security and essentially within the basis of the future of Eurasian energy security.

Ankara-Baghdad energy relationships have correspondingly formed one of the central components of former's energy security, starting with the Kirkuk-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline in 1977. Nonetheless in the post-2003 Iraq War, its capacity has not been at its initial phase, closely relating with the domestic instability in Iraq. PKK and ISIL's terrorist attacks threaten this country's pipeline network. The rich hydrocarbons of relatively stable Northern Iraq have attracted the regional countries especially Turkey and also the Western countries. But one should not forget that according to the Iraqi Constitution, the natural richnesses of the country belong to all Iraqis. Therefore Erbil's unilateral initiatives for signing to unilaterally benefit from the resources positioned at this region are illegal. Another issue within that context is the sharing of revenues between Baghdad and Erbil coming from the sale of hydrocarbons. Unless these issues are resolved, the transportation of Iraq's abundant hydrocarbons to world markets is highly unlikely.

Even though Turkey and Iran have not been in quarrelling since 1639, especially after 1979 Islamic Revolution, these two countries have ideologically been confronting. In that sense, one can also comment on Iran's regime export strategy to neighbouring countries and support to the PKK terrorism in several times. Iran comes after Russian Federation as the central energy supplier of Turkey for years. There have been experiencing different complications between Ankara and Tehran in connection with the supply disruptions and price disagreements in the energy field which are sued by Turkey in the international law. Instead, since 2013, there has been a rapprochement process going on between Iran and the P5+1 countries regarding the former's nuclear program, resulted with the Lausanne Deal in 2015. According to this deal, following the implementation of the terms by Tehran, the sanctions over it will gradually be lifted and Tehran will become a part of international system. In terms of gas, Tehran ranks after Moscow. It is assessed that this will be definitely a game changer for energy geopolitics. There are also projects regarding the inclusion of Tehran's gas resources into the SGC. Because only country committed to provide gas for this corridor is Azerbaijan which will not be sufficient when the Europe's increasing gas demand in 2030 is seriously considered. But the involvement of Iran into important gas projects in the region will likely be the case following the development of its gas resources and the gradual lifting of the sanctions over this country in the forthcoming years.

Since 2009, one of the most significant regions in Eurasian energy geopolitics has been the East-Med. The gas discoveries in Tamar, Leviathan and Aphrodite fields have been seen as very valuable for regional energy security. However, it is publicized that the Aphrodite field does not possess important reserves for the gas export. Therefore Tamar and Leviathan have been appealing to

the world's attention. There have been discussing several projects on exporting these resources to the European markets. However owing to Tel Aviv's political problems with some East-Med countries like Lebanon and Palestine, Turkey comes into forefront as the most available country for the monetization of Israel's. Especially after the occurrence of Gaza Flotilla Crisis in 2010, Ankara-Tel-Aviv relations would experience its worst terms till 2013. Following the apology in 2013, the parties have been working on re-establishing the relations. In terms of East-Med, another important issue is the unresolvedness in the multilateral Cyprus Question negatively impacting on the commercialization of the region's gas. When the positive improvements in these two issues are provided in the near future, the carrying of East-Med gas to the European markets might be probable.

Consequently, Turkey's critical energy corridor position at the center of Eurasia will be determined by the abovementioned geopolitical developments. If the geopolitical crises in the Eurasia region are peacefully resolved in the near or long terms, then it is promising to mention new oil and gas pipeline projects in which to Ankara, these will bring peace and stability to the Eurasia region in the 21st century.

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