

Mediterranean Sea-Energy-Geopolitical Stability and Challenges

by

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The current energy and geopolitical environment in the southeastern Mediterranean area is very crucial and sensitive. Greece, Cyprus, and Israel try to create an economic alliance and explore the natural gas resources. In addition, Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt and Libya want to be part of that energy chessboard game. The Aegean dispute and the Cyprus question create serious problems to establish a well developed economic relation and partnership among Turkey, Greece, and Cyprus. Moreover, Turkey has to face domestic political upheavals and regional geostrategic challenges. Greece and Cyprus face a severe politico-economic crisis. Specifically, the Tsipras communist administration in Greece is weak, corrupt, and inexperienced to deal with important and sensitive defense and foreign issues. Athens since 2009, is totally unable due to endemic socio-political corruption to deal effectively with the economic crisis. The Anastasiadis conservative government in Cyprus struggles to restore economic stability and reunite the island. Nicosia faces huge economic and political challenges due to political corruption. Lebanon has domestic political instability and try to avoid get embroiled to the Syrian crisis. Israel has a strong defense apparatus and economic structure, however the Israeli government has to deal with the various Palestinian terrorist activities. Egypt and Libya have regime consolidation issues.

Lately, Russia's troop movements in Syria create a new era of politico-military instability. Russia with the assistance of the Iranian theocratic regime want to safeguard the survival of Assad regime a traditional Russian puppet. The refugee/illegal immigration in Europe from Syria and other conflict areas in the Middle East has destabilize the European socio-economic and political system. Furthermore, the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) is a major threat to Middle Eastern socio-political stability in the southeastern Mediterranean basin. Thus, the situation is extremely perilous and unstable for the whole region. United States can play a positive role. The sixth fleet and other American military assets in the region can be a security guarantee and deterrence for potential military and terrorist threats. The Obama administration needs to adopt a strong foreign and defense policy and protect the Pax Americana in the Mediterranean basin. President Barack Obama must perceived the Mediterranean Sea and its extension the Aegean Sea as an American lakes and an extension of American territory that contains vital and crucial geoeconomic interests. Gibraltar, Sardinia, Sicily, Malta, Crete, and Cyprus can be utilized as huge military bases projecting the American military power in the area. United States must deployed in these islands F-22 Raptors and once operational F-35 joint strike fighter. It is crucial and imperative the American administration to destroy ISIS, dismantle the Assad regime, and stop the Russian onslaught in the Middle East region. F-22 must be deployed in Israel to check Moscow's political and military ambitions in Syria.

The Obama administration needs to seek new innovative ways of politico-economic and military cooperation with Turkey. The new era of mutual collaboration would bolster the American

presence in the region and Caucasus area. Mainly in the South Caucasus region with vast natural gas and oil resources an American geopolitical influence can have positive results in the region and the global economy. Also, Turkey could benefit by achieving access to new venues of natural gas and oil reserves. Thus, making Ankara independent from Russian natural gas supplies. Furthermore, Turkey could become major regional player on energy policies. In addition, through that region United States can challenge and eventually curtail the new Russian resurgence that threatens regional and global stability.