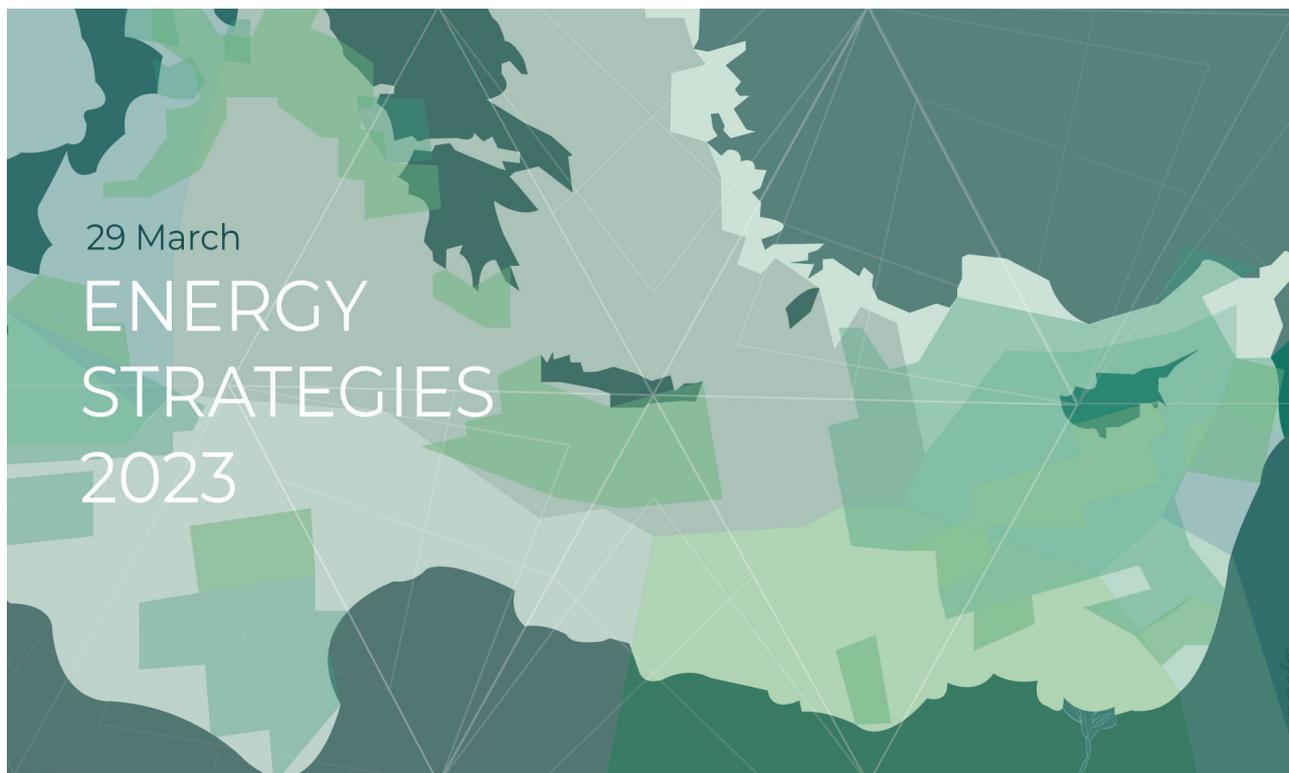




NATO Foundation  
Defense College



29 March

# ENERGY STRATEGIES 2023

*High-Level Conference organised by the NATO Defense College Foundation  
in co-operation with **Eni S.p.A.** (Corporate Partner), **Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo**,  
the **Institute for National Security Studies** (Tel Aviv),  
the **Policy Center for the New South** (Rabat) and the **NATO Defense College***



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## ENERGY STRATEGIES 2023

### *The Mediterranean: new resources and integration*

*High-Level Conference*

*Organised by the NATO Defense College Foundation*

*in co-operation with Eni S.p.A. (Corporate Partner), Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo, the Institute for National Security Studies (Tel Aviv), the Policy Center for the New South (Rabat) and the NATO Defense College*

**Rome | Wednesday, the 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2023**

*Venue: Rome Cavalieri, A Waldorf Astoria Hotel – Sala delle Belle Arti (Via Alberto Cadlolo 101)*

**14,00 – 14,30 CEST** *Participants arrival*

**14,30 – 14,45** *Welcome remarks*

- **Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo**, President, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome
- **Christopher Schnaubelt**, Dean, NATO Defense College, Rome
- **Nicolò Russo Perez**, Head, International Affairs, Compagnia di San Paolo, Turin

**14,45 – 15,45**

#### SESSION 1

#### NEW MAPS OF ENERGY DIVERSIFICATION

*An energy portfolio diversification between European importers and regional producers is a complex endeavour, also in the context of an ongoing war and, in the medium-term, the EU Green Deal. The newest potential resources are owned by Egypt and Israel, while Libya has still an important potential, and the Gulf as well. What are the opportunities and the risks? How to protect essential infrastructures? How to weave in renewables and green hydrogen?*

Chair: **Nicola Graziani**, Head, Foreign Editorial, Agenzia Giornalistica Italia, Rome

- **Ahmed Badr**, Director, Project Facilitation and Support Division, International Renewable Energy Agency, Abu Dhabi
- **Claudia Gazzini**, Senior Libya Analyst, International Crisis Group, Tripoli
- **Remi Daniel**, Mediterranean Dialogue Fellow, NATO Defense College, Rome (INSS, Tel Aviv)

*Q&A Session*

15,45 – 16,20 *Coffee Break*

16,20– 17,20

## SESSION 2 ENERGY AND NORMALISATION: PROGRESS AHEAD

*Normalisation has proved to be an important factor of progress in the region (and potentially also in the Indian subcontinent), but the energy scenario is still uneasy. The politics of energy need to be further normalised: what are the possible paths and positive consequences? The future of the region lies to a large extent in energy development and cooperation. What the best inclusive formats? How to stimulate hi-tech cooperation in the area?*

Chair: **Mehmet Ögütçü**, Chairman, London Energy Club, London

- **Ashraf Mohammed Keshk**, Research Fellow and Head of Strategic & International Studies, Derasat, Manama
- **Grammenos Mastrojeni**, Deputy Secretary General for Energy and Climate Action, Union for the Mediterranean, Barcelona
- **Marco Piredda**, Vice Chairman, Energy Transition Committee, Observatoire Méditerranéen de l'Energie, Paris

*Q&A Session*

17,20 – 17,30 *Special Intervention*

- **Pasquale Ferrara**, Director General, Directorate General for Political Affairs and Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Rome

17,30 – 17,50 *Coffee Break*

17,50 – 18,50

## SESSION 3 THE CHALLENGE OF MARKET INTEGRATION

*A connected energy market in the Eastern Mediterranean on the one hand requires infrastructures, interconnections, grids and well implemented regulations. On the other hand, in order to ensure North-South exchanges, it also needs a cooperative security framework to achieve stability. How do market actors interact among themselves and with (inter)governmental bodies assuring energy security?*

Chair: **Alon Bar**, Ambassador of Israel to Italy, Rome

- **Ahmet Evin**, Founding Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and Professor Emeritus, Sabancı University, Istanbul
- **Rim Berahab**, Senior Economist, Policy Center for the New South, Rabat
- **Leonardo Bellodi**, Adjunct Professor, Luiss Business School, Rome

*Q&A Session*

18,50 – 19,00 *Concluding Remarks*

- **Alfio Giuseppe Rapisarda**, Head of Global Security, Eni, Rome

**END OF THE WORKING DAY**

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## ENERGY STRATEGIES 2023

### *The Mediterranean: new resources and integration*

#### **A view from the region**

Traditional fossil sources for energy have been always been viewed as sources for fierce competition between concessions' seekers, sanctions' imposers and opposing rights claimers. These sources and actors are still there and remain active. But in recent years we have also witnessed the positive aspects of the energy sector on regional developments, which should be studied and leveraged beyond the energy domain.

Three examples to consider:

- Europe's reaction to the Russian invasion of Ukraine;
- the strategic decision of Europe to reduce its dependence on Russian energy resources shows political and economic resolve by citizens and leaders. It does not solve all the problems slowing down the process of Europe's unification but it strengthens the resilience and determination to push on;
- natural gas as a pacifying factor in the East Mediterranean.

Conflicts in the Middle East and specifically in the eastern part of the Mediterranean could have turned natural gas discoveries in the area from a source of economic rejuvenation into a cause for war (*casus belli*). Instead, and in spite of political hurdles, Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority and Israel teamed up with Cyprus, France, Greece and Italy to create the East Mediterranean Gas Forum. The EMGF enables discussions on energy regional cooperation, including the sales of natural gas from Israel to the PA, Jordan and Egypt.

The drastic reduction of European procurement of Russian natural gas opens up the option of increased quantities imported from the East Mediterranean. This can be done in stages, starting with an increased liquification of Israeli and Egyptian gas in Egypt's installations and later by shipping liquefied natural gas. Other technical alternatives for the delivery of gas exist and they can be carefully considered in due time.

Another positive development in this respect was the agreement reached between Lebanon and Israel (27<sup>th</sup> of October 2022) in the dispute over their relative Exclusive Economic Zones. This should unplug the development of the maritime natural gas resources in Lebanon and, in due course, allow exports to Europe and help reduce Lebanon's huge economic problems.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2022, Israel, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates signed a Memorandum of Understanding at the heart of which is the supply of desalinated Mediterranean water from Israel to Jordan and the supply of solar energy from Jordan to Israel. This is a good example of interdependency creating a win-win situation between a country lacking fresh water resources with long distances from the sea and urban centres and another with unlimited sea water at close range to its neighbours (the PA and Jordan), but with limited space for solar farms. The project can be eventually expanded and include other regional participants.

To summarise, the European Union has in recent years slowed down its East Mediterranean activity mostly due to developments beyond its control. The situation described above calls, however, for an enhanced role of the EU in promoting greater economic cooperation, that will also serve the interests of the member states.

This can be done with:

- the expansion of the EMGF by adding new members (the EU is already an observer);
- by tasking professional entities like the World Bank (also an observer) and the European Investment Bank with proposing the best technical and financial options for conveying gas, oil and possibly solar electricity from the Middle East to Europe and, above all, for preparing the transition to the era of clean/green energy.

## **Oded Eran**

*Senior Research Fellow, Institute for National Security Studies, Tel Aviv*

Ambassador Oded Eran is currently Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) in Tel Aviv, where he served as Director from July 2008 to November 2011, following a long career in Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other government positions. Before joining the INSS, Ambassador Eran served as Secretary General of the Israel branch of the World Jewish Congress. From 2002 to 2007, he was Israel's Ambassador to the European Union, covering NATO as well. Prior to that, he was also Ambassador to Jordan, and Head of Israel's negotiations team with the Palestinians. Among his previous positions: Deputy Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Chief of the Israeli Embassy in Washington DC. Between 2007 and 2013, Ambassador Eran served as an advisor to the Knesset sub-committee on Foreign Affairs. He holds a Ph.D. from the London School of Economics.



## **ENERGY STRATEGIES 2023**

### *The Mediterranean: new resources and integration*

#### **Background Paper**

In the last decade, Eastern Mediterranean has become a relevant region, leading to a general reshuffle of geopolitical and geo-economic trends and, at the same time, to the establishment of new partnerships. While the European Union is completely rethinking its political energy after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Levantine countries are trying to go beyond a post-Arab Spring scenario by improving their national security and poor economic performance, worsened by the ongoing global crisis and cyclic social unrest. On the other hand, the 2022 NATO Strategic Concept has clearly in mind energy security of supply as a desirable goal.

This complexity is clearly exemplified by the case of Egypt. Since the rise to power of President ‘Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi, the country has portrayed itself as a crucial energetic hub that is capable of meeting and matching needs and demands of Europe, connecting it to Africa and the Middle East. This ambitious project takes root in the 2015 discovery of Zohr, a 100 km<sup>2</sup> offshore gas field located 200 km north of Port Said, the entrance of Suez Canal. Since then, Egypt has become a net gas exporter and has signed a remarkable partnership with Eni for the exploration and drilling of the seafloor, that eventually led to the discovery of the Nargis-1 depot well in January 2023.

The emergence of energy sector brought positive outcomes, first of all the partnership between Egypt and Israel. Cairo can count on huge hydrocarbon reserves; however, it needs a broader import-reexport strategy in order to increase its revenues. This scheme comprises firstly Israeli gas supply via Arab Gas Pipeline and secondly the use of strategic terminal facilities (Damietta and Beheira), where the gas is liquefied and finally shipped to Europe. Consequently, the Egyptian-Israeli agreement paved the way to the 2022 Memorandum of Understanding with the European Union, further integrating energy market.

The fact that such agreement affects directly core NATO issues is proven by the successful mediation led by American diplomats in resolving after more than ten years the maritime border dispute between Israel and Lebanon, where mutual economic benefits are expected to overcome long-lasting confrontation. Even Jordan is part of this project, since the Kingdom has doubled its capacity of electrical

interconnection with Egypt and in January 2022 it agreed, through a US-brokered deal, to bring electricity in Lebanon in order to contain shortages and ameliorate inhabitants' life conditions.

Despite this encouraging facts, one can notice the growing challenges of the region: e.g., Egypt's economic structure, heavily controlled by the military apparatus, is rapidly deteriorating and the huge availability of hydrocarbon hardly copes with the increasing domestic demand and huge demographic pressure. As mentioned, Lebanon is struggling with a devastating and enduring socio-economic crisis, while Jordan remains in a precarious standing, though its visible stability.

In this sense, a more structured and target-oriented response of NATO would bolster security framework and replicate new energy agreements and partnership.

### **Mauro Primavera**

*Researcher, OASIS International Foundation, Milan*

Dr Mauro Primavera is researcher at OASIS International Foundation and Teaching Assistant in Geopolitics, History of Islamic Asia, History of Civilization and Political Culture at the Catholic University of Milan. His research areas include Arab and Mediterranean geopolitics, history of the MENA region, Arab secular and religious movements. He holds a Ph.D. in Institutions and Policies.

## THE NATO DEFENSE COLLEGE FOUNDATION

The NATO Defense College Foundation, the only existing think-tank bearing the name of the Alliance, was established in Rome in 2011. It grew out from a common intuition of the President Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo and the NATO Defense College top decision makers, who understood the value of a non-profit NGO that could work beyond usual and institutional outreach, training, communication and scientific research activities.

The principles stated in the preamble to the Washington Treaty of 1949 are our heritage.

Our mission is to promote the culture of stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area and in NATO Partner nations.

Our aim is to meet the highest standards in contributing to public debate and future deliberations on strategic, security and geopolitical issues.

Therefore, the NDCF strives at considering relevant issues not just in a descriptive or prescriptive way, but by catching the sense of events and the essential vectors of future developments.

In a claim: Charting ahead.

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## NOTES

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