

TURKEY, ISRAEL, GREECE: RESHUFFLING IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

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Abstract: Lots have happened in the East-Mediterranean since the beginning of the third millennium. A list of the main events reveals a long series of issues that took place in the region and heavily affect it. The impact of these issues and events will stay with us for the foreseeable future and is heavily discernible in the relations between the eastern - Mediterranean non-Arab littoral countries: Turkey, Israel, Greece and Cyprus.

This list includes, for example, the 2000s deteriorating relations between Turkey and Israel (in 2016 the two resumed full diplomatic relations); the current crises in the relations between Turkey several Middle Eastern countries (Egypt, Syria, Iraq); the civil war that rages in Syria since 2011 and Turkey's deep involvement in it; acts of Islamist led terrorism, attacks by ISIS¹, and manifestations of religious extremism that heavily affect daily life, economies and tourism in Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, as well as in other places; illegal immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers that inundate Turkey, Greece (and via them) many EU countries; energy explorations in the Mediterranean Sea; issues related to civil rights, minorities, the growing tendencies towards strong executives and authoritarian regimes at the expense of democracy and pluralism; heavy internal changes like the decline of Turkish Kemalism, the growing impact of religion in Israel and Turkey, and the financial crisis of Greece; In addition, the struggle for self-determination of various ethnic groups and peoples (the Kurds, the Palestinians, and others); the Russian reappearance, American disappearance and the EU weak impact on events in the Middle East and the Eastern - Mediterranean - - these and subjects have brought about dramatic changes in the Eastern Mediterranean sub-system.

1. See at the end of this text: ANNEX: Evidence on the Collaboration of Turkey with ISIS and other jihadist groups, as well as relevant testimonies from international sources

From the Turkish standpoint, the events in our region express what is happening in the global arena: Europe is aging, its economy and currency are limping and convulsing, and the EU radiates political disintegration (the Brexit) and economic weaknesses. The US is suffering from an economic crisis, it is globally and politically on the decline, internally it is also on the decline following the eight years' presidency of Barak Obama, and the November 2016 election of President Donald Trump. Simultaneously, other powers (China, Russia) strive to replace American hegemony all around the globe. Also from the standpoint of Ankara, Turkey desires to be now a rising «uneasy» power, and is demarcating the limits of its influence: Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Balkans, on the one hand; black Africa, North Africa, and the Middle East, on the other.

Following several setbacks, Turkish – Russian relations are developing and disagreements have been settled. And all these developments and events have greatly affected the three eastern - Mediterranean non - Muslim countries (Greece, Israel, Cyprus), and the region's sole non - Arab but Muslim country - Turkey. In our paper we will make an attempt to describe and analyze the major impacts that these events and issues have had on the developments in the eastern – Mediterranean, with particular focus on Turkey and Israel, and the growing cooperation between Greece and Israel.

CENTROWESTERN BALKANS, TURKEY, ISRAEL, GREECE AND REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS: RESHUFFLING IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

A. The pragmatology of instability in geopolitical subsystems of Greece - Cyprus - Turkey and Turkey - occupied northern part of Cyprus.

The nearly 20 year period, that passed since the US intervention in Iraq (March 2003), the re-initiation of official talks of between Greece and FYROM, and the latest Turkish intercepting actions in hampering/blockading the Italian drilling rig (ENI Saipen 12000) within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Cyprus Republic (Feb. 2018), is characterized by the escalation and the consolidation of tension in the geographic complex of Eastern Mediterranean and Near East. Accepting that fact, a researcher cannot neglect the evaluation of rationality of the influences of the supra-system Poles of Powers, like Moscow or Washington.

In figuring out/estimating, with the method of Systemic Geopolitical Analysis, the balances in the area of the Eastern Mediterranean complex with respect of the geostrategic behavior of the three [under examination] nation-state actors, the following sub-systems of relations are noted:

a) The sub-system of Greece - Republic of Cyprus ("free" or non-occupied region/FreRe.)

For that subsystem, the Doctrine ("Dogma") of the Unified Greece-Cyprus Defence Space, which was agreed in 1993 between the administrations of Glafkos Cleridis and Andreas Papandreou, valid in practice from 1994 to 1999, whereas it was practically/tacitly abandoned by the Kostas Simitis administration, in the context of a PASOK's appeasement foreign policy against Turkey.

Of course, that appeasement policy of the PASOK administrations (and those that followed ever since) brought exactly the opposite results from those that Athens expected (according to the Greek perspective:.. In these sentimental topics it is important to underline whose thinking it is, especially considering the reader profile of this book!) For instance from the Turkish perspective the 2004 referendum, as a good opportunity to resolve the Cyprus problem) full escalation of Turkish provocations and considerable violations of International Law and International Law of the Sea, in the areas of Greek Thrace, in areas of national Greek sovereignty (and of EU legal space) in the Aegean Archipelagos and in areas of national sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus (equally included in the EU legal space) and those of international responsibility in its respective EEZ.

b) The sub-system of Turkey - occupied territories in northern Cyprus

In that sub-system, Turkey since 1964 projects power in the area, by acting not in conformity with the provisions of the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions 186/4 March 1964 and 187/13 March 1964, which were adopted, unanimously, and Resolutions 186/4 March 1964 and 187/13 March 1964. The UN General Assembly also considered the situation in Cyprus and adopted Resolution 2077(XX) on 18 December 1965. Afterwards, Ankara also showed no respect to relevant Resolutions of the UN Security Council and of the General Assembly (in particular UNSC Res 365/1974, UNSC Res 541/1983, UNSC Res 550/1984, UNSC Res 1250/1999 and others that followed ever since), with regard to the unlawful Turkey's military invasion on Cyprus in July-August 1974, which resulted to the illegal military occupation of the northern part of the island.

A.1.) Turkey's strategic behavior within the context of the two (above mentioned)

Syb-systems

With respect of the subsystems (b) and (c), Turkey's conceptual strategic thinking, as regarding the projection of its own Power, is clearly defined (without any doubt or misinterpretation) within the writings of Ahmet Davutoğlu, thus avoiding taking unaware or possibly surprise other major international actors, like EU or even USA, on the unlawful (with respect to international law) reforming aspirations of Ankara. The most distinguished of these Davutoğlu ideas are as follows:

- 1) In relation to Davutoğlu's plan for the Greek Dodecanese island complex which belongs to the same geopolitical subsystem with the area of Cyprus (Sub-system of Dodecanese islands-Cyprus), the Turkish Foreign Minister is clear in positing that *«At this point, the geopolitical and military reality must be harmonised with the economic and political reality. In the same way, the dependence of the Dodecanese on the continental plate of Asia Minor [i.e Turkey – he thus gives a geological aspect, which he plans to use in order to disallow Kastelorizo from claiming an EEZ or a continental shelf, even if the geological dimension is now absent from the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea]»*². With regard to bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey, it is quite clear that his perception is driven solely to the element of military Power, while lacking any respect or even reference to international law: *«Effort is being put so that Turkey*

2. A. Davutoğlu, 2004, *Stratejik Derinlik. Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu*, İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 202.

becomes accustomed to experience, on a regular basis, tensions with Greece and Syria – this corresponds to a heavyweight wrestler's training, to confront medium-weight class wrestlers. The consequence of this is that the country cannot fully exploit its potential. Turkey is now obliged to be upgraded so that, having attained a higher class, it may consider its relations with these countries as inferior elements and exercise only policies from above, vis-à-vis these countries»³.

As pertains to Davutoğlu's strategic planning in relation to Cyprus, the cynicism of the toughest classical school of Geopolitics is explicit:

[1] «[The latest developments have shown that] the US, by creating a dynamic link between their policies for Eastern Europe and the Middle East, aim to control Europe's Hinterland and fill the void of a geopolitical field that developed on the Balkan–Middle East axis, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The Aegean Sea and Cyprus are two significant branches, both on the line of Eastern Europe and Middle East, in relation to land connection, and on the line of the Adriatic Sea, the Mediterranean and the Gulf, in relation to maritime connection»⁴

[2] [...] In the context of this strategic planning, the Cyprus issue will come to the foreground more actively [...] Today, a field of a very dynamic interaction is formed between Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Adriatic Sea, the Aegean Sea, the Eastern Mediterranean and the Gulf [...] On this line, uniting the Balkans and the Middle East, the development of new onsets will be inevitable»⁵.

[3] «Turkey's strategic Gordian knot and Cyprus: Cyprus, located centrally in the world's continent, almost equidistantly from Europe, Asia and Africa, together with Crete, is found on a line intersecting the routes of maritime passage. Cyprus is located between the Straits that separate Europe and Asia and the Suez Canal that separates Asia and Africa. Moreover, it also has the location of a stable base and of an aircraft carrier that catches the pulse of the sea routes of Aden and Hormuz, together with the basins of the Gulf and the Caspian Sea, which are the most important routes linking the Eurasia and Africa »⁶.

3. *op. cit.*, 235.

4. *op. cit.*, 174.

5. *op. cit.*, 175.

6. *ibid.*

[4] «A country that ignores Cyprus cannot be active in the world and peripheral politics. In world politics, it cannot be active because this small island occupies a position that (may) influence directly the strategic linkages between Asia and Africa, Europe and Africa, and Europe and Asia. In peripheral politics, it cannot be active, because Cyprus points with its eastern nose in an arrow-like manner to the Middle East, while its western ridge it is the cornerstone of strategic balances in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Balkans and Northern Africa»⁷.

[5] «Turkey, affected because of its location by a multitude of balances, is obliged to assess its Cyprus policy, taking it out of the Turkish-Greek equation. Cyprus is increasingly becoming an issue of Eurasia and Middle East-Balkans (Western Asia-Eastern Europe). [Turkey's] Cyprus policy should be put in a new strategic framework, and in a manner appropriate for this new strategic framework. On the issue of Cyprus, from the side of Turkey, this importance can be found in two main axes. The first axis is that of human value, oriented towards safeguarding the security of the Muslim Turkish community, as a result of Turkey's historic responsibility»⁸.

[6] «Any incompetence [of Turkey] that [may eventually] obtain in the issue of securing and protecting the Turkish community in Cyprus could spread as a wave into Western Thrace and Bulgaria, even into Azerbaijan and Bosnia. The second important axis of the Cyprus issue is the importance of this island in geostrategic terms [...] Even if there were no Muslim Turks in Cyprus, Turkey would be obliged to preserve a Cyprus issue. No country can remain indifferent vis-à-vis such an island, which is located in the heart of its very vital space [...]»⁹.

[7] «This geostrategic importance is two-dimensional: One dimension has a narrow strategic importance, and is related to the balances between Turkey and Greece, on the one hand, and between the TRNC and the Greek part [sic], on the other, in the Eastern Mediterranean. The importance of the second geostrategic dimension is great, and is related to the place of the island in the context of international and regional strategies»¹⁰.

7. op. cit., 176.

8. op. cit., 178.

9. op. cit., 179.

10. *ibid.*

[8] «No regional or world power can ignore Cyprus when making strategic calculations in the Middle East, in the Eastern Mediterranean, in the Aegean Sea, in Suez, in the Red Sea and in the Gulf. Cyprus is placed such an ideal distance from all these areas, that has the capacity of a parameter capable of directly influencing each one of them. The strategic advantage which Turkey gained in the 1970s, on this very parameter, must be used not as the element of a defensive Cyprus policy aimed to safeguard the status quo, but as a fundamental support of a maritime strategy with a diplomatic nature»¹¹.

The examination of the above geostrategic perceptions of A. Davutoğlu helps us to understand the reformative and not in conformity with international law of the Sea, behavior of Turkey in Central Balkan region (FYROM, Albania, Kosovo) and in Eastern Mediterranean, and in particularly to the EEZ of the Republic of Cyprus. A behavior that puts in danger international peace and security and/or regional stability, and energy security of Israel, Egypt and EU. Those behavioral elements will be explained further below.

A.1.1) Turkey's behavior on the current unstable situation in the Eastern Mediterranean due to Turkey's drilling projects in the area surrounding Cyprus.

After the third round of the granting of offshore licenses in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the Republic of Cyprus has been concluded, the following picture has emerged concerning the distribution of drilling rights to companies: i) ENI-KOGAS performs drilling in Blocks 2, 3 and 9¹², ii) ENI performs drilling in Block 8, iii) ENI-TOTAL in Blocks 6 and 11, iv) EXXON-MOBIL-QATAR PETROLEUM in Block 10¹³ and v) Shell-Noble-Delek in Block 12¹⁴. ENI shall start drilling in Blocks 3, 6 and 8 after the relevant environmental permits have been granted, using the 6th Generation Ultra Deepwater Drillship "Saipem 12000" which is currently stationed in Las Palmas of the Canary Islands. The consortium consisting of Exxon Mobil and Qatar Petroleum is preparing two drills in Block 10. The two companies shall be able to begin drillings in the second half of 2018, as announced.

11. *op. cit.*, 180.

12. https://www.eni.com/en_IT/media/2013/01/eni-awarded-three-offshore-exploration-blocks-in-the-republic-of-cyprus?lnkfrm=newssearch

13. <https://www.offshoreenergytoday.com/exxonmobil-qatar-petroleum-ink-contract-for-block-off-cyprus/>

14. <http://www.globes.co.il/en/article-delek-noble-energy-to-return-cyprus-block-12-rights-1001124712>

i) Overview of the illegal claims of Turkey in the EEZ of the Republic of Cyprus.

Ankara opposes *in toto* the legal base of all aforementioned, raising objections spelled out in a letter sent to the United Nations on April 12, 2017 (A/71/875-S/2017/321)¹⁵, by which the Turkish government i) questions the outline of the EEZ of the Republic of Cyprus and ii) claims Block 6 as part of Turkey's continental shelf in the Eastern Mediterranean. Block 6 has already been ceded for exploration and exploitation to ENI-TOTAL, a consortium of Italian, French, and Israeli interests. Cyprus and Greece have provided their respective legal objections on Turkish allegations in similar letters (A/71/901-S/2017/416 and A/71/900-S/2017/392)¹⁶. In general, the government of Turkey continues to promote legally ungrounded view concerning the Greek-Turkish dispute over the delimitation of the continental shelf¹⁷.

In this way, Turkey disregards the legal framework of UNCLOS II/1982 which, on those points it is widely accepted as customary law, in a clear attempt to deprive the Republic of Cyprus of every sea zone that lies beyond the Cypriot territorial waters. At the same time, the Turkish government seeks to appear as the legitimate owner of the whole continental shelf in the Eastern Mediterranean that lies beyond the 6 n.m. territorial waters of Greek islands. If the United States and the European Union allow and legitimize the projection of such Turkish claims, they will actually jeopardize, or even oppose, the interests of the aforementioned companies and consortia since the granting of offshore licenses by the Republic of Cyprus will be deemed void and would be reissued, this time from the Islamist regime of Ankara.

If Turkey, acting on this matter as a "Trojan horse" on behalf of Tehran and Moscow, succeeds in the "Finlandization"¹⁸ of Cyprus, then it will control fully, in cooperation with Russia and Iran, the geostrategic focal point of the Mediterranean Sea: Ankara will control the deposits of the Levantine Basin (Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Cyprus) and the Nile Delta, the hydrocarbon deposits of Mosul and Kirkuk in northern Iraq, the water deposits of the Middle East (Tiger and Euphrates), the Suez Canal, as well as the geographical area inhabited

15. http://www.un.org/depts/los/general_assembly/other_general_assembly_documents.htm

16. http://www.un.org/depts/los/general_assembly/other_general_assembly_documents.htm

17. <https://www.mfa.gr/en/issues-of-greek-turkish-relations/relevant-documents/delimitation-of-the-continental-shelf.html>

18. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/Finlandization>

by 32 million Kurds (Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria), an area that under different circumstances could provide Israel with the strategic depth that is necessary for its survival in the Middle East. The Turkish blockade of ENI rig¹⁹, in the south-eastern part of the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Cyprus, leads the situation in SE Mediterranean to an extremely dangerous point and also, it proves the aforementioned intentions of Turkey. Thus, Ankara will become part of a “pentagon of anti-Western powers” in the Eastern Mediterranean consisting of Moscow, Ankara, Tehran, Beirut (which Iran aspires to control totally) and Doha in Qatar, a country that has allegedly financed the Muslim Brotherhood and the regime in Ankara.

Such a prospect undermines the energy security of the Euro-Atlantic block, as all energy supply lines will be controlled by Moscow and Tehran, including the EastMed pipeline²⁰. So far, the Turkish government seems to respect the jurisdiction of its Euro-Atlantic allies, as it has not posed any claims on Block 11. Seven countries have projected their sea and air power in this region, after the first phase of drilling in Onesiphorus deposit was initiated²¹, assumed by the TOTAL-ENI French-Italian consortium.

ii) Russia's influence in Egypt

The aforementioned “pentagon of anti-Western powers” in the area could be expanded with the inclusion of Egypt, if Russian attempts at its infiltration- as well as Turkish aspirations for rapprochement with Cairo- are successfully concluded, thus creating a triple conglomeration of Moscow, Ankara and Cairo. So far, the Egyptian government under al-Sisi has not endorsed such a rapprochement. The following actions would mark Russian infiltration in Egypt:

1) The creation of an expanded Russian industrial zone (RIZ) east of Port Said, on the axis of the Suez Canal, which is covering an area of 5 million sq.m that could absorb an investment exceeding 7 billion U.S. dollars. The total cost for this industrial zone amounts to 190 million U.S. dollars. «RIZ would be established on an area of 5.25 million square meters and will be built over three phases.[...] The three phases are expected to be finished by 2031, when Russian companies will start operations, providing some 35,000 direct and indirect jobs. The Egyptian and Russian

19. https://www.ansa.it/english/news/2018/02/12/turkish-blockade-of-eni-rig-for-cyprus-drilling-continues_ad40ca43-91f3-441d-b8e2-fb01ed1fd14e.html

20. <http://www.igi-poseidon.com/en/eastmed>

21. <http://www.oedigital.com/drilling/item/16198-cyprus-gas-probe-positive-news-despite-being-new-commercial>

sides have agreed to establish a company under the name of Moscow Economic Zone to be responsible of the zone's operations and construction works. The two sides have further agreed that the Egyptian and Russian governments will supervise the project, which is funded by the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) and a number of Egyptian banks. Total Russian investments in the Egyptian market are valued at about \$62.8 million across 417 projects in various fields, according to the Trade Ministry»²². This assists the Egyptian authorities in creating "protection facilities"²³ for the Russian investments, thus aiding the presence and docking of Russian warships

2) In this context, Russia has expressed its interest in upgrading and rendering fully functional the naval base of the adjacent coastal area of Sidi Barani, lying 95 km east of the Egypt-Libya borderline, between Marsa Matrouh and Salum. The naval base lies 250 km from the nuclear reactor of Dabaa (which was constructed with Russian assistance) and characteristically near the biggest airbase in Egypt, constructed by Soviet experts in 1971. This is a deep-water port that can accommodate large warships. «The Soviet Union had a small naval facility near the town until 1972, which was used to monitor US naval forces deployed to the region. The facility in question is not a port [which are non-existent on this coastline], but rather the Sidi Buarrani air field about five miles to the south of town [roughly 31.45 N x 25.90 E / 31°27'60» N 25°52'41» E]. This standard issue military airfield has several dozen hardened aircraft shelters at the north and south ends of the double runway, and another handful or so in the middle, just for good measure.»²⁴

3) The cooperation between ENI and Rosneft highlights the geostrategic dimensions of Russian power projection in the Eastern Mediterranean. The two companies have been cooperating for a period of time, especially over the last decade. The Strategic Partnership Agreement of 2006 allowed Gazprom to provide a volume of direct supplies to the Italian economy amounting to 34 bcm³ of natural gas until 2016. It is worth mentioning that, while BP controls 10% of the shares, Rosneft controls 30% of the shares of the Zohr gas field, the Zohr gas field contains, according to ENI estimations, "total potential of 850 billion cubic meters of gas" and is "the largest natural gas field ever discovered in the Mediterranean".

22. <https://www.egypttoday.com/Article/3/44692/Gov%E2%80%99t-approves-agreement-to-establish-Russian-Industrial-Zone>

23. see: 1) <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/egypt-ready-agree-new-russian-air-base-coast-reports-1845388280> 2) <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/russia-strives-cover-its-bases>

24. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/egypt/sidi-barrani.htm>

iii) *The new European regime of defense and security and its implications for the Republic of Cyprus.*

The aforementioned Turkish destabilization attempts have been met with a clear answer by the Euro-Atlantic state actors with the inclusion of Greece and Cyprus and 23 other EU-member states into the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) pursuant to the implementation of provisions included in the Lisbon Treaty.

The participation of Greece and Cyprus (agreed on Nov 13th, 2017), among 21 other European States, in the European initiative of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), which was already provided to the Lisbon Treaty, further promotes the integration and strengthening of defense and security cooperation within the EU framework, in order to help better address the security challenges of European states. In this regard, it can be considered a counterbalance to Turkish destabilizing tendencies in the region, mainly because it links the Republic of Cyprus with Western European and/or NATO framework and with relevant structures and architecture of defense and security.

At the same time, contributing to reinforcing the EU's strategic autonomy, particularly in the area of ESDP in helping avoiding the possibility of Turkish intervention in internal European matters, as PESCO lies exclusively on EU member-states. That added political value of the PESCO initiative is particularly reflected in the recent statement of the Secretary General of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg: "I welcome PESCO because I believe that it can strengthen European defense, which is good for Europe but also good for NATO".

Since 2004, I have been writing extensively on the prospect of Cyprus joining NATO, presenting my views in Cypriot and Helladic fora, as well as in political/academic meetings with high-ranking US officials and I feel vindicated, vis-à-vis this prospect. From my perspective, the inclusion of Greece and Cyprus in PESCO and the US support towards the European governments on the creation of PESCO: i) marks a new era of rational redistribution of security and development with the EU, ii) provides security to Israel, a democracy in the Middle East aligned with the West, iii) Assures energy security in the Levantine Basin, which is undermined by the destabilizing choices of the Islamist regime of Ankara, iv) assures a long-lasting solution to the Cyprus issue, rendering the Turkish claim that the presence of the invasion army that currently occupies the northern part of Cyprus would "protect Cyprus from external interventions" obsolete according to Nicos Anastasiades, President of the Republic of Cyprus.

Furthermore, the creation of PESCO: i) offers a security framework to the Republic of Cyprus based on an EU framework, ii) secures exploitation of the

deposits of the Republic of Cyprus in the sea area designated by international sea law as the EEZ of the Republic of Cyprus, iii) promotes talks between the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish-Cypriot community protecting the procedure from external blackmailing interventions by Ankara, thus assisting a dialogue as understood according to European legal culture.

In conclusion, the state actors with economic interests in the energy reserves of the EEZ of the Republic of Cyprus, as well as the great powers that are possible to promote peace, stability, and security in the region (namely the United States) seem to realize that only the creation of a Euro-Atlantic shield of peace and security in the Eastern Mediterranean can provide for a secure and stable environment in the light of Turkish destabilization efforts.

A.2.) The Geostrategic Behavior of Russo-American Energy Antagonism in the Sub-system of the Balkans in the Greater System of the Mediterranean

During the last months, the Geopolitical Complex of the Mediterranean features an ongoing upheaval in the Western Balkans region, part of the Geopolitical Sub-system of the Balkans. Greece has the ambiguous privilege of forming the intersection of two unstable Sub-systems of the Mediterranean Geopolitical Complex, i.e.:

- i. the Sub-system of the Balkans and
- ii. the Sub-system of Turkey and the Near East.

We shall demonstrate that these two Sub-systems feature an intense joint function of instability in the present juncture and we shall also emphasize the main Geopolitical Factor that causes the aforementioned instability, i.e. energy security. Furthermore, we shall lay emphasis on the new Cold War-style antagonism between the two fundamental Poles of International Power, i.e. Moscow and Washington, an antagonism affecting in a destabilizing manner the Geopolitical Complex of the Mediterranean and in the Western Balkans regions as a main focal point. The term *new Cold War-style* is used so as to highlight the fact that there exists a considerable ideological distance between these two Poles (the same applies albeit in a different manner for the relations between Washington and Beijing), as was the case during the Cold War. The ideological difference in this case consists of the contrast between the neoliberal Western approach and the identitarian conservative approach of the East spearheaded by Moscow.

The following (our) analysis is based on the classic Anglo-Saxon geopolitical school and especially on N.J. Spykman's «containment model», as the latter

has been modified by Z. Brzezinsky. Our methodological approach is based on Systemic Geopolitical Analysis.

A.2.1. Eastern Europe and the Balkans: Unstable Balance and Power Redistribution. The Balkan Sub-system concerning the behavior of Washington

i. The first action against Russian power projection was the loss of Russian influence over Montenegro, a country with Slav-Orthodox population. Montenegro became a member of NATO in 2017.

ii. The second action against Moscow was the downfall of the pro-Russian government of Gruevski in FYROM and the gradual reorientation of FYROM under the new government.

iii. The third action consists of the recently adopted by US Congress executive orders that introduce sanctions against the Russian Federation. It should be noted that the sanctions were adopted despite President Trump's objection by a wide margin of 98 to 2 and having already been adopted by the House of Representatives with 419 votes in favor and 3 against.²⁵

In general NATO expansion in the Balkans and Eastern Europe has led to inclusion of thirteen new member-states during a period of eighteen years (March 1999-June 2017)²⁶, thereby excluding vast regions of vital interest for Russian economy from Moscow's influence.

This coherent and strategic surrounding of Russia by NATO and its allies in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe is a faithful fulfillment of Spykman's theoretical model of Rimland and the geostrategic approach of the diplomat George Kennan and his theoretical successor Zbigniew Brzezinsky. Such an intention can be clearly deduced from the text itself of the recent US sanctions against the Russian Federation.²⁷

25. «It's official: Congress has handcuffed Donald Trump on Russia» [<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/7/28/16055630/congress-trump-russia-sanctions-veto>].

26. On March 12 1999 the Czech republic, Hungary, Poland entered NATO, being followed in March 2004 by Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, by Albania and Croatia on April 2009 and lastly by Montenegro on June 2017.

27. Article 254 reads as follows: "**Russia Sanctions Review Act of 2017**" (**Tuesday 3 January, 115th Congress of USA**) SEC. 254. Coordinating aid and assistance across Europe and Eurasia. (a) Authorization of appropriations. – There are authorized to be appropriated for the Countering Russian Influence Fund \$250,000,000 for fiscal years 2018 and 2019. (b) Use of funds. – Amounts in the Countering Russian Influence Fund shall be used to effectively implement, prioritized in the following order and subject to the

Russia attempts to respond to these NATO advances by resorting to its comparative advantages in the region, mainly energy and especially natural gas that forms one fourth of European energy consumption. It should be noted in this context that Gazprom supplied the EU with one third of this quantity. Given the compulsory reduction of electric energy from coal due to EU quotas and NATO policy concerning energy security in Europe the Balkan states face a serious energy dilemma that is driven to a solution dictated by US and NATO interests. Croatia, an EU member has to align itself to this policy, while other states of Western Balkans aspiring to become EU members have to reorient their policies accordingly.

It is also clear that NATO assumes that Russia's ability of a future energy influence over Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina,²⁸ FYROM and Bulgaria can be easily transformed into political influence; such a perspective is annoying to Washington given also the Cold War climate that the US Congress insists on maintaining against the Russian Federation.

availability of funds, the following goals: (1) To assist in protecting critical infrastructure and electoral mechanisms from cyberattacks in the following countries: (A) Countries that are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or the European Union that the Secretary of State determines – (i) are vulnerable to influence by the Russian Federation [A.N.: the states which are indicated in this text are obviously: Turkey, Serbia]; and (ii) lack the economic capability to effectively respond to aggression by the Russian Federation without the support of the United States. (B) Countries that are participating in the enlargement process of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or the European Union, including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Macedonia [A.N.: i.e. FYROM], Moldova, Kosovo, Serbia, and Ukraine [A.N.: Interesting concerning future planning in the region]. (2) To combat corruption, improve the rule of law, and otherwise strengthen independent judiciaries and prosecutors general offices in the countries described in paragraph (1). (3) To respond to the humanitarian crises and instability caused or aggravated by the invasions and occupations of Georgia and Ukraine by the Russian Federation. (4) To improve participatory legislative processes and legal education, political transparency and competition, and compliance with international obligations in the countries described in paragraph (1). (5) To build the capacity of civil society, media, and other nongovernmental organizations countering the influence and propaganda of the Russian Federation to combat corruption, prioritize access to truthful information, and operate freely in all regions in the countries described in paragraph (1) [https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/3364/text#toc-H954BE429129341AB9D32B-2D4775AA845], [downloaded: 8/8/2017]

28. A.N. Russia can exert political influence over Bosnia-Herzegovina through the constituent polity of Republika Srpska.

NATO's geostrategic response vis-à-vis existing or possible Russian influence in the Western Balkans is developed on two levels:

1. Energy security, through the following pipes:

i. Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP, connecting Turkey-Greece-Albania-Italy) due to be completed until 2020²⁹

ii. Ionian-Adriatic Pipeline (IAP), an extension of TAP that shall be bi-directional and will be divided in a LNG terminal on the island of Krk of Croatia and shall supply Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania and FYROM. Construction of the LNG terminal shall cost 630 million Euros and 50% of the expenses shall be covered by the EU, while it holds a capacity of 4-6 billion m³. The Croatian government seeks strategic investors that shall also act as common owners of the whole project. It should also be noted that Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, FYROM and Montenegro, assisted by USAID, signed in May 2017 an agreement for the construction of this project, so as to reduce their energy dependency from Russia. Serbia and Romania did not sign this agreement.

iii. The general Western energy planning includes the development of the Eastern Mediterranean Pipeline (EastMed). The pipeline was approved in April 2017 with a Common Statement by the Ministers of Energy of Italy, Greece, Cyprus and Israel during a ministerial meeting in Tel Aviv and in the presence of the European Commissioner Miguel Arias Canete. The EastMed Pipeline belongs to the European program Connecting Europe Facility (CEF). According to studies and the reports by the companies Intecsea and C&M and IHS-Cera it has been proved that this pipeline is: a) technically feasible, b) economically viable and of a lower cost in comparison to other planned pipelines and c) complementary to other export options.

It should also be noted that on the basis of the certified existing resources in the Levantine basin and in the EEZ of the Cyprus Republic this pipeline could provide 30 billion m³/year to the international markets. Such estimation does not include the remaining fields in the area of the Egyptian deposits in Al Zor that shall be transported in a variety of ways to the international markets, i.e. as LNG or through EastMed. The strategic importance of this pipeline for Greece and the Cyprus Republic but also for Israel and Egypt under al-Sisi (and not under Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood), as well as the influence of oil com-

29. TAP's shareholding is comprised of BP (20%), SOCAR (20%), Snam S.p.A. (20%), Fluxys (19%), Enagás (16%) and Axpo (5%).

panies that have or shall invest in the EEZ of the Cyprus Republic have been triumphantly manifested during the recent series of Turkish provocations in the region.

iv) In this respect, Serbia also shall be the first point of confrontation between Moscow and Washington. Moscow cannot allow a pressure on Serbia, like the one exerted on 1999. If tension arose in Serbia, this could lead to a general conflict in the Balkans and perhaps in other parts of Europe.

2. Poles of International Power and their Action in the Sub-systems: Behavior and Rationality Analysis. Description of Moscow's Behavior and Evaluation of its Rationality

Russian Federation can respond to the aforementioned exclusion initiated by Washington in only one peaceful manner, i.e. with the Turkstream pipeline, a project jointly decided by Russia and Turkey in October 2016. Announcement of new sanctions imposed on Nord Stream II has led Russia to speed up construction of Turkish Stream in the Black Sea, a work under progress. Since May 2017 Swiss Allseas that has taken on the project from Gazprom, has already constructed 15 miles of the undersea pipeline. The first of these two parallel pipelines shall be fully functional by March 2018, while the second by 2019. Planned yearly capacity of each branch shall be 15.75 billion m³ or 32 billion m³ for both branches.³⁰ This pipeline is supported by Serbia as a gesture of coordination with Russia, still it does not seem possible that the pipeline shall reach Serbia due to a variety of geostrategic issues, such as:

i. Relations between Turkey and the EU have reached their lowest point ever. Withdrawal of German military personnel from Incirlik and Konya is a clear indication.

ii. Relations between Turkey and the US feature tensions. The US withdraws gradually its forces from Incirlik seeking new facilities in an expanded base in Suda, Crete.

iii. Turkish interest to obtain Russian weapons' systems, such as S-400, shall endanger Turkish relations with NATO and its political addendum, the EU.

iv. Turkey's support for the Muslim Brotherhood and the connection of the latter with UCK, as well as Turkish involvement with the Islamic State and other jihadist groups in Syria. Consequently, Moscow faces a double irrational model concerning its Balkan policy:

30. F. William Engdahl, " Turkey, Russia and Interesting New Balkan", "Turkey, Russia and Interesting New Balkan Geopolitics", 14/08/2017, <http://www.defenddemocracy.press/turkey-russia-and-interesting-new-balkan-geopolitics/>

iv.1. the vision of a Greater Albania that shall include Kosovo and the Serbian valley of Presevo is contrary to Russian interests and undermines the core of its defensive strategy vis-à-vis expansion of NATO influence in the Western Balkans and in the possible corridors of Russian energy pipelines towards the EU. Creation of a Greater Albania with Turkish support shall lead to entry of Albania into NATO and the EU after a while!

iv.2. How shall Moscow respond to a strong influence exerted by militant Salafist elements ante portas? To what degree can Moscow disregard Turkey's support and instrumentalization of jihadist Islam? The answer is that Moscow has to receive considerable compensation and assurances concerning this irrational nexus of relations with its Turkish ally, especially concerning Turkish support for Islamo-fascist groups in Syria³¹. We must accept that Syria is the region where fundamental Russian strategic interests in the SE Mediterranean are at stake: i) regaining part of its previous (Soviet) influence on the Arab-Muslim world, ii) access to Syria's natural gas, iii) on the Shiite corridor of Iran's natural gas towards the Mediterranean (Tehran-Damascus-Lebanon) and iv) on power projection towards a key strategic point in the Middle East that protects Western interests, i.e. the Suez Canal and the Persian Gulf. It's obvious after all, that Russia faces a war concerning its soft power and status as a superpower in a reforming international environment. This war causes serious economic damage to Russia, which is already isolated on an economic level. Moscow has taken into serious consideration US support for a Kurdish state in northern Syria. In August 2017 State Department and Pentagon officials met in Raqqa with Kurds belonging to PYD/YPG. The US officials reportedly promised creation of a Kurdish state in northern Syria within six months according to international practice.³² Moscow seems to have encouraged Ankara to announce cease of support for rebel Islamist groups in Syria and start of talks for preserving the integrity of the Syrian state.³³ Turkey also seems to face a grave geostrategic dilemma, as through such a strategy it opposes both US and NATO interests:

iv.3. Turkey revises its policy in the Balkans against NATO policy in the Western Balkans.

iv.4. Turkey distances itself from those elements that until now allowed Turk-

31. See at the end of this text: ANNEX: «Evidence on the Collaboration of Turkey with ISIS and other jihadist groups, as well as relevant testimonies from international sources».

32. http://www.pronews.gr/amyna-asfaleia/diethnis-asfaleia/622549_i-toyrkia-stamata-tin-ypostirixi-tis-stoys-islamistes [accessed: 14-08-2017]

33. *Ibid.*

ish power to be projected onto the Adriatic Sea, with naval forces in the port of Vlore (Avlon). NATO support for Turkey cannot be guaranteed from now on given its anti-Western and anti-NATO behavior.

v. TAP shall in all probability be cancelled. TAP aimed to secure European energy security and independence from Russian natural gas. This marks a complete reverse of US and NATO strategic planning concerning supply of energy for the EU.

vi. Azeri energy deposits lose their relevant value in this context and shall have to be transported towards the EU through another route, i.e. through the planned pipeline linking Burhas and Alexandroupolis. This pipeline supported by the US towards Athens and Sofia, as well as by the composition of the consortium, shall serve Western interests in a satisfying manner.

d. In light of the above, it is estimated that the stability of Islamic regime in Ankara will be put under considerable pressure.

2.1 Description of Washington's Behavior and Evaluation of its Rationality

Washington has never ceased to implement a policy of power projection inside the Rimland. This policy has been influenced by the models developed by Spykman and Brzezinsky, while US bureaucracy still has not accepted President Trump's views on the matter of US-Russia rapprochement.

a. Washington acts according to a primordial expansionist rationalism that evolves into irrationality given the explicit German and secondary French reactions. The European dipole of Germany and France has witnessed considerable reduction of its influence.

b. Washington's geostrategic behavior is enhanced due to certain issues in the region. The first group of these issues concern handling of Albanian-Islamist nationalism. And here, the following questions can be raised:

i. How shall Washington deal with a possible rule or considerable influence of militant Salafist elements of Daesh and Al Qaeda in a Greater Albania that shall belong to the institutional framework of NATO and the EU?

ii. How shall Washington convince the European allies concerning a European cooperation that shall lead to a tremendous increase of Islamist jihadist elements inside the institutional framework of the EU?

iii. To what degree will Washington be able to effectively control the instrumentalization of jihadist Islam by an anti-American, anti-Semitic and Islamist "allied" Turkey controlled by the Muslim Brotherhood and under Qatar influence? Qatar was in turn recently isolated by the other Gulf countries, US and Israel as a 'promoter of international terrorism'.

The second group of these issues concern the handling of Albanian-Islamist nationalism in relation to the name dispute between FYROM and Greece. Here, we can point out the following:

i. An eventual name in the version of Upper Macedonia would allow for an immediate expansionist agenda put forth by Skopje concerning a 'Macedonian national identity' and subsequently to high diplomatic tension between FYROM and Greece inside NATO. Upper Macedonia as a term does not exclude such an expansionist agenda.

ii. Ankara could interfere in this dispute in a variety of manners using among other tools the network of the Muslim Brotherhood –funded by Qatar- to conduct covert operations of destabilization inside Greece and primarily in Western Thrace, a region that features a corresponding network of subversion based on the Turkish Consulate.

iii. Such an event would undermine the unstable relations between Greece and Turkey inside NATO and would offer a window of opportunity for external actors.

iv. As the issues of North Korea, Syria, Iran, Venezuela and Kurdistan remain open, NATO would not profit from such tension at the SE Wing of the Alliance.

v. An appropriate name for FYROM should not be based on imaginary national or ethnic affiliations; rather it should keep a balance between the Albanian-speaking and the Slavic-speaking element. Such a name could be Centrobalkan Republic/Republique Centrobalkane, a name that suitably allows for the preservation of identitarian cultural elements of the composing ethnic groups and serves to identify the new state in a geographical manner. Such a name could be based on the existing example on an international level of the Central African Republic/Republique Centrafricaine. It also allows NATO to claim a considerable success in the Balkan region at least on matters of semiotics.

vi. The name Upper Macedonia poses an additional problem, this time for Serbia. The northernmost limits of Upper Macedonia cannot be properly defined and could include (as Albanian nationalists claim) even the Serbian valley of Preševo. If the Albanian-speaking element of FYROM that currently supports the government in Skopje resumes the 'Macedonian' dimension of an imaginary ethnic affinity, it could claim a part of Serbia using the same tools (i.e. Turkey, UCK, jihadists). What would Russia's response then be and what would that mean for security and stability in the SE Europe?

In conclusion and given the above remarks, a Greek proposal concerning the name of FYROM could be the one mentioned above. Other perspectives pose serious immediate and long-range dangers of destabilization for all interested parts and especially for the Poles of International Power, i.e. Moscow and Washington.

2.2 Description of Berlin's Behavior and Evaluation of its Rationality

1. Berlin reacts, as German economic interests are damaged, such as a) the consortium of Nordstream II whose President is the former Chancellor Gerhard Schroder, and b) the Blue Stream project (Article 232)³⁴, that shall supply Turkey with Russian natural gas through the Black Sea. This project involves German interests.

2. Despite the sanctions against Russia the US has reserved for itself the privilege of conducting cooperation between US and Russian companies in the Arctic Circle with no obstacles; after a relevant demand by US companies, Russian cooperating companies in these consortia can keep 33% of their shares (Article 223d)³⁵.

34. *"Russia Sanctions Review Act of 2017", (Tuesday 3 January, 115th Congress of USA), SEC. 232. Sanctions with respect to the development of pipelines in the Russian Federation. (a) In general.* The President, in coordination with allies of the United States, may impose five or more of the sanctions described in section 235 with respect to a person if the President determines that the person knowingly, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, makes an investment described in subsection (b) or sells, leases, or provides to the Russian Federation, for the construction of Russian energy export pipelines, goods, services, technology, information, or support described in subsection (c): (1) any of which has a fair market value of \$1,000,000 or more; or (2) that, during a 12-month period, have an aggregate fair market value of \$5,000,000 or more. (b) *Investment described.* An investment described in this subsection is an investment that directly and significantly contributes to the enhancement of the ability of the Russian Federation to construct energy export pipelines. (c) *Goods, services, technology, information, or support described.* Goods, services, technology, information, or support described in this subsection are goods, services, technology, information, or support that could directly and significantly facilitate the maintenance or expansion of the construction, modernization, or repair of energy export pipelines by the Russian Federation.

35. *"Russia Sanctions Review Act of 2017", SEC. 223. Modification of implementation of Executive Order No. 13662. [a, b, c,] (d) Modification of directive 4. –* Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury shall modify Directive 4, dated September 12, 2014, issued by the Office of Foreign Assets Control under Executive Order No. 13662, or any successor directive (which shall be effective beginning on the date that is 90 days after the date of such modification), to ensure that the directive prohibits the provision, exportation, or reexportation, directly or indirectly, by United States persons or persons within the United States, of goods, services (except

The Social Democratic Party (SPD) through Sigmar Gabriel, Foreign Minister of Germany, and Brigitte Zypries, Minister for Economics and Energy, has referred disapprovingly to those US provisions that allow US companies to obtain a comparative advantage in relation to Russian ones concerning European import of hydrocarbon. US actions thus promote dependence of European economies on cheaper shale gas and oil that has begun to be exported by the US in a reversion of European dependency routes. Mrs Zypries has also stated that US Sanctions on Russia are a violation of international law and that “the Americans cannot punish German companies because they operate economically in another country. There are (partnerships) for natural gas and petroleum pipelines (in the region),» Zypries further added that Germany doesn’t want a trade war and has repeatedly, and on different levels, urged the Americans not to leave the line of common sanctions. Zypries also asked the European Commission to look into possible countermeasures against the United States, following tough sanctions against Russia that could potentially hit European companies.³⁶ There is an understanding that with the new restrictive measures the US is trying to push forward its own interests in the energy sector, *Die Welt* quoted Michael Harms, Managing Director of the German Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations, as saying: «The sought [after] sanctions against pipeline projects are designed to boost energy exports from the US to Europe, create jobs in the US, and strengthen US foreign policy,» Harms said. Harms thinks that the US targets specifically German companies that participate in the Nord Stream II consortium in the North Sea. Implementation of these measures would be ‘a fundamental intervention concerning EU energy supply and would lead to rise of prices and reduction of the capabilities of European economy’³⁷.

for financial services), or technology in support of exploration or production for new deepwater, Arctic offshore, or shale projects— (1) that have the potential to produce oil; and (2) that involve any person determined to be subject to the directive or the property or interests in property of such a person who has a controlling interest or a substantial non-controlling ownership interest in such a project defined as not less than a 33 percent interest.[<https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/3364/text#toc-H954BE429129341AB-9D32B2D4775AA845>, accessed: 8-08-2017]

36. <http://www.dw.com/en/germany-calls-for-eu-countermeasures-against-us-following-russian-sanctions/a-39911686>

37. *Deutsche Welle, ibid.*

2.3 *The French case*

The French company TOTAL³⁸ has huge interests concerning investments in the Arctic Circle, namely “export and production of LNG in a quantity of 16.5 million tons per year in a very difficult region from a geophysical point of view. The French company has created a huge and highly complex workplace in the Arctic Circle in an investment of 25.2 billion Euros or 27 billion US\$ that has been subsidized by the Russian company Novatek (50,1 %) ³⁹, by TOTAL itself (20 %), by China National Petroleum Company (20 %) and by the Silk Road Fund (9,9 %). This project shall acquire until 2021 15 icebreakers LNG 299m in length and 50m in width to boost production. These giant-sized constructions cost 300 million US\$ and shall be able to safely cross an ice sheet 1.5 m in width at a temperature of -50° , in order to transport 170.000m³ of LNG at a temperature of -160°.»⁴⁰

This huge investment could be undermined. TOTAL is also affected due to sanctions imposed on Iran [H.R.3364 – 115th Congress (2017-2018)]. Since June 2016 the French company had announced signing of an agreement of 4.8 billion US\$ in cooperation with the Chinese company CNPCI concerning Iranian natural gas. TOTAL would thus be the first European company that returned in Iran since 1979. The agreement was signed despite US sanctions on Iran. The consortium is composed as follows: TOTAL 50.1%, CNPCI 30% and Iranian Petropars 19.9%. European concerns are legitimate in this case also.

2.4 *Conclusions*

European reactions, specifically reactions by huge European oil companies, could alter US sanctions to a degree. Such an outcome could ironically enough reinforce the position of President Donald J. Trump who was undermined by the Obama-Clinton system supported by all European governments. Times are changing indeed.

Concerning Greece we could note the following:

i. If Suda (Crete) becomes the station that shall hold US nuclear weapons transferred from Incirlik, Greece’s geostrategic position as an important ally of

38. http://www.lemonde.fr/economie/article/2017/01/23/le-projet-gazier-geant-de-total-dans-l-arctique-russe-se-joue-des-sanctions_5067756_3234.html

39. A.N. TOTAL holds 19% of Russian NOVATEK.

40. http://www.lemonde.fr/economie/article/2017/01/23/le-projet-gazier-geant-de-total-dans-l-arctique-russe-se-joue-des-sanctions_5067756_3234.html#YVIOfqohtDLIYTeX.99.

NATO shall be greatly elevated. This could be achieved if Washington offers the current Greek government considerable privileges that shall allow for the ratification of said agreement in the Greek Parliament.

ii. In such an environment new and better perspectives rise concerning solution of the Cyprus Issue or the name dispute with FYROM. In the latter case if Greece insists on “a composite name with a geographical determinant” and does not repeat the common and unanimous decision of political leaders of 1992 under the Presidency of the late Konstantinos Karamanlis, there shall not be another chance that shall serve Greek interests.

B. THE PRAGMATOLOGY OF THE INSTABILITY OF THE GEOPOLITICAL SYSTEMS i), TURKEY - ISRAEL, ii) GREECE - TURKEY - CENTRO WESTERN BALKANS, AND iii) GREECE - REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS - ISRAEL - EGYPT.

a) The subsystem Turkey - Israel

Diplomatic relations in the context of the above Subsystem are evaluated as being below average, in terms of their quality. Turkish-Israeli relations have been restored (in their diplomatic aspect) since June 2016, from their interruption in 2010, because of the Mavi Marmara incident.

The degrading course of Turkish-Israeli relations during the period of Sep. 2000 to Jan. 2018, is apparent by the study of the following 17 most important incidents:

1) September 2000: Initiation of the Second Intifada, after the visit of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon at Al-Aqsa. That was the first serious downfall of the Turkish-Israeli relations since their close cooperation in the '90s⁴¹. Israel supports Süleyman Demirel in his election campaign as member of the Mitchell Committee, which was mandated to define the causes of the Second Intifada.

2) March 2003: US intervention in Iraq and redefinition of Turkey's position in the Middle East because of the approachment between Iran and Syria. Ankara accepted grave criticism from the Israeli lobby in the US, for its choices.⁴²

3) June 2004: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan publicly said that Israel exercises “state

41. Oktav, Ö.Z. (2011) *Turkey in the 21st century: Quest for a new foreign policy*. London: Ashgate. Σελ. 37.

42. Arbell, D. (2014) The U.S.-Turkey-Israel triangle. *The Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings*, 34, σελ. 10.

terrorism". That constitutes the birth act of the new strategic concept of rupture of relations with Israel, in pursuance of a new "caliphate" role (for Turkey).

4) February 2006: Visit of Hamas delegation to Ankara, which caused serious reaction of Israel.⁴³

5) July 2006: Israeli military campaign against Lebanon, caused Turkey's serious criticism. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan expressed his concerns about strategic tasks of Israel, by stating: «*There is no excuse for the merciless bombardment of civilians and for the total destruction of cities*».⁴⁴

6) December 2008 - January 2009: Gaza Strip blockade and the casualties of approximately 1.400 Palestinian deaths causes a serious diplomatic reaction on behalf of Turkey.⁴⁵

7) January 2009: in the context of the World Economic Forum of Davos, in Switzerland, Erdoğan causes a serious diplomatic incidents, by provoking Israeli President Shimon Peres in public, while he is asked to comment on the Gaza situation.⁴⁶ The real reason for relates with the attempt of the Turkish president to fuel his influence and to promote his image to the Muslim community, globally.

8) October 2009: Turkey prevents Israel from participating to common military exercise with the USA and Italy, while asks international community to recognize Hamas as the lawful representative of the Palestinian people.

9) May 2010: Turkey formally interrupts diplomatic relations with Israel because of the Mavi Marmara incident. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan stated: «*The protection of Turkish ships that carry humanitarian assistance [sic] to Gaza Strip, has been assigned to Turkish naval ships. We will not allow ever again any attack from Israel, like the one to Mavi Marmara, while in that case, Israel will receive the appropriate response*».⁴⁷

10) September 2011: The Palmer Report is been published, according to which steps of restoration of the erupted relations between Turkey and Israel were to

43. "Hamas Visits Ankara: The AKP Shifts Turkey's Role in the Middle East", *The Washington Institute*, Policy #1081, 16 February 2006.

44. "Erdoğan: 'İsrail'in derdi nedir?'" , *CNN Türk*, 15 July 2006.

45. "Blast at Gaza Border Kills Israeli Soldier; Palestinian Farmer Killed by Gunfire", *Washington Post*, 28 January 2009.

46. "Recep Erdogan storms out of Davos after clash with Israeli president over Gaza", *The Guardian*, 30 January 2009.

47. "Turkish PM saw Gaza raid as 'grounds for war'", *Reuters*, 12 September 2009, and "Israel calls Turkey warship threat grave", *Hürriyet Daily News*, 9 September 2011.

take place. Turkey set terms, which were considered as unacceptable from Israel, while Israel expressed its sadness for the Mavi Marmara incident, but without taken it any further. During the next 12 months, any diplomatic activity froze, while most importantly the Turkish-Israeli Military Cooperation suspended.⁴⁸

11) January 2012: Hamas suspends the operation of its political office in Damascus and its leader, Khaled Mashal, abandons Syria. The relation of Turkey with Egypt, under the regime of Mahmoud Abbas (Muslim Brotherhood), is been reinforced, with highlight the common intention of Erdoğan-Abbas to visit Gaza.⁴⁹

12) November 2012: Confidence Building Measures between Israel and Turkey failed, as the USA mediation, in general. The deep gap of their bilateral relations has been reaffirmed.⁵⁰

13) November 2012: Air attack of Israeli Air Forces in Gaza, targeting the military leader of Hamas, Ahmed Jabari. Erdoğan again, during his speech in Cairo University, threatens publicly Israel that “will pay heavy price”, while blames it for uncaused and disproportional aggression.⁵¹

14) March 2013: The Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu «apologised to the Turkish people for any errors that could have led to the loss of life», for the Mavi Marmara incident, in May 31, 2010.⁵² Erdogan accepted the apology. New commitments will follow for the reparation of victims, on behalf of Israel, within 2016.⁵³

15) August 2014: Israeli IDF operation “Resolute Cliff”⁵⁴ in Gaza and new reactions on behalf of Turkey.⁵⁵

48. Arbell, D. (2014) The U.S.-Turkey-Israel triangle. *The Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings*, 34, σελ. 16-17.

49“Hamas leader abandons longtime base in Damascus”, *New York Times*, 27 January 2012.

50. Arbell, D. (2014) The U.S.-Turkey-Israel triangle. *The Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings*, 34, σελ. 2.

51 “Turkey finds it is sidelined as broker in Mideast”, *The New York Times*, 20 November 2012.

52. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/mar/22/israel-apologises-turkey-gaza-flotilla-deaths>.

53. “Netanyahu apologizes to Turkish PM for Israeli role in Gaza flotilla raid”, *The Guardian*, 22 March 2013.

54. Ghert-Zand, Renee (9 July 2014). "Name 'Protective Edge' doesn't cut it". *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved 18 July 2014.

55. “Israel-Gaza conflict: 50-day war by numbers”, *Independent*, 27 August 2014.

16) July 2017: New diplomatic friction between Turkey («Eastern Jerusalem is been under illegal occupation for 50 years») and Israel («the glory days of Ottoman Empire have been long passed»);⁵⁶

17) January 2018: Israeli precision air attacks in Syria, under the fear of extension of the Iranian influence as a result of failure of Syrian state. In the same period, turkey has invaded Syrian territory. As a result, Ankara and Jerusalem to support different or even opponent sides in the Syrian conflict.⁵⁷

b) The Sub-system Greece - Republic of Cyprus - Israel - Egypt.

Bilateral diplomatic relations among Athens and Jerusalem, in the context of the above Sub-system, during the period from August 2010 up to Feb 2018, are constantly and rapidly improving, and gradually deepened, as well. That is also observed at the field of bilateral Defence Cooperation: During July 2012 and December 2017, seventeen (17) small, medium or large scale military or aeronautical exercises took place, whereas military forces from both sides had the opportunity to participate. Some of them where of quite large scale, unprecedented in the military history, or operational practice of the two nations. The most distinguished facts that indicate that positive development in bilateral relations during that period, divided in those i) of political-diplomatic character, and ii) of military-diplomatic, are as follows:

b.1.) Facts of political-diplomatic character

1) August 2010: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is the first one who officially visited Greece. During his two-days official visit, in an effort to counterbalance/compensate the negative consequences of the full dismantling of the Turkish-Israeli relations (at that time), B. Netanyahu signed a series of bilateral Agreements with his Greek counterpart, PM George Papandreou, while seeking potential possibilities of furtherance the context of the bilateral military/defense and industrial base cooperation between Greece and Israel.⁵⁸

2) January 2012: Further strengthening of bilateral relations between Greece and Israel takes place with the signing of a bilateral Agreement in the field of Defense cooperation, during the visit of Israeli Minister of Defense, Ehud Barak,

56. "Israel, Turkey continue war of words: 'The days of the Ottoman Empire have passed'", *Haaretz*, 26 July 2017.

57. "Israeli and Turkish attacks could prolong Syrian war", *Alaraby*, 22 January 2018.

58. "PM Netanyahu meets with Greek PM Papandreou", *Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs* [press release], 16 August 2010.

in Greece, where he stated: «*We remain focus in our common effort, with the aim the deepening of our bilateral relations in the fields of Defense and Security.*». ⁵⁹ That statement of E. Barak had real result, as it was followed, as we will see further below, from a series of nine (9) common military Exercises either strictly bilateral between Greece and Israel, or in a multilateral context, with the participation of forces by other states, like Italy or the USA, with the exception of course those of Turkey.

3) March 2012: Memorandum of Understanding between the Greek Minister of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, George Papakostantinou, and the Israeli Minister of Energy and Waters, Uzi Landau, for the establishment of a cable of electric energy supply between Israel, Cyprus and Greece, which will allow the mutual supply of available reserves and energy surplus, the security, and the long term satisfaction of the internal demand of energy for the agreed parties. ⁶⁰ That interconnection, under the official name of “Euro-Asia Interconnector”, will have Hedra/Israel, as the starting point, and will end up in the area of Attica, in Greece.

4) October 2013: First Intergovernmental Council (Government-to-Government - G2G) between Greece and Israel, in Jerusalem, with the presence of both PMs, Antonios Samaras and Benjamin Netanyahu. A number of ten (10) Agreements for bilateral Cooperation were signed in the field of Energy, Science, Technology, Culture and Education. ⁶¹

5) November 2015: Meeting of the Greek PM Alexis Tsipras with the Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel, with basic subject of the meeting Agenda the transfer of Israeli natural gas to the European markets. ⁶²

6) January 2016: First Cyprus-Israel-Greece Trilateral Summit in Nicosia. Agreement for the examination of the possibilities of the construction of an underwater pipeline in East Mediterranean. ⁶³

59. Tziampiris, A. (2015) *The emergence of Israeli-Greek cooperation*. London: Springer. Σελ. 126.

60. “Memorandum of understanding in the field of the protection of the environment”, *Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change of the Hellenic Republic* [press release], 28 March 2012.

61. “Israel-Greece governments summit”, *Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs* [press release], 7 October 2013.

62. “Greek PM and Netanyahu discuss bringing Israeli gas to Europe”, *The Times of Israel*, 25 November 2015.

63. “Greece, Cyprus, Israel agreement of huge geopolitical importance”, *Greek News*, 30 January 2016.

7) January 2016: Visit of Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras in Jerusalem, and meeting with the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, on energy issues.⁶⁴

8) March 2016: Establishment of trilateral meetings between Cyprus-Israel-Greece on a yearly basis. During next meetings, in the agenda of discussions will be included issues as inter-parliamentary cooperation, conciliation on for regional matters, collaboration on scientific research, development, technology, cyber, antiterrorism, common action in cases of natural disasters, exchange of information in cases of emergency etc.⁶⁵

9) March 2016: Official visit of President of the Hellenic Republic, Prokopios Pavlopoulos, in Jerusalem, and meeting with the Israeli President, Reuven Rivlin.⁶⁶

10) December 2016: Second Trilateral Cyprus-Israel-Greece Summit in Jerusalem. Its main subject was the construction and the promotion of an oil pipe from Israel to Greece, and then to Italy and Bulgaria. Its cost is estimated to reach \$ 6.7 billions, and is expected to conclude in 2020. In June 2017, similar discussions on that matter were repeated in Thessaloniki / Greece, where an Agreement concluded for the establishment of common action teams for the study of that project.⁶⁷

11) June 2017: Trilateral Cyprus-Israel-Greece meeting in Thessaloniki / Greece, with an agenda on energy issues.⁶⁸

12) July 2017: Diplomatic friction between Turkey («*Eastern Jerusalem is been under illegal occupation for 50 years*») and Israel («*the glory days of Ottoman Empire have been long passed*»).⁶⁹

13) Trilateral meeting between the Presidents of the Parliamentary Assemblies of Greece - Cyprus - Israel.⁷⁰

64. "Tsipras comes to Jerusalem: Israel and Greece's ambivalent relationship", *Haaretz*, 26 January 2016.

65. "Israel-Greece-Cyprus hold trilateral parliamentary meeting", *Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs* [press release], 3 March 2016.

66. "President Pavlopoulos on official three-day visit to Israel", *To Vima*, 29 March 2016.

67. "Israel, Cyprus and Greece ties forge ahead with trilateral rescue unit", *The Jerusalem Post*, 8 December 2016.

68. «Στις 15 Ιουνίου στη Θεσσαλονίκη η νέα τριμερής Ελλάδας-Κύπρου-Ισραήλ με επίκεντρο τα ενεργειακά», *Energy Press*, 11 Μαΐου 2017.

69. "Israel, Turkey continue war of words: 'The days of the Ottoman Empire have passed'", *Haaretz*, 26 July 2017.

70. «Τριμερής συνάντηση των Προέδρων των Κοινοβουλίων Ελλάδας - Κύπρου

14) November 2017: Meeting between Defense Ministers Panos Kammenos and his visiting Israeli counterpart Avigdor Lieberman, where they agreed on the expansion of Greek-Israeli defence cooperation.⁷¹

15) November 2017: Trilateral cooperation between Defense Ministers of Greece - Cyprus - Israel, which is followed by trilateral cooperation between Defense Ministers of Greece - Cyprus - Egypt, in December 2017.⁷²

16) December 2017: Turkey's reaction on the USA intention to recognize Jerusalem as capital of the State of Israel.⁷³

17) January 2018: Trilateral cooperation between Greece - Cyprus - Israel for drafting a common Action Plan for cases of marine pollution in Eastern Mediterranean. The meeting finally was postponed for the spring of the same year because of parliamentary obligations of Israeli PM B. Netanyahu.⁷⁴

18) May 8, 2018: Trilateral cooperation meeting in Nicosia, between Greece - Cyprus - Israel.

b.2.) Facts of military-diplomatic character

1) July 2012: Common maritime exercise Greece - Israel under the name 'Noble Dina 2012' «*simulates defense of gas installation from force resembling Turkish navy. The exercises are also intended to simulate air-to-air combat and anti-submarine warfare and are being overseen by the US Sixth Fleet. [...]. Operation Noble Dina was inaugurated in 2011 in what is seen by some as a coup for Greece and reflective of diplomatic changes in the eastern Mediterranean [...]. The US had conducted similar exercises ("Reliant Mermaid") with Turkey and Israel from 1998 to 2009, but these were canceled after Turkish president Tayyip Erdogan suspended military cooperation with Israel in 2010*».⁷⁵

2) November 2012: Common air exercise Greece - Israel within the Greek national airspace, with scenario on simulation of Search and Rescue.⁷⁶

- Ισραήλ», *Το Βήμα*, 2 Νοεμβρίου 2017.

71. «Ελλάδα-Ισραήλ διευρύνουν τη στρατιωτική συνεργασία τους», *Το Βήμα*, 6 Νοεμβρίου 2017.

72. «Τριμερής στρατιωτική συνεργασία με Ελλάδα και Αίγυπτο», *Καθημερινή*, 11 Δεκεμβρίου 2017.

73. "Turkey to Trump: Calling Jerusalem the Israeli capital will draw Muslim anger", *CNBC*, 5 December 2017.

74. «Τριμερής θαλάσσια συνεργασία με Ελλάδα και Ισραήλ», *Ο Φιλελεύθερος*, 1 Ιανουαρίου 2018.

75. "Joint Israeli-Greek military drill seen by some as rebuff to Turkey", *The Times of Israel*, 1 April 2012.

76. "Aerial cooperation between IAF and Greece", *Israeli Air Force*, 6 December

3) March 2013: Common air-maritime exercise Greece - Israel - USA, under the name 'Noble Dina 2013'.⁷⁷ «*Noble Dina is an annual trilateral naval exercise designed to increase interoperability by developing the individual and collective maritime proficiencies of Greece, Israel and the U.S., while also promoting friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation. Continue reading for some quick facts and additional links*»⁷⁸ As Cmdr. Christopher M. McCallum, USS Laboon (DDG 58) commanding officer says: «*Noble Dina was a great exercise for us to work with our allies in the Eastern Mediterranean. It allowed us to conduct a number of mission areas during at-sea drills between air and surface assets. It also afforded my Officers and Sailors the opportunity to work directly with the men and woman of Hellenic and Israeli navies and we look forward to participating in future engagement opportunities.*»⁷⁹

4) November 2013: International air exercise under the name "BLUE FLAG" held by the Israeli Air Force, based at Ovda Air Force Base in Israel. It was characterized as the largest in in Israel's history.⁸⁰

5) March 2014: Common air-maritime exercise by the name "NOBLE DINA 2014", participating Israel, Greece and USA. Its scenario is related to Iran.⁸¹

6) March 2015: Air exercise by the name "HNIOCHOS 2015", held by the Hellenic Air Force, based at Andravida Air Base in Greece, where air forces from USA and Israel participated.⁸²

7) May 2015: International air-naval exercise under the name "NOBLE DINA 2015", where naval and air forces from the U.S., Greece, and Israel participated.⁸³ It features are as follows:

«i) Participating forces conducted a series of at-sea drills to exercise expertise in a number of mission areas ii) Training with other military forces enhances our mutual

2012.

77. "Greece, Israel and US begin 'Noble Dina' naval exercise", *E kathimerini*, 7 March 2013.

78. <http://www.c6f.navy.mil/news/us-hellenic-israeli-navies-conclude-exercise-noble-dina-2015> [downloaded 2 Mars 2018]

79. *ibid.*

80. "Israeli, Italian, Hellenic and U.S. Air Force take part in largest joint-military exercise in Israel's history", *The Aviationist*, 25 November 2013.

81. "'Iran scenario' at Israel, US, Greece naval exercise", *The Times of Israel*, 25 March 2014.

82. «Ηνίοχος 2015: Η μεγάλη άσκηση της ΠΑ με τη συμμετοχή αεροσκαφών από ΗΠΑ και Ισραήλ», *Defence Line*, 28 Απριλίου 2015.

83. «Άσκηση Noble Dina 2015», *Γενικό Επιτελείο Εθνικής Αμύνης* [ανακοινώσεις τύπου], 29 Απριλίου 2015.

awareness and maritime capability of our allies. Noble Dina helps create an environment that promotes maritime safety and security in the region, and interoperability among participating nations iii) U.S. forces participating in the exercise were the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Laboon (DDG 58), Military Sealift Command fleet-replenishment oiler USNS Lenthall (T-AO 189) and P-3C Orion aircraft from Patrol Squadron 47, all of which are currently operating forward in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations iv) Noble Dina 2015 commenced in Souda Bay, Greece, April 29 v) U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts a full range of maritime security operations and theater security cooperation missions in concert with coalition, joint, interagency, and other parties in order to advance security and stability in Europe and Africa.»⁸⁴

8) July 2015: Israel Air Force conducted exercise over the mountain terrain of Greece, for the operational training of Israeli Air Force personnel in such a geographic conditions, since Israel is a country with limited geographic diversity.⁸⁵

9) October 2015: International air Exercise in Israel, under the name “BLUE FLAG 2015”, with the participation of air forces from Israel, Greece, USA and Poland.⁸⁶ *«The forces simulated a war situation, in which every day different targets were destroyed, including dynamic, moving targets. The exercise lasted two weeks, with the first week’s goal being the foreign participant’s acclimation to the «Ouvda» Airbase and mental acclimation to the intensity of the exercise. In the second week the level of intensity rose, as the forces practiced a complex military campaign against the «enemy forces» that were simulated by the Israeli «Aggressors» squadron, the «Flying Dragon» squadron.»⁸⁷*

10) March 2016: Air Exercise under the name “HNIOCHOS 2016”, with the participation of air forces from Greece, Israel and USA. It took place in Air Base Andravida / Greece, in the period of 4-14 April 2016.⁸⁸ During the exercise, there were complex simulated operational day and night air missions (concerning air attack on ground or surface targets, suppression/destruction of Air Defence, Combat Search and Rescue - CSAR), which took place in the area of ATHENS

84. <http://www.c6f.navy.mil/news/us-hellenic-israeli-navies-conclude-exercise-noble-dina-2015> [download, 2 Mars 2018]

85. Nomikos, J.M. (2017) Israel international relations: Greece-Israel relations. *Jewish virtual library*.

86. “Israel concludes multinational Blue Flag drill”, *Defense News*, 29 October 2015.

87. <http://www.iaf.org.il/4426-45512-en/IAF.aspx> [downloaded, 2 Mars 2018]

88. «Άσκηση Ηνιοχος 2016 – AT 033/2016», *Γενικό Επιτελείο Αεροπορίας*, 30 Μαρτίου 2016 (AT 033/2016).

FIR. In the exercise, a large number of air, land and naval forces took place, as well as air forces from Israel and the USA, and in addition a military observer from French Air Force. *«This year (2016), in addition to the major participation by almost all HAF Squadrons, there were twelve Israeli F-16C/D Fighting Falcons from different squadrons and one Gulfstream 550 for the Airborne Early Warning & Control role (AEW&C), along with the two Greek EMB-145H aircraft. Also an E-3A AWACS from the NATO AEW&C Flight was orbiting the exercise areas contributing in this role as well. For the second consecutive year, twelve USAFE F-15E Strike Eagles deployed to Andravida along with approximately 260 airmen from the 492nd Fighter Squadron of the 48th Combat Wing based at RAF Lakenheath, UK».*⁸⁹

11) March 2016. Common air -naval exercise under the name “NOBLE DINA 2016” took place in the wider area of northern and southern Cretan Sea and of East Mediterranean Sea. In the exercise participated forces from Greece, Israel and USA. It also included training activities in the facilities of the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Center (MIOTC) based in Crete, and in those of the Haifa Naval Base.⁹⁰ As Cmdr. Andria L. Slough, USS Porter (DDG 78) commanding officer, said: *«Exercise Noble Dina has been an enriching experience for USS Porter, both ashore and at sea. Partnering with our Hellenic and Israeli counterparts, we have been able to improve our skills in many different areas, such as Search and Rescue coordination, Anti-Submarine Warfare and countering seaborne illicit activity. The cooperation and interoperability developed over the course of Noble Dina will serve as a foundation for future operations critical to maritime safety and security.»*⁹¹

12) November 2016: Common training air exercise, between Greece and Israel, concerning helicopter flights.⁹²

13) March 2017: Common air -naval exercise under the name “NOBLE DINA 2017”, where participated forces from Greece, Israel and USA, in for the first time from the Republic of Cyprus.⁹³ *«From March 22nd to April 6th 2017, in the context of multinational cooperation with Eastern Mediterranean Partners and the USA and with the objective to promote regional stability and security,*

89. <https://www.milavia.net/specials/iniohos-2016-andravida/> [downloaded 2 Mars 2018]

90. “Άσκηση ‘Noble Dina 2016’”, Γενικό Επιτελείο Ναυτικού, 15 Απριλίου 2016.

91. <http://www.c6f.navy.mil/news/trilateral-naval-allies-successfully-conclude-exercise-noble-dina-2016>

92. «Κοινή άσκηση ελικοπτέρων Ελλάδας – Ισραήλ», Καθημερινή, 27 Σεπτεμβρίου 2016.

93. «Για πρώτη φορά συμμετοχή Κύπρου στην άσκηση ‘Noble Dina’ με ΗΠΑ, Ελλάδα, Ισραήλ», Mignatiou.com, 29 March 2017.

the Hellenic Navy (HN) participated in the trilateral naval exercise, titled "NOBLE DINA 2017", along with the Navies of the USA and Israel, with ships, submarines, maritime patrol aircrafts and helicopters. The Navy of Cyprus participated, under observer status. The exercise was conducted in the wider area of the Cretan Sea and Eastern Mediterranean, and it included activities at the facilities of NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) at Souda Naval Base and at the Naval Base of Haifa. The main objects concerned the co-training of the three Navies in the field of Maritime Security in order to tackle present and future challenges in the maritime environment. The exercise promoted the mutual understanding and cooperation among the participants, at a multinational operational and tactical/technical level and contributed to the reinforcement of operational and combat ability as well as the readiness of the participants.»⁹⁴

14) March 2017: International three-day Air Exercise under the name "ONISILLOS- GIDEON 2017", took place in Cyprus. Participated Israeli Air Forces tested Cypriot air defense. It was the largest since 2014, when the two countries held joint exercises.⁹⁵

15) March 2017: International Joint Medium Scale Air Force Exercise under the name "HNIOCHOS 2017" took place from March 27 to April 6, 2017, ⁹⁶ in the area of ATHENS FIR, with the participation of air forces from Greece, Italy, USA, Israel and United Arab Emirates (UAE), and a military observer from Republic of Cyprus. ⁹⁷ The exercise took place on the basis of a "Single Base Concept", while its scenario included complex air operations simulated situations of tension, crisis escalation, or full scale conflict. Air operations were extended in a 24hours battle rhythm, similar to those of other international air exercise, like TLP, RED FLAG etc. Hellenic Air Force participated with almost entirely its forces, Hellenic Army with AH-64 A/D, CH-47D, NH-90, UH-1H helicopters and other land forces, Hellenic Navy with surface battle units. USA participated with 12 F-16 and JTAC teams of the 4th ASOG, IAF with 12 F-16, AAR, AEW&C G550 and a JTAC team, ItAF with 4 AMX and a JTAC team, UAE Air Force with

94. <http://www.hellenicnavy.gr/en/news/latest-news/item/8062-exercise-noble-dina-2017.html> [downloaded 2 Mars 2018].

95. "Israel pilots flying alongside pilots from the UAE in week-long Greek drill", *The Jerusalem Post*, 28 March 2017, available at <http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Israel-Air-Force-launches-joint-drill-exercises-with-Arab-Greek-forces-485391>.

96. "Israel pilots flying alongside pilots from the UAE in week-long Greek drill", *The Jerusalem Post*, 28 March 2017.

97. <https://www.haf.gr/en/2017/03/iniohos-2017-exercise/>.

6 F-16 and a NATO E-3A. Also, National Guard of the Republic of Cyprus will participate for the first time with military observers.⁹⁸

16) October 2017: Multinational exercise «NEMESIS-2017» took place on October 17, 2017, in the area of EEZ of Republic of Cyprus, under the direction of Larnaca Search and Rescue Coordination Center. Air and naval forces from Cyprus, Greece, France, United Kingdom and Israel participated in the exercise, with a scenario to develop cooperation and coordination at international level to deal with emergencies. In particular, the Greek Armed Forces participated with a Frigate, a Fast Patrol Boat, a C-130 aircraft, as well as personnel from the Hellenic Navy and Hellenic Air force.⁹⁹ In addition, personnel from the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and ships of EDT Offshore and SAIPEM S.p.A. participated, as well. The exercise scenario included co-training on objects concerning Search and Rescue, Boarding, and Sea Pollution. Particularly, it included a simulation of an attack to a marine drilling platform, boarding to ship and drilling platform from special forces of Hellenic Navy and Cyprus National Guard, mass (large scale) personnel rescue-evacuation after naval accident from naval forces of Cyprus National Guard and friendly forces. Except the military forces, the Police and the civil sector Department of Construction, geological Survey and Meteorology also participated. According to the official statement of Department of Defence, “the exercise aim to the development of effective cooperation and coordination between all relevant Services of the Republic of Cyprus, and with other neighboring or friendly states, and for the immediate response in cases of emergency in commercial ships and drilling platforms, as well as other humanitarian operations in East Mediterranean. During the exercises, particular special national Plans of the Republic of Cyprus “Nearchos” and “Orfeas” were tested, as well as the provisions of various bilateral agreements on Search and Rescue.¹⁰⁰

17) November 2017: international air exercise under the name “BLUE FLAG 2017”, with the participation of air forces from Cyprus, USA, Greece, Italy, Germany, Poland, France and India.¹⁰¹

98. <http://www.athina984.gr/2017/03/28/aeropiriki-askisi-iniochos-2017-mesymmetochi-ipa-israil-iae-italias-elladas-ke-kyprou/>

99. <http://www.onalert.gr/stories/nemesis-2017-askhsh-mesa-apo-fakogeetha/60135>.

100. «Κύπρος, Ελλάδα, Ισραήλ, Γαλλία, Βρετανία σε κοινή άσκηση, μήνυμα, στην κυπριακή Α.Ο.Ζ.», *Mignatiou.com*, 17 Οκτωβρίου 2017.

101. «Στρατιωτική συνεργασία Ελλάδας, Ισραήλ και Κύπρου», *Καθημερινή*, 8 Νοεμβρίου 2017.

18) December 2017: Joint exercises Cyprus - Israel under the names "IASON", "NICOCLIS-DAVID" and "ONISILOS- GIDEON".¹⁰²

b.3.) The role of energy as a geopolitical factor for the consolidation of Greek-Israeli relations.

During the current historical coincidence, the geostrategic conjunction of Greece-Cyprus-Israel is a reality, in order for the three states to cope in the best possible manner with the contemporary and future challenges in the arena of international and regional relations. Having a common strategic perception of the geopolitical sub-system of the south-eastern Mediterranean, Athens, Nicosia and Jerusalem strengthen day by day their political, diplomatic, economic and military relations, aiming at the preservation of stability in the area, against any revisionist factor. For the aforementioned strategic alliance, discovery, extraction and exploitation of the hydrocarbon neo-reserves within the Greek, Cypriot and Israeli consecutive Exclusive Economic Zones, (EEZs), is the dynamic catalyst that reinforces even further the allied cooperation and effectiveness.

Amidst the geopolitical transformation of the wider region of North Africa, Middle and Near East, the construction of the East Mediterranean Pipeline, (East-Med), is a common pursuit of the outmost significance, for the strategic alliance. Indeed, if the East-Med is realized, it will be able to transfer, in the first phase, the Israeli and Cypriot hydrocarbons from the off-shore neo-reserves *via* Greek sovereign territory and EEZ to Italy and central Europe, signaling EU's gradual disengagement from the dependence on the Russian natural gas, allowing the EU to make its first steps of energy emancipation. Despite Ankara's attempt for rapprochement with Jerusalem, the official Israeli position heavily leans towards an Israel-Greek-Cypriot strategic alignment, as Israel's national security constitute the ultimate long-term priority for Jerusalem. While it is quite understandable from the three states that such a development will upgrade the geopolitical status of all the three states of the strategic alliance in the regional geopolitical as well as the supra-geopolitical system.

1. The strategic alignment of Greece-Cyprus-Israel and the energy geopolitical factor

From the previous analysis, it has become obvious that, in late-2000s, Athens and Jerusalem have come closer on the diplomatic, political and military fields. The pursuit, in one hand of the valuable strategic depth towards the Mediterra-

102. «Ξεκινούν τρεις κοινές ασκήσεις Κύπρου - Ισραήλ: Ισραηλινά μαχητικά πάνω από τη μεγαλόνησο», *Mignatiou.com*, 3 Δεκεμβρίου 2017.

nean Sea by Israel and on the other hand the achievement of successful deterrent regional mechanism against regional threats that tend to destabilize the area, primarily resulting in the adequate protection of Nicosia's legitimate rights in extracting energy mixture from its Exclusive Economic Zone, (EEZ), have automatically promoted the convergence of the aforementioned states' national interests, of the geopolitical sub-system of the South-Eastern Mediterranean. In the same context, their cultural heritage has set the foundations of the western cultural model, while the current political developments, with the widespread unrest in the geopolitical sub-systems of North Africa and the Middle East contribute further to the strengthening of the relations of Greece, Cyprus and Israel.

However, the geopolitical factor of energy is the one that guarantees the seamless collaborative and allied dynamic of the three states in the long term basis. The quite newly discovered energy reserves in the adjacent EEZs of the three states, and notably the proposal of the East-Mediterranean pipeline, promise the turnaround of the area to a global energy strategic interest spot.

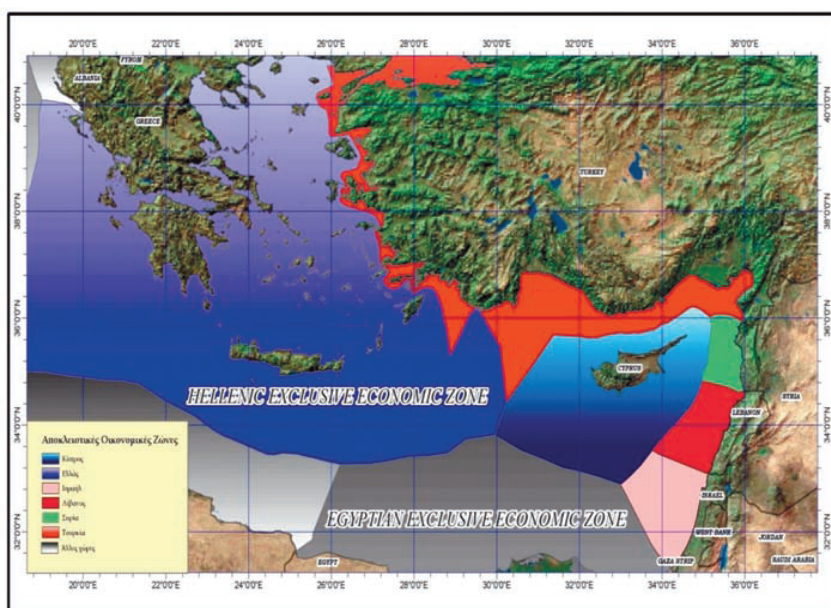
The conclusion of a strategic alliance between Greece, Cyprus and Israel is an indubitable fact. In general terms, this is realized in all areas of activity of a sovereign state, with basic springboard the political, diplomatic and military alignment of the three states. A main motive behind the approachment of Athens and Nicosia by Jerusalem has been the gradual alienation of Turkish-Israeli relations, resulting in the ultimate rupture in their relations, in late 2000s. Indeed, the strategic alliance between Turkey and Israel, which lasted just over ten, (10), consecutive years and provided Jerusalem with the necessary strategic-operational depth, began to tremble once Ankara attempted to implement its neo-Ottoman doctrine¹⁰³, which has in store the dominant role in the wider region for Turkey, starting from the classic Middle East. Successive incidents, such as the episode of the on the air disagreement between the Israeli President Mr. Shimon Peres and the, at that time, Turkish Prime Minister, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the World Economic Forum in Davos, in January 2009, which resulted in the latter's final departure,¹⁰⁴

103. For the neo-Ottoman doctrine and its critics, Davutoğlu, Ahmet, *Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu*, KüreYayınları, İstanbul Küre, 2005, also, Davutoğlu, Ahmet, "The Clash of Interests: An Explanation of the World (Dis) Order", *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 2, no. 4, Dec 1997-Feb 1998, Mazis, Ioannis Th., *Davutoğlu and Geopolitics*, Herodotus, Athens, 2012, and Mazis, Ioannis Th., "Theoretical Perception of Geopolitics in Davutoğlu's Work: A critical Presentation", *Civitas Gentium*, 3:1 (2013), Section A, pp.9-50, accordingly.

104. *Time Magazine*, 30, January, 2009.

and the Mavi-Marmara case,¹⁰⁵ marked the time of the definitive cessation of close political, diplomatic and military relations of Ankara and Jerusalem.

At the same time, Greece and Cyprus were facing the challenge of a revisionist islamist-turkish policy throughout the geographic arc from western Thrace and the northern Aegean down to the south east Mediterranean, in the Cypriot EEZ. As it was anticipated, with the objective convergence of the national interests of the three countries, Athens and Nicosia decided to proceed to the build-up of a trilateral/tripartite strategic alliance with Jerusalem, securing in this manner the full support and cooperation of the operationally powerful actor in the southeastern Mediterranean region, Israel. As a result, the historic conjuncture has been exploited to a significant extent, so that the three states can benefit to the maximum from this strategic alliance, creating a grid of multipliable power deterministically leading to geostrategic balance and political stability in the wider region. A region with inherent instability in its peripheral geopolitical sub-systems, (North Africa, Middle East, Near East), where re-structuring has begun to materialize.



Map no 1: The EEZs of the south-eastern Mediterranean states according to the International Law, United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, (UNCLOS III), Montego Bay, Jamaica, 10th December 1982. (Source: Ioannis Th. Mazis and Georgios Sgouros, *Regional Science Inquiry Journal*, Vol. II (2), 2010, pp. 133-150)

105. The Mavi Marmara incident in May 2010, in which nine Turkish activists while attempting to break the Israeli naval blockade of Gaza, with the blessings of Turkish Prime Minister, Mr. Tajip Erdogan.

The initiation of the political efforts of Athens and Jerusalem to build a strategic alliance, took place on 8 August of 2013, in Nicosia, where a Trilateral Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Ministers of Energy of Greece, Cyprus and Israel, which confirms “...*their volition for the promotion of their in-between economic relations and the reinforcement of the collaboration in the area of energy.*” A clause about cooperation in order to protect key infrastructures, in the hot spots of the gas-fields in the south east Mediterranean, is also included in the Memorandum.¹⁰⁶ In the same vain, on October 2013, during the proceedings of the Supreme Council of Ministers for Cooperation between the Governments of Greece and Israel,¹⁰⁷ several legal agreements between the two countries for cooperation in various sectors, were signed.

In addition, following a meeting of the three foreign Ministers, a joint communiqué was issued by the three parties, on 12 November 2014, in Athens, expressing their “...*volition for the promotion of their in-between economic relations and the reinforcement of the collaboration in the area of energy...*”, once again.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, in the military-defence sector, Brigadier Giora Eiland,¹⁰⁹ stated on 30 November, 2014: “*We decided to have military attaché in Athens, something that only happens in 15 cities worldwide. This shows the depth of cooperation that exists now. We conduct common aviation and naval exercises in Greece, the Israeli defense industry supplies the Greek armed forces, the cooperation in the field of security and exchange of information is deepening, for the common fight against terrorism. Relationships that based on mutual economic benefits, as well as energy, have their own dynamics. Of course, if the Turkish-Israeli relations continue to deteriorate, there is another reason for closer cooperation between Greece and Israel.*”¹¹⁰

Indeed, in the military-operational field, dozens of common aeronautical and military manoeuvres have taken place in the Aegean Sea, the island of Crete (and within its EEZ limits), Cyprus, (and within its EEZ limits), in mainland

106. Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the fields of energy and water between the Ministry of Energy, Commerce, Industry and Tourism of the Republic of Cyprus, the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change of the Hellenic Republic and the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources of the State of Israel. 08 August, 2013.

107. http://www.mfa.gr/index2.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1620&Itemid=318. The Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

108. Joint Communiqué of the Ministries of Energy of Greece, Cyprus and Israel, 12 November, 2014, Athens.

109. Former head of the National Security Council of Israel.

110. *Kathimerini*, 30 November 2014.

Greece and the coast and deserts of Israel, something that further consolidates the strategic alliance of the three. Nonetheless, the energy geopolitical factor is the qualitative dynamic catalyst in this tripartite allied relationship. Undeniably, the relations of the three countries have been profoundly impacted by geography, since they have contiguous EEZs, in which large volumes of energy mixture, (Israel, Cyprus) have been, or expected to be, (Greece), discovered, as well as by the potential construction of the East Mediterranean pipeline, a project of mutual strategic benefit.

2. The geopolitical factor of energy as the qualitative catalyst for a closer strategic alliance between Greece-Cyprus-Israel. The hydrocarbon neo-reserves and the Eastern Mediterranean Pipeline, (East-Med).

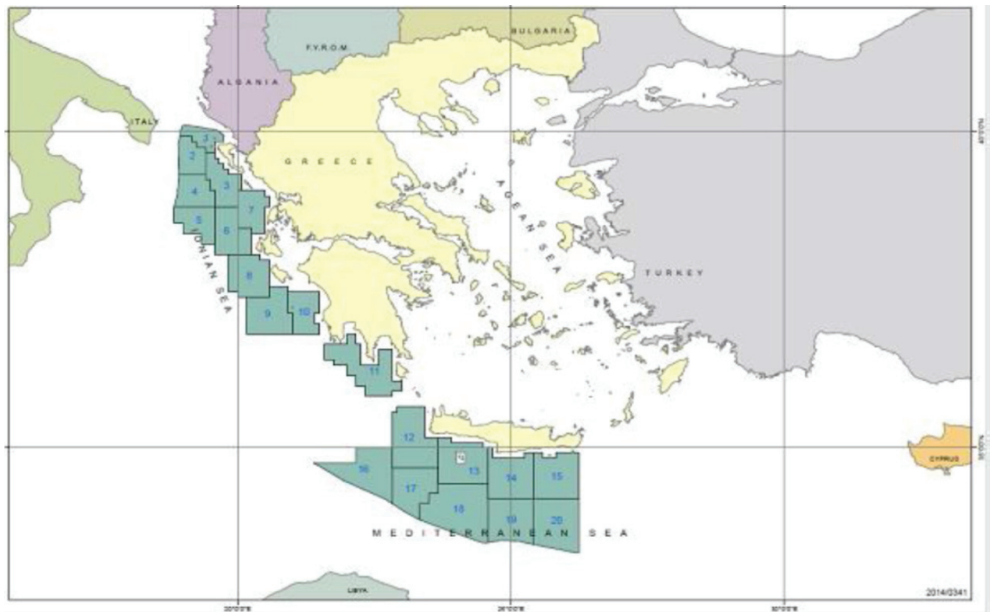
The coincidence of discovery, extraction and exploitation of Israeli hydrocarbon neo- reserves with those of Cyprus, along with the Greek effort to scientifically measure its own, brings closer, by default, the interests and perceptions of Athens, Nicosia and Jerusalem for regional stability and development. Especially, as noted above, the lack of a stable regional ally for Israel, and the substantial disbursement of resources required from Greece and Cyprus in order to ensure their national sovereignty in a wider area, give the said convergence, elements of Grand National Strategy.

3. The Greek neo-reserves

Mainly three areas are the ones which are of energy interest, which objectively and without a doubt possess large volumes of hydrocarbons, natural gas and/or oil. These are the wider off-shore areas south of the island of Crete, the Ionian and the Herodotus Basin. As it frequently happens in such cases, the scientific studies do not agree as to the volume size, however in this case, they all agree on the existence of extensive neo-reserves of natural gas south of Crete and the Herodotus Basin as well as of oil reserves along the Ionian.

Thus, according to the US Geopolitical Survey, it is estimated that there are substantial volumes of natural gas 70km south of the Mesara Bay in Crete, which it is claimed that Greek block no 14 between the areas of Plakias and Frangokastello has 1,5 trillion m³ of natural gas.¹¹¹ Similarly, a Greek study estimates the total volume of natural gas in the same area to approximately 3,5 trillion m³,

111. Iosiphides, Iosif, *Energy Planning 2011-2030 and Geopolitics. RES, Natural Gas. 27+12 states together ... and 1 state against*, Parga, Athens, 2011.



Map no 2: The Greek 'blocks', as appear in the second licensing round for hydrocarbon exploration, in 2014. (Source: Greek Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change)

identifying it with the Mexico Bay, the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea.¹¹² In relation to the financial value of the off-shore hydrocarbon neo-reserves and the net profits of Greece from the specific area alone, Deutsche Bank has estimated it to approximately €427 bn, while the Greek Public profit is estimated to €214 bn.¹¹³ A similar economic study raises the Greek Public profit to €599 bn, over a period of 25 years, from the commencement of the exploitation.¹¹⁴ Regarding the marine area of the Greek part of the Herodotus Basin, according to the French Beicip-Franlab, it is estimated that it might come to 2.5 trillion cubic meters of natural gas,¹¹⁵ while, the American Geological Review gives 50% probability

112. Konophagos, Foskolos, et al, "The steps for attracting investments and the generation, as soon as possible, of mineral wealth. The delimitation of [Greek] EEZ", Secret Report to the Greek Prime Minister, July 2012, *Reuters*, 03 October 2012.

113. Iosiphides, Iosif, op. cit.

114. Konophagos, op. cit.

115. This conclusion was reached by Beicip-Franlab by simulating the Greek part of the Herodotus Basin with that of the Israeli part of the Levantine Basin. Mazis, Ioannis Th., "The secrets of the Israel-Cyprus-Greece axis. The European energy reality. The emergence of US and Russia. The Turkish plans for Kastellorizo", *Foreign Affairs*, Hellenic Edition, March 2012, pp. 9-10.

there are 3 trillion cubic meters in excess of the 2.5 trillion m³, (i.e. a total of 5,5 tr. m³). In relation to the Greek oil energy neo-reserves, the responsible ministry assesses that the area of the Ionian Sea, along with that south of the island of Crete can produce 20-25 mil b/y over a period of 25-30 years from the commencement of exploitation.¹¹⁶

Finally, as a transfer network host country, it must be noted that Greece has a strong geographical advantage, being a core transit country for the regional energy planned network of pipelines. Greece is part of TAP, Turk-Stream (the former South-Stream), as well as the, extremely interesting, Vertical Corridor, which vertically connects the Balkan and Eastern European States, from the Aegean to the Baltic, by-passing Ukraine. Finally, Greece has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Russia, Serbia, Hungary and FYROM for the expansion of Turk-Stream towards Austria.



Map no 4: The Vertical Corridor connects vertically the Balkan and Eastern Europe states, from Aegean towards Baltic, can by-pass Ukraine. (Source: Institute of Energy for South-East Europe).

3.1 The Cypriot neo-reserves

Recent studies have shown that the marine area of the Levantine Basin up to the area adjacent to the Herodotus Basin contain natural gas neo-reserves. According to the most moderate estimates, the Beicip-Franlab and the Institut Fra-

116. Greek consumption of oil comes to 120 million bbl./y.

nais du Petrole, estimate the total volume of neo-reserves of the off-shore area within the Cypriot EEZ to 3 trillion m³ of natural gas. The Cyprus EEZ has been divided in 13 so-called “blocks”. Possible areas of neo-reserves within the EEZ are blocks 12 and 9 which are the first ones explored and have been conceded to international consortia for operation. Noble Energy and Delek are the operators of Block 12 and the Aphrodite natural gas field that is located within it, 34km west of the Israeli “Leviathan” gas field, which is also operated by the same consortium. Block 9 and the underlying gas fields “Onasagoras” and “Amathus” is operated by the Italo-Korean Consortium Eni-Kogas. With their announcements on 19 November 2014, the Israeli companies Delek and Avner, claim in the brief to their shareholders in the Israeli stock exchange that the natural gas quantities in ‘Aphrodite’ gas field exceed 4.5 trillion m³, 12% more than the estimates so far.¹¹⁷

Furthermore, especially the Aphrodite natural gas field alone, in block no 12, according to the former Director of the Energy Service of the Cypriot Ministry of Commerce, Solon Casinis, contains approximately 8-12 trillion m³ of natural gas, the value of which is estimated to € 350 billion, and the net profit for the Cypriot state to € 86 billion.¹¹⁸ So far it is claimed by Noble Energy and Delek, which operate the said reserve-gas field, that it can yield a production of approximately 10 b/m³/y for the next 2-3 decades. In this view, Delek company, demonstrating its interest in the Aphrodite gas field, has entered into negotiations to buy share from Noble Energy, with its CEO Yossi Abu stating after a meeting with the Cypriot President, Nikos Anastasiades on 4 September: *“We are fully committed to developing the Aphrodite gas field, in line with its strategy of supplying the Cypriot and Egyptian markets with natural gas fast and efficiently. We already started the process of marketing the gas into those markets and we have long discussions with potential buyers for this gas”*.¹¹⁹ It should be noted that given that the Cypriot economy is exclusively dependent on oil in order to cover its domestic needs, the vast majority, 80-85%, of the total production of natural gas, i.e. 2,4 to 2,5 trillion m³, will be exported. Indeed, since 2014, advanced talks have taken place for the export of the total natural gas production from the Aphrodite gas field to Egypt. In joint statement, on 25 November 2014, made by the Egyptian Minister of Oil and Mineral Resources, Ismail Sherif and the Cypriot Minister of Energy George Lakkotrypis, the former stated that: *“Egypt can receive as much gas quantities as Cyprus can export”*.¹²⁰ His Cypriot counterpart also, stated that: *“It appears that the best option for ex-*

117. Mazis, Ioannis Th., op. cit., pp. 9-10.

118. Interview of Solon Casinis to www.Euro2day.gr, 15 April 2014.

119. *Naftemporiki*, 04 September, 2015.

120. *Cyprus News Agency*, 25 November, 2014.

*port at present appears to be via a pipeline between Cyprus and Egypt and the talks focus on the existing infrastructure of Egypt's liquefaction terminal, i.e. in Idku and Damietta".*¹²¹

A recent development of high importance is that legal operators of the block number 6 in the Cypriot EEZ, Eni and Total¹²² have reported the existence of a new rich natural gas reserve discovery, offshore Cyprus in the block number 6, following the drilling in the target no 1 of the Calypso well, in the block. Eni's CEO Claudio Descalzi, added that the new reserve could be of 230bcm contain capacity, but in any way it is not less than 17bcm capacity. Also, Calypso geological structure is similar to that of the Egyptian mega-neo-eserve Zohr field which is located about 80 kms southern from the Calypso target no 1 discovery, and it is also operated by the Italian energy company.¹²³

3.2 *The Israeli neo-reserves*

Until the recent discovery of the Leviathan, Tamar and Dalit neo-reserves, the Israeli deposits came to a maximum of 1, 7 trillion m³, from the traditional off-shore natural gas fields of Mari and Noa. According to the most moderate estimates, the BEICIP-FRANLAB and the Institut Franais du Petrole, the neo-reserves of natural gas in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Israel amount up to 800billionm³. More specifically: 1.Tamar: 90 km from Haifaand in depth of 1.680m. Estimated reserves 142 bn/m³, 2.Dalit: 13km east of Tamar: Estimated reserves: 14 bn/m³, 3.Leviathan: 130km west of Haifa and in depth of 1.635m. Estimated Reserves: 535 bn/m³. In 2009, Israel began the extraction from the gas field Tamar, while the even larger field Leviathan is expected to yield production within 2016. Finally, it is estimated that the aforementioned volumes of natural gas can cover Israel's energy needs for the next 2 to 3 decades, while large quantities are to be exported.

An extremely important development took place lately, when Israeli drilling company Delek along with US Noble announced that they have reached an agreement with the Egyptian energy company Dolphinus for the purchase of 64 bcm of Israeli natural gas, from Tamar and Leviathan offshore gas fields, over the next decade.¹²⁴ Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that "...the

121. Ibid.

122. Eni and Total had bagged the legal rights for the block number 6 in 2016 from the Cypriot government in the 3rd offshore licensing round.

123. <https://www.offshoreenergytoday.com/report-eni-total-in-large-gas-discovery-offshore-cyprus/>, also in <http://www.globes.co.il/en/article-eni-ceo-1001223556>

124. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-egypt-natgas/egyptian-firm->



Map no 5: Israel and Cyprus off-shore natural-gas fields

agreement strengthens our security, economy and regional relations...” since it is the largest Israeli natural gas export ever.¹²⁵

3.3. The Egyptian neo-reserve natural gas-field Zohr

A recent development comes to re-structure the plans for the exports of Cypriot and Israeli natural gas, as well as expedite the promotion of East-Med. According to the Italian ENI¹²⁶, an ‘ultra-gigantic’ neo-reserve of Egyptian natural gas in Zohr gas field, in block 9, also known as “Shorouk” which covers an area of 100 km², at a depth of 1.450 km, 109 km of Port Side, was discovered on 30 August 2015.¹²⁷ Also, “It’s the largest gas discovery ever made in Egypt and in the Mediterranean Sea and could become one of the world’s largest natural-gas finds”,¹²⁸ the company said.

Indeed, this reserve is the largest discovery of natural gas ever taking place in the Mediterranean, while according to ENI, its full utilization will

to-buy-15-billion-of-israeli-natural-gas-idUSKCN1G31BK

125. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/business/netanyahu-lauds-israeli-firm-s-15b-gas-deal-with-egypt-1.5828419>, and also in <https://www.timesofisrael.com/delek-noble-sign-accords-for-15b-in-sales-of-israeli-natural-gas-to-egypt/>

126. The research for oil and gas reserves was signed in 2014, between the Italian ENI and the Egyptian Ministry of oil, following a call for tenders.

127. ENI’s official public announcement, 30 August, 2015.

128. *Ibid.*

be in a position to cover Egypt's demand in natural gas for decades. More specifically, Zohr gas field is estimated to cover an area of 100 km² and can yield approximately 850 billion m³ of natural gas.¹²⁹ An extremely important statement is that of Hamdy Abdel Aziz, Director of Communication of the Egyptian Oil Ministry, to Bloomberg Agency: "... the entire production will be used for domestic consumption."¹³⁰, while the quantities in Zohr gasfield, in Shorouk block, are estimated to adequately cover Egypt's need for more than 10 years.

Also of extreme importance is the fact that Zohr gas field adjoins block 11 of the Cypriot EEZ, only 6 km away. It is worth noting that according to the Cypriot News Agency, the former Director of the Energy Service of the Ministry of Energy, Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Solon Kassinis supported that: "Large quantities of gas will be discovered in the surrounding area and I am certain that our EEZ contains even larger quantities."¹³¹ Consequently, what needs to be done is for the French company Total, holder of exploitation rights for the Cypriot block 11, to research whether this gigantic neo-reserve extends to the Cypriot EEZ.¹³²

It becomes clear that once the Egyptian government directs the entire quantity of natural gas from the aforementioned neo-reserve for domestic consumption, export options towards nearby markets, such as Egypt, are dramatically decreased for Jerusalem and Nicosia. On the other hand 2,5 trillion m³ of Cypriot natural gas, as well as a large part of the Israeli one, approximately 600-800 billion m³, 'await' their distribution in international markets. As a result, turning towards further, geographically, markets is unavoidable, a fact that is favourable for East-Med's prospects.

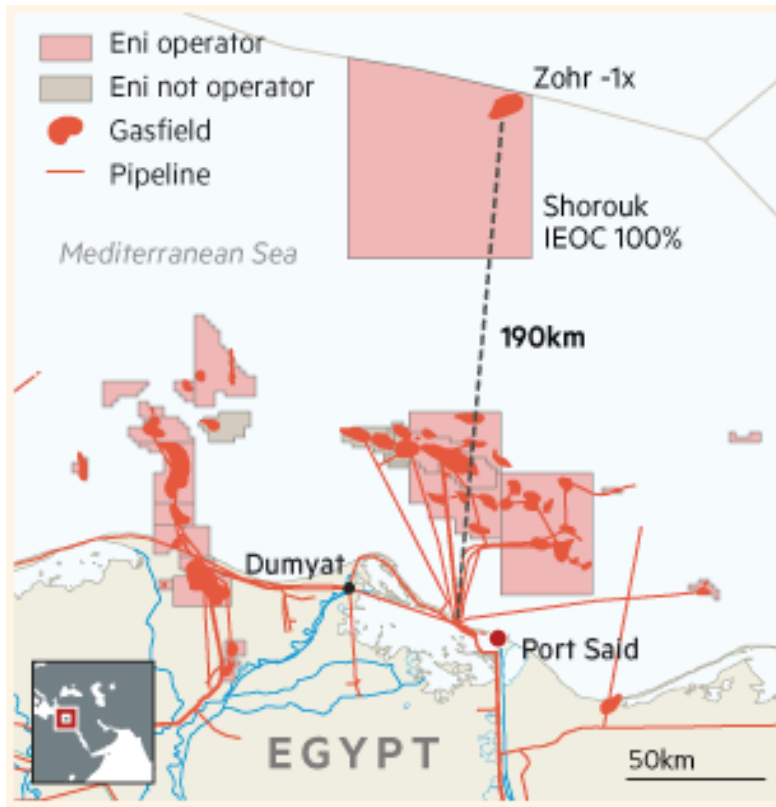
In conclusion, it appears that the "*alea jacta est*" for the development of a wider, deeper and substantial energy cooperation between Israel, Cyprus and Greece, within the framework of the existing geostrategic alliance of the three states. Athens expedites the international licensing round for hydrocarbon exploration, Nicosia consolidates the sector of production of natural gas and Israel is expected to commence the extraction from the Leviathan neo-reserve gas field

129. The role of Egypt as an energy key player in the region will be significantly upgraded following the discovery of Zohr gas field. The discovery increases Egypt's total reserves of natural gas from 65,2 trillion m³ to 100 trillion m³, significantly enhancing its geopolitical position.

130. Bloomberg Agency, 02 September, 2015

131. Cyprus News Agency, 02 September, 2015.

132. The new research results for block 11 will be delivered by the French Company to the Minister of Energy Commerce, Industry and Tourism in October.



Map no 6: The Egyptian neo-reserve natural gas-field Zohr

in 2016, the third largest in the world, since the newly discovered Egyptian Zohr.

4. The Eastern Mediterranean Pipeline, (East-Med)¹³³

All of these can only have the expected added value for the allied states, with the construction of the East Mediterranean Pipeline, which will form the backbone of the long term alliance between Israel, Greece and Cyprus. Indeed, this pipeline is of the outmost strategic importance, since it will transport the Israeli, Cy-

133. For more, see also: Sotiropoulos, Ioannis, P., "The Geopolitics of Energy in the South-East Mediterranean. Greece, European Energy Security and the Eastern Mediterranean Pipeline.", *Contribution in the Roundtable of the International Scientific Workshop, 'Repositioning Greece in a Globalizing World'*, Collective, Joint Partnership Project, Global and European Studies Institute, (GESI), University of Leipzig and the Faculty of Turkish Studies and Modern Asian Studies, School of Economics and Political Sciences, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, 8-11 June, 2015, University of Leipzig, 2016, *forthcoming*, (12.000).

priot and Greek natural gas reserves. The Greek Public Natural Gas Company, (DEPA) was the first to propose the option of East-Med, in 2012.

The pipeline, as an option, having a length of 1.530 km¹³⁴ and a capacity of 8 to 12 billion m³, without the Greek neo-deposits contribution, satisfies European Union's goal of multiple suppliers in order to achieve the higher degree of energy security.¹³⁵ Passing entirely through European ground and sovereign space, it links Israel, Cyprus, Greece, and finally is connected with the Greek-Italian interconnector, (IGI), pipeline, which crosses the Adriatic Sea.¹³⁶ Following the construction of the off-shore pipeline, a terminal station is planned to be constructed in Cyprus, which will be used for the liquefaction of natural gas prior to its transfer to the European markets.

Besides, Brigadier Giora Eiland's statement, highlights Israel's intention: «... the use of existing LNG facilities in Egypt is examined. The other option, the construction of the pipeline to Greece, is the preferred political and the safest way to interconnect with Europe.».¹³⁷ It is of extreme importance that during a meeting in Rome, 18-19 November 2014, the Israeli Minister of Energy, Shirvan Shalom, proposed the solution of the East-Med to his counterparts of the European Mediterranean countries, labeling it a monumental technical construction of immense political significance.¹³⁸ Indeed, with the appropriate management in the energy sector, Greece-Cyprus-Israel will be in a position to forge a long-term alliance, which, having energy extroversion as a spearhead, could substitute in time the majority of EU's, practically monopolistic, suppliers of energy mixture. For each ally individually, this has also particular political importance. Jerusalem will probably attempt to immediately capitalize on the power stemming from exporting energy mixture to the E.U., *inter alia*, in the re-orientation of certain European institutions and powers, in favor of Israeli positions, in respect to the Arab-Israeli

134. More specifically, the off-shore distances of the East-Med from on-shore to on-shore landmark are the following: 150 km=Levantine Basin-Cyprus, 650 χλμ=Cyprus-Crete, 400 km=Crete-Peloponnesus, 500 (on-shore) km=Peloponnesus-Thesprotia and connection with IGI.

135. For an analysis of the Eastern Mediterranean Pipeline, (East-Med), and how it can increase the European Energy Security refer to: Sotiropoulos, Ioannis, P., op. cit.

136. *Ibid.*

137. *Kathimerini*, 30 November, 2014.

138. "Building a euro-Mediterranean energy bridge. The strategic value of the euro-Mediterranean natural gas and electricity networks in the context of energy security. 'International Euro-Mediterranean High Level Conference', 18-19 November, Rome Italy.

conflict. Greece and Cyprus will agonizingly attempt to exploit the benefits of their energy sector in order to exit faster and easier from the economic depression they are experiencing. Finally, there is no doubt, that the systemic geopolitical result of the tripartite alliance, which is geometrically accentuated by the energy geopolitical factor, is the rapid upgrading of the geopolitical status of the three allies on a peripheral level, in the geopolitical system of the southeast Mediterranean, and not only, with the warm blessings of the EU.

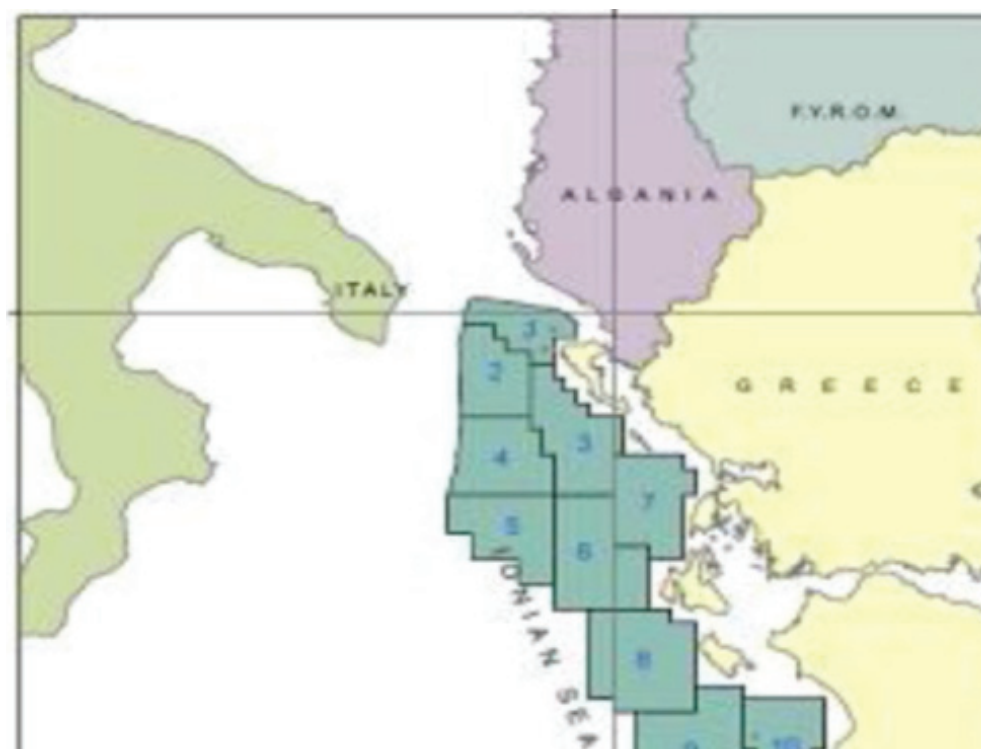
The East-Med proposal is also officially presented to the Vice-President of the European Commission and European Commissioner for Energy Union, Marcos Sefcovic by the Greek and Cypriot Ministers of Energy on 9 December 2014, accompanied with the relevant economic violability studies and research results so far.¹³⁹ The pipeline has been included in the Project of Common Interest, (PCI) of the European Commission for 2015, while the responsible sub-committee of the European Union will finance its further feasibility study, initially with the symbolic amount of two million euros, demonstrating its genuine interest for the construction of the East-Med. The said pipeline will increase EU's energy security,¹⁴⁰ as it is estimated that the Eastern Mediterranean Basins contains more than 3,5 trillion m³ of natural gas, and 1,7 billion barrels of oil.¹⁴¹ Consequently, a strategic Mediterranean carousel has begun, originating from the south-east Mediterranean neo-reserves of Israel and Cyprus, with the involvement of certain key-state guarantors and hosts of East-Med pipeline infrastructure, such as Greece, Cyprus and Israel, and potentially new energy suppliers such as Greece and Egypt, once the former starts the exploitation of its reserves and the socio-political situation in the latter is stabilized.¹⁴²

139. Sotiropoulos, Ioannis, P., op. cit.

140. Ibid.

141. 'Overview of oil and natural gas in the Eastern Mediterranean region', *Energy International Association*, August 2013.

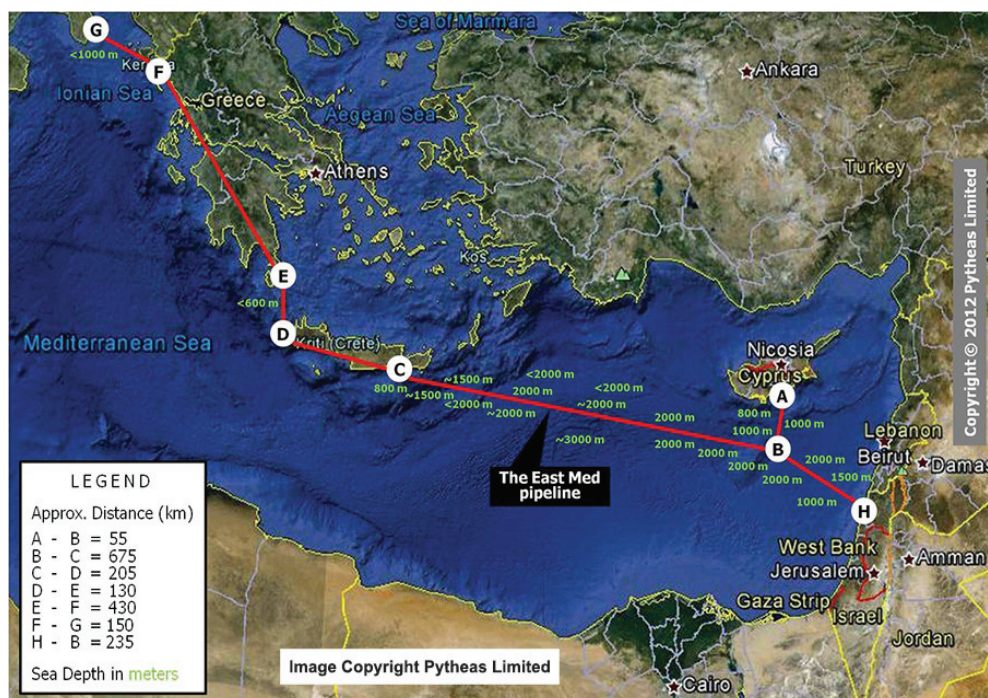
142. "Cairo has achieved variety in its energy mixture intended for consumption, while exports of oil and oil derivatives in Europe and the US, hold a significant share, at least until recently, of its total exports, although a downturn occurred since mid-2012 due of the political crisis experienced by the country.". According to CIA World fact-book, "The Egyptian production of natural gas, which is not sufficient to cover domestic needs, amounts to approximately 2,056 billion m³/y, while oil production varies from 720.000 for 2012, to 691,000 for 2013, bbl/d, i.e. 32,936 million tonnes/y, depending on the year and the source.". According to the Statistical report of the International Energy Agency, "Egypt's proven reserves in natural gas and oil amount to 2,186 trillion m³ and 4,400 billion bbl., respectively. Both oil and gas are mined in the western regions



Map no 7: The Projects of Common Interest, (PCIs) in Europe

It becomes clear that East-Med in one hand constitutes the qualitative catalyst in the strengthening and deepening of the allied relationship between Greece-Cyprus-Israel in the long-term and on the other hand will play a very important role in the transport of energy mixture and the increase of EU energy security, while the development of the alliance between Athens, Nicosia and Jerusalem consists an *interalia* geostrategic counterweight for the Turkish revisionism in the wider area.

of the country, the Nile Delta and the Gulf of Suez. Finally, Egypt uses, mainly for export purposes, two large seaside terminal stations of liquefied gas, (Liquid Natural Gas-LNG) in Idko and Damietta, which remain inactive since the 2010 revolution, when Cairo decided to cease gas exports and to exclusively use it for domestic consumption and mainly the productive industry. Egypt holds the largest oil refinery capacity in Africa with 726,000 bbl/d." . Ibid.



Map no 8: The Eastern Mediterranean Pipeline, (East-Med). (Source: Ioannis Th. Mazis and Georgios Sgouros, *Regional Science Inquiry Journal*, Vol. II (2), 2010, pp. 133-150, Image Copyright Pytheas Ltd).

5. The Turkish efforts for rapprochement with Israel

Since the shooting down of the Russian SU-24 fighter by Turkish F-16 fighters and the subsequent development, the Russian-Turkish diplomatic relations are at their nadir. On the energy field, where Turkey is vulnerable, Moscow called off the construction of the Turkish Stream, which would transfer Russian natural gas to Europe through Turkey, while Ankara has become Kremlin's energy hostage, since it imports 50% of the natural gas it consumes from Russia.

Under these circumstances, Ankara attempts to normalise the Israeli-Turkish relationships, with the mutual energy benefits as the core argument. More specifically, the Turkish President, Tajip Erdogan, stated on 2 January 2016: "Israel is in need of a country like Turkey in the region, ...And we too must accept that we need Israel. This is a reality in the region... If mutual steps are implemented based on sincerity, then normalization will follow".¹⁴³

One could argue that there are reasons of mutual benefits for an Israeli-Turkish rapprochement. The future prospect of co-exploitation of the natural gas re-

143. *Kayhan International*, Kayhan Group of Newspapers, 2 January, 2016.

serves in the east Mediterranean is the primary reason, since Israel wishes to export natural gas from the 'Leviathan' gas field to Europe *via* all possible routes. On the other hand, Turkey would secure a substantial amount of natural gas for domestic consumption and would enter the Eastern Mediterranean natural gas transport map towards Europe. Netanyahu's government is already trying to enter into agreements with the governments of Nicosia and Athens for the export of Israeli natural gas, while some argue that an additional route, that of Turkey would increase his negotiating power and would speed up the export of Israeli natural gas. Finally, Turkey and Israel have traditionally been the USA's strategic partners. Following a long and serious Turkish deviation from this traditional policy, which raised a number of questions by NATO's partners as to Ankara's true political stance, a rapprochement and cooperation¹⁴⁴ between Ankara and Jerusalem, is going to be extremely satisfying to Washington, a powerful international pole of power of the acting geopolitical supra-system.

All these take place amidst the non-resolution of the Cyprus problem, the continuing blockade of the Gaza Strip by Israel and the strategic cooperation between Jerusalem-Nicosia-Athens with political, military and energy synergies. Moreover, it is extremely doubtful if whichever Turkish-Israeli rapprochement proposal from Ankara, does not disturb Israeli's relations with other regional forces.

In fact, it appears that there are business groups within Israel who find the Israeli-Turkish rapprochement beneficial to their own micro-economic interests and who actively promote it *via* energy based relations and official energy agreements.¹⁴⁵ Nevertheless, as Israel's national security is the ultimate priority for Je-

144. Reuters suggested on December 17th, (from an anonymous Israeli source) that Mossad's incoming Director, Yossi Cohen, the Israeli envoy, Joseph Ciechanover, and the Turkish foreign ministry under-secretary, Feridun Sinirlioglu, have reached a preliminary agreement during negotiations in Switzerland. Ankara denied that such a meeting has taken place.

145. Sotiropoulos, Ioannis, P., "The Geopolitics of Energy in the South-East Mediterranean. Greece, European Energy Security and the Eastern Mediterranean Pipeline", *Contribution in the Roundtable of the International Scientific Workshop, 'Repositioning Greece in a Globalizing World'*, International Research Project 'Repositioning Greece in a Globalizing World', Collective, Joint Partnership Project, Global and European Studies Institute, (GESI), University of Leipzig and the Department of Turkish Studies and Modern Asian Studies, School of Economics and Political Sciences, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, 8-11 June 2015, Leipzig, (International Research Programme duration 2014-2017),

rusalem, the official Israeli position heavily leans towards an Israel-Greek strategic alignment. Brigadier Giora Eiland's statement though is indicative of the intentions of the Israeli state on the issue: «... *the use of existing LNG facilities in Egypt is examined. The other option, the construction of the pipeline to Greece, is the preferred political and the safest way to interconnect with Europe.*».¹⁴⁶ Furthermore, the Israeli Minister of Energy, Shirvan Shalom, proposed the solution of the East-Med to the ministers of the European Mediterranean countries during the meeting in Rome between 18 and 19 November, as a monumental technical construction of immense political significance.¹⁴⁷ Finally he pointed out that the project requires investment from Europe, of tens of billions of euros.¹⁴⁸ Considering that Israel's national security and interests are at stake, it is clear that business interests will not prevail. Moreover, given that this is also the international political trend, Israel would never jeopardize its national security in such a crucial sector such a synergy. As mentioned by Raphaël Metais: "*Since the 1960s when the private oil companies 'the Seven Sisters'*¹⁴⁹*controlled more than 85% of international oil reserves, the trends reversed and today the 'new Seven Sisters'*¹⁵⁰*, the primary oil companies are of national character and possess the majority of the reserves*".¹⁵¹ Thus, Metais explains, "*the continuously growing number of similar national companies, controlled by the governments of their states, tend to surpass the logic of the markets for the benefit of wider political and ideological aspirations.*".¹⁵² In addition, *the reluctance of certain governments of oil producing states to accept direct foreign investments renders the*

University of Leipzig Publications, Leipzig, 2018, *forthcoming* (12.000).

146. Kathimerini, 30 November, 2014.

147. "Building a euro-Mediterranean energy bridge. The strategic value of the euro-Mediterranean natural gas and electricity networks in the context of energy security. 'International Euro-Mediterranean High Level Conference', 18-19 November, Rome Italy.

148. www.timesofisrael.com

149. There are: Exxon-Mobil, Chevron, BP, Royal Dutch Shell, ConocoPhillips and Total (6 have left after mergers and acquisitions.), (in Mazis, Ioannis Th. and Balafouta, Virginia G., *Geopolitical Reality in the Dipole Greece-Cyprus, Solutions and Alibis*, Scientific series: Geo-cultures-Politics and Culture, Papazisis, 2014, p. 35.).

150. Aramco (Saudi Arabia), Gazprom (Russia), CNPC (China), NIOC (Iran), PDVSA (Venezuela), Petrobras (Brazil), and Petronas (Malaysia), (in *ibid*, p. 35.).

151. Frank Umbach, "Global Energy Security and the Implications for the EU", *Energy Policy*, no. 38, 2010, p. 1232, (in *ibid*, pp.35-6).

152. Umbach, *op.cit.*, p. 1232, (in *ibid*, pp. 35-6.).

goal of energy security of energy importing countries, slightly more complicated.¹⁵³ The geopolitical framework based on the above information with respect to energy security may be properly analyzed by the model «Empire and regions» as developed by Aad Correljé and Coby van der Linde.¹⁵⁴ This model foresees the future of energy security issues through “the division of the world between countries and regions, based on ideologies, religions and political arguments”.¹⁵⁵ The main props of this view is the absence of effective international markets combined with energy companies of a high degree of integration operating on a national basis.. “The observed dimension of the UN Security Council on the issue of the war in Iraq is an eloquent example of different states or groups of states with diverse interests on a conflict where energy considerations were not absent.”¹⁵⁶ It is also remarkably instructive the case study, which justifies these approaches, of the Russian President’s behavior since he was elected at the highest Russian office in 2000. President Putin has demonstrated an “increasing by the day ability and volition to use energy as a political tool for the achievement of political and geopolitical goals [...and] the reinforcement of his international position.”¹⁵⁷ “This fact appeared to be part of broader trends towards re-nationalisation and politicization of matters of energy matters.”¹⁵⁸

Conclusions

From a geopolitical perspective, the area of the south-east Mediterranean, since the discovery of the energy neo-reserves has come to face a new geopolitical reality. It is a fact that the hydrocarbon neo-reserves of Greece, Cyprus and Israel exceed their domestic needs by large. As a result, a significant bulk will be exported in order to cover the needs of European, mainly industrial intensive, states. The transport of the energy mixture from Greece’s, Cypriot and Israel’s EEZs, via the planned East-Mediterranean pipeline, will give the EU the opportunity to expand its energy supplier portfolio, increasing its energy security, significantly.

153. Umbach, op.cit., p. 1232, (in ibid., pp. 35-6.).

154. Aad Correljé and Coby van der Linde, “Energy supply security and geopolitics: A European Perspective”, *Energy Policy*, vol. 34, no. 5, 2006, p. 535.

155. op.cit., p. 536, (in Mazis, *Geopolitical Reality in...*, p. 36.).

156. Metais, Raphaël, “Ensuring Energy Security in Europe: The EU between a Market-based and a Geopolitical Approach”, *EU Diplomacy Paper03*, College de l’Europe, Department of EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies, p. 11.

157. Jakub M. Godzimirski, “Energy Security and the Politics of Identity”, in Fermann (ed.), *Political Economy of Energy in Europe*, Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, Berlin, 2009, p. 181.

158. Metais, Raphaël, “Ensuring Energy Security...” , ibid. , p. 10).

The majority Greece's neo-reserves area concentrated east of the island of Crete. They are estimated at 6 trillion m³ of natural gas and 1,7 billion barrels of oil. The sustainability of the natural gas reserves is estimated at 100 years, a fact that underlines the importance of their proper management by the Greek government or the legal beneficiaries in future. The Ionian and Aegean Seas and the East Mediterranean have reserves of energy resources that can cover further needs as an exportable product. Moreover, the geographical route of the Turk-Stream, if implemented, is suitable to directly receive the energy production of these deposits *via* Greek territory, while an important role will be played by the Vertical Corridor which can connect, from an energy perspective, vertically the Balkan and Eastern Europe states, starting from the Aegean, with a direction from south to north, by-passing Ukraine and without involving any of Moscow's infrastructure. Israel's energy reserves are estimated to approximately 2,5 trillion/m³ and it is estimated that they are can adequately cover its domestic energy needs for the next 3 decades, along with a certain volume of exports. In addition, Nicosia's domestic needs rely on oil, which means that the biggest bulk of its 3 trillion natural gas neo-reserves, approximately 2,5 trillion, can be exported; another fact that advocates in favour of the immediate construction of the East-Med. Finally, the discovery of the Zohr gas field does not downgrade the significance of the existing neo-reserves of the area. On the contrary, adjoining the Cypriot EEZ and block 11, this discovery increases the possibility for a similar one by Cyprus. In addition, the current planning for the export of Israeli and Cypriot natural gas to Egypt can be easily revised, inevitably channeling the lion's share towards the EU through the East-Med. Moreover, an increasing accumulation of energy mixture available for export by Israel and Cyprus is achieved, reinforcing the financial viability of East-Med, as well as its geopolitical value, exhorting Jerusalem and Nicosia towards its speedier construction, bringing Athens, Nicosia and Jerusalem even closer. Despite Ankara's attempt for rapprochement with Jerusalem, the official Israeli position heavily leans towards an Israeli-Greek-Cypriot strategic alignment, as Israel's national security constitute the ultimate long-term priority for Jerusalem.

Considering that the developments in the energy sector, and particularly the planning and the construction of pipelines, are closely related to the wider geo-strategic interests and national policies, Greece, Cyprus and Israel are countries of unique energy, *inter alia*, geopolitical location. Being members of the EU, (Greece and Cyprus) and NATO, (Greece), either undeviatingly oriented towards the Western Community (Israel), they abut on the energy producers of the Middle East, North Africa and the energy channels of the Black Sea and Caspian natural

gas. Particularly, the European strategy of diversifying the procurement of energy mixture is currently a favorable factor for the implementation of East-Med, the pipeline of Israel-Cyprus and Greece, which will transport natural gas from the neo-reserves of the Levantine Basin in the Mediterranean towards Europe. In this sense, Greece, Israel and Cyprus, which are extremely endowed due to their geopolitical position, including their cultural dimension, both historically as well as in the contemporary world, come even closer together, covering gaps of geopolitical nature, operational character and political-economic flitters, deterministically heading towards a closer, deeper and long-term cooperative alliance, with the geopolitical factor of energy as a functional scheme.

ANNEX

Evidence on the Collaboration of Turkey with ISIS and other jihadist groups, as well as relevant testimonies from international sources

1. Primary Documents

10 April 2015: “Islamic State Financing and US Policy Approaches”, Congressional Research Service, 10/4/2015.¹⁵⁹

3 April 2014: US Department of the Treasury, Remarks of Under-Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence David Cohen before the Center for a New American Security on «Confronting New Threats in Terrorist Financing”: “Al-Qa’ida still looks to these tried and true methods to raise funds. Since early 2012, senior al-Qa’ida leaders in Pakistan have raised millions of dollars from deep pocket donors. They receive the majority of their funds from Gulf-based sympathizers, followed by supporters based in Pakistan and Turkey”.¹⁶⁰

12 August 2012: Declassified DIA document concerning Turkish support of jihadists in Syria and Iraq. The document reveals that various Western states in coordination with the Gulf states and Turkey sponsored violent Islamist groups in order to destabilize Assad.¹⁶¹

2. Academic Papers and Papers by Policy Institutes

2.1 Academic Papers

(2015) Emrullah Uslu, ‘Jihadist Highway to Jihadist Haven: Turkey’s Jihadi Policies and Western Security’, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, DOI: 10.1080/1057610X.2015.1119544

According to the author “Turkish support to jihadists is not merely a tactic aimed at removing Assad from power. It stems from a strategic decision on the part of Turkish authorities to influence Middle East affairs through non-state actors, much as Iran has been doing for some time. Turkey’s support of jihadists transiting into Syria and its establishment of close ties with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood are joint aspects of this strategy. Turkish authorities have permitted Al Qaeda sympathizers to use pro-government media to promote their beliefs. [...] Not a single counterterror operation has been launched to disrupt Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)’s networks or recruitment activities. The Turkish National Intelligence Organization has been given full responsibility

159. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/R43980.pdf>

160. <https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2308.aspx>

161. <http://www.judicialwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Pg.-291-Pgs.-287-293-JW-v-DOD-and-State-14-812-DOD-Release-2015-04-10-final-version11.pdf>

to deal with jihadist activities, without any active oversight, and the police are loath to venture into their territory. As a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Turkey's jihadi policies have direct and indirect impact on Western security".¹⁶²

(March 2015) George Kiourktsoglou & Alec D. Koutroubis, *ISIS Export Gateway to Global Crude Oil Markets*, International Information Center for Balkan Studies, Occasional Papers 231.¹⁶³

(2017) Daniel Byman, 'How States Exploit Jihadist Foreign Fighters', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, DOI: 10.1080/1057610X.2017.1361281

Professor Daniel Byman of Georgetown University's Security Studies Programme was previously a Middle East analyst for the US intelligence community, and headed up the Center for Middle East Studies at the RAND Corporation. According to the author several regional states including Turkey, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia deliberately empowered al-Qaeda and ISIS foreign fighters for their geostrategic goals: "A number of US allies allowed their citizens to send money or volunteer with little interference, at times bordering on regime complicity. When the organization [IS] established itself in Syria a decade later, key US regional partners like Turkey facilitated the flow of fighters and logistical support in the hopes of expediting the overthrow of the Assad regime. Without the relatively permissive environments in these states, the Islamic State would have been far weaker and fighting it much easier."¹⁶⁴

2.2 Research Papers by Policy Institutes

(April 2015) Bipartisan Policy Center, *Turkey: An Increasingly Undependable Ally*.¹⁶⁵

(July 2016) Monica Marks, *ISIS and Nusra in Turkey: jihadist Recruitment and Ankara's Response*, Institute of Strategic Dialogue.¹⁶⁶

(October 2016) Aaron Stein, *Islamic State Networks in Turkey: Recruitment for the Caliphate*, Atlantic Council/Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East.¹⁶⁷

162. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2015.1119544>

163. <http://www.marsecreview.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/PAPER-on-CRUDE-OIL-and-ISIS.pdf>

164. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2017.1361281>

165. <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/library/turkey-an-increasingly-undependable-ally/>

166. https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ISDJ4677_Turkey_R1_WEB.pdf

167. <http://www.publications.atlanticcouncil.org/islamic-state-networks-in-turkey/>

(March 2017) Merve Tahiroglu & Jonathan Schanzer, *Islamic State Networks in Turkey*, Foundation for Defense of Democracies.¹⁶⁸

(October 2017) Francesco d' Alema, *The Evolution of Turkey's Syria Policy*, Istituto Affari Internazionali, IAI Working Papers 17.¹⁶⁹

3. Media researches

4 December 2013: CNN, video documentary 'The secret jihadi smuggling route through Turkey'.¹⁷⁰

28 April 2014: Erika Solomon (Financial Times): 'Large tanks of crude are auctioned to smugglers who head to Turkey or to middlemen who sell them to government-controlled regions in the west'.¹⁷¹

11 June 2014: Janine Di Giovanni, Leah McGrath Goodman and Damien Sharikov (Newsweek): 'Iran and Turkey are now working the same routes between ISIS-held Iraq and the outside world'.¹⁷²

17 June 2014: Daniel Pipes (Middle East Forum), 'Turkey's Support for ISIS Islamist Terrorists'.¹⁷³

11 July 2014: Ali Ediboglu (CHP lawmaker): '\$800 million worth of oil that ISIS obtained from regions it occupied this year [the Rumeilan oil fields in northern Syria – and most recently Mosul] is being sold in Turkey. They have laid pipes from villages near the Turkish border at Hatay. Similar pipes exist also at [the Turkish border regions of] Kilis, Urfa and Gaziantep. They transfer the oil to Turkey and parlay it into cash. They take the oil from the refineries at zero cost. Using primitive means, they refine the oil in areas close to the Turkish border and then sell it via Turkey. This is worth \$800 million'.¹⁷⁴

9 August 2014: Ahmet Davutoglu (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Turkey): 'ISIS is not a terrorist group but a community of people who are angry'.¹⁷⁵

4 September 2014: Holly Williams (CBS): 'As Turkey turned blind eye, ISIS took advantage'.¹⁷⁶

168. http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/Islamic_State_Networks_Turkey.pdf

169. <http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/iaiw1728.pdf>

170. <https://edition.cnn.com/2013/11/04/world/europe/isis-gaining-strength-on-syria-turkey-border/index.html>

171. <https://www.ft.com/content/5346e788-cbd6-11e3-9f27-00144feabdc0>

172. <http://www.newsweek.com/2014/11/14/how-does-isis-fund-its-reign-terror-282607.html>

173. <https://www.meforum.org/articles/2014/turkey-s-support-for-isis-islamist-terrorists>

174. <http://www.newsweek.com/isis-and-turkey-cooperate-destroy-kurds-former-isis-member-reveals-turkish-282920>

175. <http://ufilter.blogspot.gr/2014/08/isis-is-not-terrorist-group-but.html>

176. https://www.cbsnews.com/news/as-turkey-turned-blind-eye-isis-took-Civitas_Gentium_6:1 (2018)

12 September 2014: Francois Ricciardone (US Former Ambassador in Ankara): 'The Turkish authorities thought they could work with extremist Islamist groups in the Syrian civil war and at the same time push them to become more moderate. That led them to work with Jabhat al-Nusra, al-Qaeda's branch, as well as hardline Salafi Islamist groups like Ahrar al-Sham. I tried to persuade the Turkish government to close its borders to the groups, but to no avail. We ultimately had no choice but to agree to disagree. The Turks frankly worked with groups for a period, including al Nusra, whom we finally designated as we're not willing to work with. Turkey allowed its borders to be used as a conduit for aid, weapons and volunteers heading for the Syrian rebel cause from the start of the uprising, and there have long been accusations that it did not do enough to distinguish between «moderate» groups and extremists'.¹⁷⁷

13 September 2014: Juan Zarate (Center for Strategic and International Studies): 'Turkey in many ways is a wild card in this coalition equation. It's a great disappointment: There is a real danger that the effort to degrade and destroy ISIS is at risk. You have a major NATO ally, and it is not clear they are willing and able to cut off flows of funds, fighters and support to ISIS'.¹⁷⁸

13 September 2014: Fehim Tastekin (Radikal): 'Suriye krizinin yüküne karşılık kaçak döşenen yüzlerce boru hattından mazotun Türkiye'ye pompalanmasına göz yumuldu. Şimdi ortaklık bozuldu...'.¹⁷⁹

20 September 2014: Vladimir Putin (President of Russia): 'IS has big money, hundreds of millions or even billions of dollars, from selling oil. In addition they are protected by the military of an entire nation. One can understand why they are acting so boldly and blatantly. Why they kill people in such atrocious ways. Why they commit terrorist acts across the world, including in the heart of Europe'.¹⁸⁰

20 September 2014: David Blair and Richard Spencer (The Telegraph): 'In the case of Syria, Qatar's chosen method for supporting its favored insurgents is to pass large sums to middlemen in Turkey. These figures then use the money to buy weapons from third countries, notably Croatia, and arrange for their onward transfer to rebels in Syria'.¹⁸¹

advantage/

177. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/turkey/11093478/Turkish-government-co-operated-with-al-Qaeda-in-Syria-says-former-US-ambassador.html>

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181. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/qatar/11110931/How-Qatar-is-funding-the-rise-of-Islamist-extremists.html>

26 September 2014: Ioannis Grigoriadis (Professor, Bilkent University): 'The negation to align for combatting jihadists gets the country into the danger of diplomatic isolation and escalation of the Kurdish Issue inside the Turkish borders'.¹⁸²

27 September 2014: Eline Gordts (The World Post): 'The crude oil is either refined in small facilities or exchanged across the border – mostly in Turkey – for refined oil products. The southern corridor of Turkey has thus become a gateway for oil products and illicit trading that contribute to transnational terrorism'.¹⁸³

7 October 2014: Scott Bronstein and Drew Griffin (CNN): 'How ISIS makes its millions'.¹⁸⁴

7 October 2014: Deborah Amos (NPR), "A Smuggler Explains How He Helped Fighters along 'Jihadi Highway,'"¹⁸⁵

12 October 2014: Claudia Roth (German Deputy Speaker): 'NATO must stop Turkey support for ISIS'.¹⁸⁶

23 October 2014: David Cohen (Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence): 'ISIL was selling oil at substantially discounted prices to a variety of middlemen, including some from Turkey, who then transported the oil to be resold'.¹⁸⁷

November 2014: David L. Philips, *ISIS-Turkey Links*, Huffington Post.¹⁸⁸

7 November 2014: (Newsweek) "ISIS Sees Turkey as Its Ally": Former Islamic State Member Reveals Turkish Army Cooperation". According to Newsweek Turkey allowed the passage of ISIS vehicles through its territory.¹⁸⁹

9 March 2015: New York Times, 'A Path to ISIS, Through a Porous Turkish Border'.¹⁹⁰

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186. <http://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/12102014>

187. <https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2672.aspx>; <http://www.diken.com.tr/abd-hazine-bakanligi-isid-petrol-satisina-turkler-de-aracilik-ediyor/> and <http://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/271020142>

188. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-l-phillips/research-paper-isis-turke_b_6128950.html

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10 April 2015: Carla Humud, Robert Pirog and Liana Rosen (Congressional Research Service Report): 'The Islamic State has been in control of a number of relatively small oil fields in northern Iraq, selling volumes of oil through Turkey in essentially the same manner as their sales of Syrian oil'.¹⁹¹

12 May 2015: Kim Sengupta (Independent): 'Relations had been fraught between the Turkish president and the late King Abdullah, primarily because of Turkey's support for the Muslim Brotherhood, which the Saudi monarchy considers a threat'.¹⁹²

25 July 2015: The Guardian, 'Turkey sends in jets as Syria's agony spills over every border'.¹⁹³

26 July 2015: US jets targeting Abu Sayyaf (Tunisian extremist maintaining relations with Turkey as an oil smuggler – The Guardian).¹⁹⁴

3 August 2015: Kemal Kilicdaroglu (CHP Leader): 'Erdogan, his government behind terrorism in Turkey and the region'.¹⁹⁵

12 August 2015: Sarah Almukhtar and Tim Wallace (New York Times): 'On the same day that Turkey announced it would help fight the Islamic State, Turkish forces began an airstrike campaign against one of the very groups that has been crucial to stopping the advance of the Islamic State'.¹⁹⁶

14 October 2015: Financial Times, "Inside Isis Inc: The journey of a barrel of oil".¹⁹⁷

23 October 2015: Iraqi Intelligence (Associated Press): 'Washington has been talking to regional governments, including Turkey, about its concerns over the importing of energy infrastructure into IS-run territory in Syria, including equipment for extraction, refinement, transport and energy production, according to a senior U.S. official with firsthand knowledge of the IS oil sector'.¹⁹⁸

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19 November 2015: Nafeez Ahmed (Insurge Intelligence): ‘Turkey has played a key role in facilitating the life-blood of ISIS’ expansion: black market oil sales. Senior political and intelligence sources in Turkey and Iraq confirm that Turkish authorities have actively facilitated ISIS oil sales through the country. Last summer, Mehmet Ali Ediboglu, an MP from the main opposition, the Republican People’s Party, estimated the quantity of ISIS oil sales in Turkey at about \$800 million – that was over a year ago. By now, this implies that Turkey has facilitated over \$1 billion worth of black market ISIS oil sales to date’.¹⁹⁹

25 November 2015: Anatoly Antonov (Russia’s Deputy Minister of Defense): ‘President Erdogan and his family are involved in this criminal business,’ he said. He also showed reporters satellite images of ISIS purportedly sending oil to Turkey.²⁰⁰

26 November 2015: Al-Araby al-Jadeed ‘Raqq’a’s Rockefellers: How Islamic State oil flows to Israel’.²⁰¹

28 November 2015: Dmitry Peskov (Kremlin’s Press Secretary): ‘The son and the bridegroom of the President of Turkey contribute into financing jihadists through oil smuggling’.²⁰²

29 November 2015: State Department (Matthew Rosenberg, Nicholas Kulish and Steven Lee Myers – Financial Times): ‘The State Department pointedly mentioned the use of the city of Gaziantep as a transit point for fighters heading to the Islamic State when it recently announced a \$5 million reward for a senior militant figure. The militant, Tirad al-Jarba, better known by his nom de guerre Abu-Muhammad al-Shimali, is the Islamic State’s border chief, and runs one of the group’s logistics committees that coordinates “smuggling activities, financial transfers, and the movement of supplies into Syria and Iraq,” according to the State Department’.²⁰³

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29 November 2015: Official of Barrack Obama's administration (Independent): 'The game has changed. Enough is enough. The border needs to be sealed'.²⁰⁵

2 December 2015: Vladimir Putin (President of Russia – BBC): 'We see from the sky where these vehicles [carrying oil] are going...'²⁰⁶

3 December 2015: Siyasi Haber: 'CHP'li Altıok ve HDP'li Kürkçü İŞİD'ten petrol alımını 4 ay önce meclise taşıdı'.²⁰⁷

3 December 2015: Russian Ministry of Defense (The Daily Star): 'Defense Ministry officials displayed satellite images which they said showed columns of tanker trucks loading with oil at installations controlled by Daesh in Syria and Iraq, and crossing the border into neighboring Turkey'.²⁰⁸

2 December 2015: Cumhuriyet, "İSİD petrolu uc güzergahtan Türkiye'ye gidiyor".²⁰⁹

4 December 2015: Veterans Today: 'ISIS selling oil to Turkey through Qatari brokers'.²¹⁰

8 December 2015: Bilal Erdogan negates any interconnections with ISIS.²¹¹

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17 August 2016: Government of Germany: ‘The many expressions of solidarity and support actions by the ruling AKP and President Erdogan for the Egyptian MB (Muslim Brotherhood), Hamas and groups of armed Islamist opposition in Syria emphasize their ideological affinity with the (broader) Muslim Brotherhood’.²¹⁷

4 May 2017: Michel Rubin (Commentary): Italian Intelligence: ‘Since 15 December 2015, an unknown number of wounded fighters of the Islamic State in Libya have been transported out of the country to an Istanbul hospital to undergo medical treatment’. The bulk of the ‘false wounded’ come from the Libyan area of Fataeh, where ‘elements of the Islamic State would be holed up’, the document states. From there, the fighters are most commonly sent to Turkish hospitals. It claims in one case the fighters showed fake passports to doctors in

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Misrata and told them they were wounded in Sirte and Benghazi'.²¹⁸

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