



PRESS RELEASE

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EU'S ENERGY AMBITIONS IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN THREATEN PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Sine Qua Non's latest publication sheds light on the inconsistency between European energy infrastructure projects in the Eastern Mediterranean and the EU's regional foreign policy.

Stefan Wolfrum, a visiting researcher at Sine Qua Non, claims that the construction of the EastMed pipeline and the EuroAsia Interconnector, two large-scale infrastructure projects which would connect Israel's energy resources to the EU via Cyprus and Greece, might "increase regional friction". The article shows that both projects "[give] Israel preferential treatment in the field of energy "and fail to integrate other MENA countries.

The fact that Israel generates a part of its renewable electricity in the occupied Palestinian territory risks exacerbating tensions. **This stands in stark contradiction with the EU's engagement in support for a two-state solution as part of the Middle East Peace Process.**

The EU has put economic interests before its political ambition, but the report casts doubts on the economic benefit of both projects. The EastMed pipeline would "only cover a fraction of the EU's gas need" while the EuroAsia Interconnector would deprive the EU of access to other MENA countries' natural resource market.

Wolfrum calls on the EU to "**abolish the EastMed pipeline project**" and "**support emerging interconnectivity in the Middle East**" **before building the EuroAsia Interconnector.** Instead of ignoring regional ambitions, **the EU should rely on existing interstate energy networks**, such as the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum (EMGF).

The paper suggests concrete alternatives, such as importing liquefied natural gas from Egypt and promoting the development of the Gaza Marine gas field.

Adherence to these recommendations would not only increase the Member States' economic benefit and support the European transition to renewable energies. It would also allow the EU to foster regional cooperation in the MENA region and advance the Middle East Peace Process.

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