



# THE EUROPEAN GEOPOLITICAL FORUM

## **EGF Turkey File**

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### **Key positions:**

- British Prime Minister David Cameron's recent speech to the Turkish Parliament, which gave strong support for Ankara's EU membership bid, is likely to have caused more reaction from European national leaders had it been delivered in Brussels
- Last month's agreement between Chevron and Turkish Petroleum to explore two deep-water wells in the Black Sea is a reflection of the Turkish government's efforts to make the country self sufficient in oil and gas production by 2023
- Italian energy company ENI has attempted to reach a compromise for its role in the competing Nabucco and South Stream pipelines by reaching an agreement with Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan in which compressed natural gas reserves will be transported by ship across the Caspian Sea, which will provide supplies to both pipelines without alienating either project's backers.
- Turkey's National Security Policy Document (also known as the 'Secret Constitution'), which is due to be reviewed shortly, will identify energy security as the country's most pressing strategic issue, and will remove Russia, amongst other neighbours, from the countries it would consider as potential enemies.

### ***British PM David Cameron Visit***

Newly elected British Prime Minister David Cameron recently visited Turkey and addressed the nation's parliament in an unprecedented speech concerning its status as an applicant to the European Union. The Conservative leader was up



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front in his remarks, somewhat of a change from veiled or passive rhetoric heard from other Western leaders on the issue. A rather long applause followed his opening statement in which he proclaimed, “I’m here to make Turkey’s case for membership to the EU. And fight for it.” Cameron stated that the need for Turkey to become a fully integrated member of the EU was “vital for our economy, vital for our security, and vital for our diplomacy”. The prime minister referred back to his own nation’s experience as an applicant to the European community in the 1960s, where French President Charles de Gaulle famously attempted to block the U.K.’s entrance. He criticized current opponents of accession as being “driven by protectionism, narrow nationalism, or prejudice.”

However, the long-term effects to such forceful statements may only resonate for their bluntness, and little else. While Cameron was highly critical of the motivations for the stalled accession talks on the part of European leaders, his location and lack of accountability in terms of naming names made his condemnation appear to be more of a politician playing to an audience. Two main critics of Turkey’s entrance are French Prime Minister Nicholas Sarkozy and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who have pushed for a (preferential) neighborhood partnership at the expense of full membership (of the EU). If such a speech were given in Brussels perhaps, European national leaders are likely to have taken the point more seriously. Cameron’s condemnation of Iran’s nuclear ambitions, however, was a determined step to emphasize Europe’s stance on the issue. While the U.S. and the EU have placed sanctions on the regime in Tehran, Turkey has blocked any Security Council initiative to enact U.N. sanctions on it. Referring to Iranian claims to seek enriched uranium for energy purposes as having “no logic”, the Tory leader was met with a much more muted response than his earlier proclamations garnered.



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## **Energy and Pipelines**

On August 31 the Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO) signed an agreement with American firm Chevron for two deep water exploratory wells to be drilled in the Black Sea coastal region. The agreement, which must be confirmed by the Cabinet, is a reflection of the position taken by the Turkish Energy and Natural Resources Ministry which has stated its mission to make Turkey completely self sufficient in oil and gas production by 2023. The ministry has estimated that the reserves under the Black Sea contain 10 billion barrels of oil and 3 billion cubic meters of gas. In the event that oil reserves are found at one of the two wells, TPAO and Chevron will be dual partners in all costs and profits. If they do not reach export potential, however, the agreement places all operational costs at the expense of Chevron.

Last month's attacks on the Turkish Iranian pipeline forced Gazprom to double its transport of gas to Turkey via the Blue Stream pipeline, moving nearly 37 million cubic meters in the past weeks. The attack, which was blamed by authorities in Ankara on Kurdish rebels in the country's eastern regions, killed two workers and severely injured another. Gazprom stated the increased need for gas by Turkish consumers was the reason for the sudden surge in transport, and will scale back according to market needs.

Italian energy company ENI has attempted to reach a compromise for its role in the competing Nabucco and South Stream pipeline projects in the Black and Caspian Sea regions. It has struck an agreement between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan in which compressed natural gas reserves will be transported by ship across the Caspian Sea, which will provide supplies to both pipelines without alienating either project's backers. Additionally, it was announced in late August



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that two more supply lines will be constructed along the Turkish borders with Iraq and Georgia for the Nabucco line. The extra outlets will provide for alternative supply resources in case of attacks that have plagued Turkish bound lines in Kurdish majority areas throughout the Middle East.

## **Domestic and Military Issues**

With the various competing supply lines and energy related projects in Turkey's neighborhood only increasing by the day, the leadership of the Republic appears to have judged energy security as the most pressing issue facing Turkey in the coming years. Sources inside Ankara have recently leaked initiatives to be included in the upcoming National Security Policy Document, also known as the 'Secret Constitution'. The paper, which is revised every five years, has been written by civilian leaders for the first time in its existence, and shows marked changes from its predecessors. According to those same sources, it will remove many Black Sea neighbors, most notably Russia, from countries it would consider as potential enemies. Instead, it highlights the need for increased cooperation in business and security sectors for the betterment of the entire region.

It also states that securing energy lines and making Turkey an international transit hub for energy supplies to Europe will go far in helping it in its EU accession talks. These revelations come on the heels of Turkey's signing of a \$20 billion dollar deal with Moscow to build a nuclear power plant with four reactors in the coming years. These signs of cooperation come at a pivotal time in the region, as tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan appear to be on the rise. Russia and Armenia signed a security pact on August 20 in which the Kremlin guaranteed the country's territorial integrity from external attack. In an



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effort to pre-empt the Russia-Armenia pact, officials in Ankara hurriedly signed a similar deal with Azerbaijan on August 16.

Tensions have been on the rise between the countries as of late, mainly due to Azerbaijani military expenditures far outweighing that of their Armenian counterparts due to incoming revenues from energy deposits recently discovered there. The president of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, ignited further diplomatic sensitivities recently by proclaiming that his nation's military spending alone outweighed the entire budget of Armenia. Some have claimed that Moscow's actions are not necessarily aimed at Baku, but rather are part of a strategy to surround Georgia militarily, and the four thousand Russian troops on Armenian soil hardly detract from such an objective. Regardless of the increasingly friendly relations between Russia and Turkey, the former still eyes the NATO member with suspicion in what it views as its sole sphere of influence.

The promotion of General Isik Kosaner to head of the Turkish armed forces (the TSK) is seen in many circles as a compromise between the secular forces in the country and the ruling Islamist AKP. Kosaner, a former commando, intelligence officer and a staunch secularist, took overall command at a ceremony in Ankara in late August. Prime Minister Erdogan and President Abdullah Gul were present, but the general towed the traditional military line by stating that, "The TSK have always taken sides and will take sides in defending the unitary state and secularism." However, the upcoming elections on September 12 will indicate how much power the increasingly powerful civilian government will have over the military. One initiative will limit the jurisdiction of military courts, which during coups have dealt harshly with all forms of political opponents. Another will lessen the reach of the military by forcing those accused of treason and coups to be



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tried in civilian courts. Many have questioned how debilitated the military is, however, given that all but one of one hundred and two alleged plotters in the 'Sledgehammer' case recently had the charges dropped against them. The trial, which was due to begin in December, has lost many of its key accused, and some have speculated that the AKP and TSK have cut a deal in order to avoid further conflict between the ruling civilian government and the military.

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