



**THE NEXUS OF ENERGY AND SECURITY:
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN**

Roundtable Discussion
Wednesday, February 25
The Aspen Institute

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

This discussion used the Eastern Mediterranean as a case study to examine how uncertainty and instability at the nexus of energy and security are impacting future growth and prosperity in Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt. Key questions covered at the roundtable included: In an ever-evolving region, how do you evaluate risks and opportunities? What are the key indicators to address challenges and attract investment? What is at stake for the future of growth and economic empowerment in the Eastern Mediterranean if the resource potential of the region remains untapped?

Key points of discussion

- Global oil and gas markets are becoming more tightly interlinked, resulting in correlative price movements. While we should expect prices to recover, the operative question is: When and to what level? Uncertainty on this front imperils large, capital-intensive projects the most. Countries with the most stable and comprehensive market framework are best equipped to weather the storm and keep a toehold in large, capital-intensive projects while prices recover.
- Today, energy is playing an increasingly prominent role in diplomacy, with particular attention to how it can be used as a framework to resolve – rather than start – conflicts. Natural resources in the Eastern Mediterranean, in particular, are well positioned to deepen economic collaboration between three anchors of stability in the region – Israel, Egypt, and Jordan – as well as provide a reason for diplomatic engagement among countries such as Turkey, Cyprus, Greece, and Lebanon.
- Energy companies operating in the Eastern Mediterranean took considerable risks by making large, capital investments upfront that yielded the discoveries of the Tamar and Leviathan fields. The legal and regulatory environment surrounding those finds has changed considerably since exploration began and still remains in flux. The private sector is poised to make transformative investments to develop those fields to their full potential. However, the private sector needs clarity and assurance on the legal and regulatory framework moving forward to justify the risk to investors.
- There was wide agreement among ambassadors and public sector representatives that the Eastern Mediterranean is potentially transformative for economies in the region and could play a substantial role in meeting the fast-growing demand for energy in resource-poor capitals. There was also consensus among the diplomatic community that the public sector and private sector must work closely and collaboratively to ensure that we do not miss a vanishing window of opportunity to realize the potential of Tamar and Leviathan.

- Industry experts, policy analysts, and former government officials at the roundtable also expressed their optimism for the resource potential of the Eastern Mediterranean and what it could mean for economic growth in the region. However, many expressed concern over the opaque and unresolved regulatory environment in Israel and the negative impact it is having on American companies that are committed to doing business with Israel and in the region more broadly. One participant noted that this issue has already led to a noticeable drop in interest of American businesses exploring opportunities in Israel.
- There was consensus around the table that the issue of energy development in the Eastern Mediterranean is –without question – a top diplomatic and geostrategic priority for the region. There was clear recognition among all parties of the need to work collaboratively and across sectors to facilitate speedy and successful resolution of impasses that have hindered the development of these resources and delayed their positive economic impact on the region.

PARTICIPANT LIST

Stephanie Ahern

Senior Army Advisor for Strategy
 Strategy and Force Development Office
 Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
 Department of Defense

Nicole Alexiev

Deputy Director
 Energy and Environment Program
 The Aspen Institute

Nader Al Suhaim

Director, Economic and Commerce Bureau
 Embassy of Jordan

Dan Arbell

Nonresident Senior Fellow
 Center for Middle East Policy
 The Brookings Institution

Eleftheria Aristotelous

Second Secretary
 Embassy of Cyprus

Reuven Azar

Deputy Head of Mission
 Embassy of Israel

Alia Bouran

Ambassador to the United States
 Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Shlomo Brom

Visiting Fellow
 Center for American Progress

Sharon Burke

Senior Advisor
 New America Foundation

James Burkhard

Managing Director, Global Oil
 IHS CERA

George Chacalli

Ambassador to the United States
 Republic of Cyprus

Efraim Chalamish

Professor
 New York University

Rob Danin

Eni Enrico Mattei Senior Fellow for Middle East and
 Africa Studies
 Council on Foreign Relations

Ben Dillon

Vice President, Communications and Government
Relations
Noble Energy

Gloria Dittus

Chairman
Story Partners, LLC

Mohamed Elhady

Second Secretary
Embassy of Egypt

J. Keith Elliott

Senior Vice President, Eastern Mediterranean Region
Noble Energy

David Gillers

Senior Counsel
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Simon Henderson

Baker Fellow and Director
Gulf and Energy Policy Program
The Washington Institute

Amos Hochstein

Special Envoy and Coordinator for
International Energy Affairs
US Department of State

Kenneth Hyatt

Deputy Under Secretary for International Trade
US Department of Commerce

Keith Johnson

Senior Reporter, Geopolitics of Energy
Foreign Policy

Yoni Komorov

Senior Vice President
S. Daniel Abraham Center for Middle East Peace

Michael Koplou

Program Director
The Israel Institute

Amy Kreps

International Trade Specialist
Office of Energy and Environmental Industries
US Department of Commerce

Murali Krishnan

Deputy Director
Middle East and Eurasia, International Government
Relations
ExxonMobil

Mary Landrieu

Former Senator and Former Chair
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate

Sir Michael Leigh

Senior Advisor
German Marshall Fund of the United States

David Livingston

Associate, Energy and Environment Program
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Gal Luft

Co-Director
Institute for the Analysis of Global Security;
Senior Adviser
United States Energy Security Council

David Merkel

Senior Fellow
Dinu Patriciu Eurasia Center
The Atlantic Council

Christos Panagopoulos

Ambassador to the United States
Hellenic Republic (Greece)

Jack Riggs

Former Senior Fellow and Executive Director
Energy and Environment Program
The Aspen Institute

Dan Rosenthal

Principal
Albright Stonebridge Group

Valerie Rouxel-Laxton

Head of the Economic and Financial Section
EU Delegation in the United States

Kareem Saleh

Senior Advisor
Overseas Private Investment Corporation

Brenda Shaffer

Visiting Researcher
Center for Eurasian, Russian and East European
Studies (CERES)
Georgetown University

Barbara Slavin

Washington Correspondent
AI-Monitor

Nathaniel Sobel

Director of Research
S. Daniel Abraham Center for Middle East Peace

Julius Svoboda

Senior Oil & Gas Trade Specialist
US Department of Commerce

Mohamed Tawfik

Ambassador to the United States
Republic of Egypt

Moshe Bar Siman Tov

Economic Attaché
Embassy of Israel

Theodosios Vallas

Economic Counselor
Embassy of Greece

Fabrice Vareille

Minister Counselor
Head of Transport, Energy and Environment Affairs
EU Delegation in the United States

Toni Verstandig

Chair, Middle East Programs
The Aspen Institute

Josh Volz

International Energy Officer
Bureau of Energy Resources
US Department of State

Todd Watkins

Manager
International Government Relations
Noble Energy

Robert Wexler

President
S. Daniel Abraham Center for Middle East Peace