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### **Turkey a vital part of Europe's energy supply security**

With the Nabucco and South Stream projects, Turkey has become an important part of the solution to Europe's supply-security problem in natural gas, the Turkish energy minister said Saturday.

Speaking to Al Jazeera television, Turkish Energy and Natural Resources Minister Taner Yıldız said that the recent energy agreements between Turkey and Russia have strengthened his country's geo-strategic location.

As Europe's natural gas needs increase daily, Turkey can help provide a secure supply through its participation in the Nabucco and South Stream projects, Yıldız said. Though the two projects are not rivals in what they do, they may compete with each other in terms of timing, the energy minister added, noting that Iran and Iraq also both hold significant potential as supply sources.

#### *Oil prospecting in Iraq*

Asked whether Turkey had any problems with oil exploration in northern Iraq, Yıldız said that the war-torn neighboring country had entered a normalization process triggered in part by the energy issue.

Noting that the Turkish Petroleum Corp., or TPAO, is pursuing oil exploration in the region, the energy minister said that Turkey has encountered problems due to a hydrocarbon law not yet being adopted in Iraq. Such a law, Yıldız added, would not only contribute to investors and public and private companies, but would benefit Iraq overall.

TPAO has been invited to the secondary phase of tenders to be held in Iraq, Yıldız said, expressing his hopes that Turkey would undertake tenders to strengthen its ties with Iraq in terms of oil and natural gas.

Regarding the water issue between Turkey, Syria and Iraq, the energy minister said that an agreement was signed in 1986, and Turkey has protected its commitment to deliver 500 cubic meters of water per second since that time.

### **Garanti provides loan for wind-power plant**

*Bilgin Energy Holdings acquires 90 million euros for a wind-power project in the Aegean region from Garanti Bank. The owner of Turkey's first privately owned and operated wind-energy plant, Bilgin aims to increase its profile in the sector as Garanti plans to offer more support for similar projects.*

Garanti Bank, the Turkish lender co-owned by General Electric Co., has provided a project-financing loan of 90 million euros for a wind-power project in Soma, a town of Manisa, located in Turkey's Aegean region.

The Soma Wind Energy Power Plant, which will be built by Bilgin Wind Energy Power Generation Inc., a subsidiary of Bilgin Energy Holdings, is expected to make a significant contribution to Turkey's renewable energy sector with its installed capacity of 90 megawatts. The plant will generate nearly 316 million kilowatt-hours of electricity annually. It is expected to start producing at full capacity as of the second half of 2010.

Following the Turkish Parliament's ratifying of the Kyoto Protocol on global warming, projects aiming to reduce carbon emissions in the country will take on more importance, says Garanti Managing



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Director Ergun Özen, who added, “I expect the Soma Wind Energy Power Plant to contribute significantly to Turkey’s renewable energy.”

Noting that Garanti has provided crucial financing to wind-energy projects, Özen said: “We constantly foster our leadership in this field with our information accumulation in energy. We will continue supporting the projects that will contribute to our country and environment.”

Mehmet Vehbi Bilgin, the chairman of Bilgin Energy, said that the firm has been working on wind-energy power plants, along with hydraulic ones, since 1997. “We realized a first in 2006 with the commencement of the operations of the 30 MW Bandırma Wind Energy Power Plant, which we established in free-market conditions. We are continuing our activities with the installation of the 30 MW Çeşme Alaçatı Wind Energy Power Plant and the 90 MW Bergama Wind Energy Power Plant,” Bilgin said. “With the contract we signed today, we will launch the construction of our Soma Wind Power Plant project, worth 114 million euros, by acquiring 90 million euros from Garanti.”

A 50 MW Zeytineli Wind Energy Power Plant project in Çeşme will start by the end of the year, Bilgin added. “Within the upcoming 10 months, we aim to complete all these wind-power plants that are under construction,” he said.

In the first six months of 2010, the capacity of Bilgin Enerji’s wind-power projects will total 310 MW and their production 1.10 kWh, the chairman said. Turkey’s total generation is 200 billion kWh.

Founded to establish facilities for generating electricity from wind energy, Bilgin Wind Energy Power Generation Inc. is especially focused on the western part of Turkey, including the Aegean and Marmara regions.

With the measurements that had been done on various sites and feasibility studies, Bilgin Wind received its license for the Soma Wind Energy Power Plant on July 17, 2008.

The companies belonging to the Bilgin Energy Holdings group have been developing, building and operating power-generation plants using domestic and renewable energy resources since 1992. With the hydropower and wind-power plants under operation and those soon to be completed, Bilgin Energy is reaching a significant amount of power-generation capacity in the renewable-energy sector.

After the completion of the 30 MW Bandırma Wind Energy Power Plant, Turkey’s first privately owned and operated wind-energy plant, Bilgin Energy has boosted its contribution to the national energy pool with its renewable-energy sources.

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