



**Delta-Eko**

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**02.06.2009 – 09.07.2009**

### **Nabucco may give Turkey upper hand in energy talks with Russia**

The signing of the European Union-backed Nabucco project is considered an important step in Turkey becoming a fully-fledged energy hub. Furthermore, it may create a better environment for Ankara to negotiate substantial projects with Russia.

“Turkey will remain on the agenda with Nabucco, South Stream or some other projects,” Energy Minister Taner Yıldız told a press conference Tuesday, following talks with his Syrian counterpart, Sufian Al-Allao. “Other countries could look in different directions but Turkey’s interests are our No. 1 priority,” he said.

The government, which signed the Nabucco intergovernmental accord Monday with the prime ministers of Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania, is preparing to negotiate energy projects with Moscow when Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin visits Turkey on Aug. 6. Turkish officials have not yet shut the door on Russian participation in the Nabucco project, which is aimed at breaking Russia’s monopoly over energy supplies.

“Russia’s involvement (in Nabucco) in the long term should not be surprising,” said Yıldız.

Observers see Nabucco as an important tool that will give Turkey leverage in the transfer of Caspian Sea or Middle Eastern energy supplies to Europe as an alternative to Russian gas, while some others argue nothing has changed from past to present for Ankara.

“The agreement has not elevated Turkey’s influence but it is obvious that things have changed for the EU,” senior energy analyst Mete Göknel told Hürriyet Daily News & Economic Review.

He complained EU member states have long tried to minimize Turkey’s role in the flagship project with debates over Turkish demand for the right to use 15 percent of Nabucco’s gas for domestic consumption, whereas the 3,300-kilometer pipeline’s transition from Anatolian land would be more advantageous and less costly for Europe.

Some commentators, however, have said the project will help Turkey play an influential role in its relations, especially with the West.

“With this project, Turkey demonstrates once more that it acts as a bridge between the East and the West. Europe is aware that the road to secure energy from the Caspian region and Middle Eastern sources passes through Turkey,” Sami Kohen said in a Tuesday column published in daily Milliyet.



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The signing was interpreted in the Russian press as Nabucco's victory over South Stream, Moscow's own pipeline project to Western Europe.

"Turkey remains outside the South Stream project' which is estimated to cost 26 billion euros' and instead should press for the Blue Stream II," said Göknel. He argued Turkey should seek Russian support to realize Blue Stream II, construction of which would be easier and less costly and allow the country to ship energy supplies to the West.

"Turkey can transfer energy supplies to the West even without Nabucco. By using its bilateral relations with Iran, Iraq and Azerbaijan, Turkey should take the initiative to play an influential role in the energy diplomacy," stated Göknel.

### **Cycling against pollution**

A cycling group from the northwestern city of Bursa has cycled from the city's Nilüfer district to Fethiye to raise awareness about environmental pollution.

The group kicked off its journey from Bursa on July 5 and cycled through Susurluk, Burhaniye, Dikili, İzmir, Kuşadası, Söke, Milas, Gökova and Akyaka. The 11-member group had members ranging from the ages of 11 to 35. They traveled 906 kilometers to reach the Mediterranean town of Fethiye, the final destination.

Ayhan Uyar, the group's captain, told reporters that the group's slogan was, "We are cycling from the green to the blue," in reference to Bursa's nickname, "the green Bursa."

"We have completed this journey to raise awareness about environmental pollution and encourage people to use bicycles," said Uyar. "Fethiye is our last stop. Now we will head back to our starting point."

### **Hotel attains 30 pct savings via eco concept**

A hotel in Antalya is going green with a new social responsibility project in the hopes of saving on energy costs.

OTI Holding, which operates in the tourism sector, created a \$15 million ecological concept for its Otium Eco Club, its hotel in Side, a town in the southern tourism city of Antalya.

The group has undertaken the investment within the scope of a social responsibility project it launched with the "Green is beautiful" slogan.

Redesigned in accordance with an ecological concept, Otium Eco Club Side has received four green stars in the "Eco Hotels of The World," a free online guide created to showcase the most environment-



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friendly hotels in the world, he said. "Moreover, our activities are ongoing to obtain green star certification and ISO 14001 Environmental Management certification."

#### *Environment fund*

The holding has implemented an "OTI Environment Fund" to support local development. "The revenues to be attained from the promotion tours in Sapadere Village in Alanya, Antalya and the city of Isparta will be transferred to the OTI Environment Fund. Primarily, the fund aims to serve the promotion and rehabilitation of the Titreyengöl region as well as it becoming a brand as a destination during the whole year. A portion of the fund will be delivered to the OTI Forest project, within the scope of which we will plant 20,000 saplings initially. The number will reach 100,000 in time."

Regarding the ecological concept at Otium Eco Club Side, Otium Hotels International General Director Tamer Mungan said, "An environment policy has been formed to attain more efficiency with less energy use. We heat via solar energy 53 percent of the water used at the hotel. We use shower cabins rather than bathtubs, as well as sensor-fitted faucets. Also, we use automatic dosing system in pools and ozone-friendly air-conditioning systems in rooms. We collect oil and extricate paper, metal, plastic and battery waste. Moreover, we inform families on the environment with books and educate children with cartoons."

OTI has also launched an education project jointly with the Turkish Education Volunteers Foundation, Bektaş noted. "Via our Atesböceği, or Firefly, project, which will primarily support those located within the districts surrounding the Antalya province, we aim to reach 6,000 students. The project includes a training program titled 'Young Environmentalists' to create awareness on environment. Students will be trained for 12 hours at mobile schools consisting of 12 computer units, study and play rooms. We aim to learn more about mobile schools with this project and then establish a mobile school belonging to OTI Holding."

Noting that tourism is facing a difficult season, Bektaş said, "At present, tour operators constrain prices, and there is no profit margin. Facilities offer as much as 20 percent discounts. This year, prices are below that of last year's prices. The loss in revenues may be 25 percent. At the beginning of the year, we designated a 40 percent growth target. Until now, we have realized 14 percent of our target. We will see our situation clearly at the end of August. Overall, there is an eight percent contraction in Antalya."

Sources: [www.hurriyetdailynews.com](http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com)