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Analysis of the Effects of the Strait of Hormuz Crisis on Algerian Gas Exports

تحليل أثار أزمة مضيق هرمز على صادرات الغاز الجزائري

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Abstract:

The study aims to analyze the repercussions of the Strait of Hormuz crisis on the Algerian gas sector's exports, which resulted in the cessation of 20% of liquefied gas flows from the Gulf countries to global markets, thereby providing Algeria with an opportunity to benefit from the Gulf gas markets lost to Europe and to conclude spot contracts, especially amid rising prices, which led to enhanced revenues. However, Algeria still faces several challenges, including rising domestic consumption, concerns about the effects of exploiting shale gas on groundwater, and the possibility of gas price declines due to the global economy entering a recessionary phase, as well as the search for alternative energies in light of ongoing technological developments worldwide.

.**keyword**: Liquefied Natural Gas; Shale Gas; Domestic Consumption.
JEL classification code : Q40, Q41, L71

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1. Introduction :

Algeria is considered one of the foremost suppliers of gas to Europe, and its role was reinforced after European countries reduced their reliance on Russian gas following Russia's declaration of war on Ukraine and its use of gas as leverage against European states, which led those countries to reorder their strategic energy source priorities. Algeria is regarded as a suitable option for European countries, and the importance of this option increased after navigation disruptions and heightened risks associated with using the Strait of Hormuz amid the US–Israeli war against Iran. The disruption of LNG tanker movements from the Arab Gulf to global markets prompted the European Union to accelerate its cooperation with Algeria and increase its gas imports either via pipelines or liquefied shipments by vessels in an attempt to cover the gap between demand and supply.

1.2. Based on the foregoing, we pose the following main research question:

Can Algerian gas exports, given the various challenges they face, cover the needs that European countries lost due to the Strait of Hormuz crisis?

1.3. Study Hypotheses:

- **Hypothesis 1:**

The Strait of Hormuz crisis has strengthened Algeria's geostrategic energy position with respect to European countries.

- **Hypothesis 2:**

The persistently high domestic demand for gas in Algeria constitutes a real challenge to fully meeting the increasing European demand for gas, especially following the Strait of Hormuz crisis.

1.4. Importance of the Study:

The study derives its importance from the repercussions of the Strait of Hormuz crisis on Algerian gas exports, as it links the geopolitical dimension (closure of the Strait of Hormuz) with a strategic economic dimension related to a principal source of national income, particularly foreign currency. The study illustrates Algeria's attempt to transform from a gas-exporting country into a strategic player in reordering European supply maps in the context of the Strait of Hormuz

crisis, and it attempts to show the main challenges Algeria faces within this transformation.

1.5. Reasons for Choosing the Topic

The choice of the study topic stems from reasons related to the current international economic situation amid the widening US–Israeli war against Iran and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, which reflected on international supply chains, including gas supply chains, prompting importing countries—especially European ones—to seek alternatives and other options such as Algerian gas, given European countries' agreement to completely stop importing Russian gas by 2027 after declaring war on Ukraine.

1.6. Methodology of the Study:

To answer the study's main problem, the descriptive method was relied upon by presenting the reality of the Algerian gas sector and collecting relevant data. The study also relied on the analytical method by analyzing the statistical data related to the study alongside analyzing the main repercussions of the Strait of Hormuz crisis on the Algerian gas sector's exports.

1.7. Study Divisions:

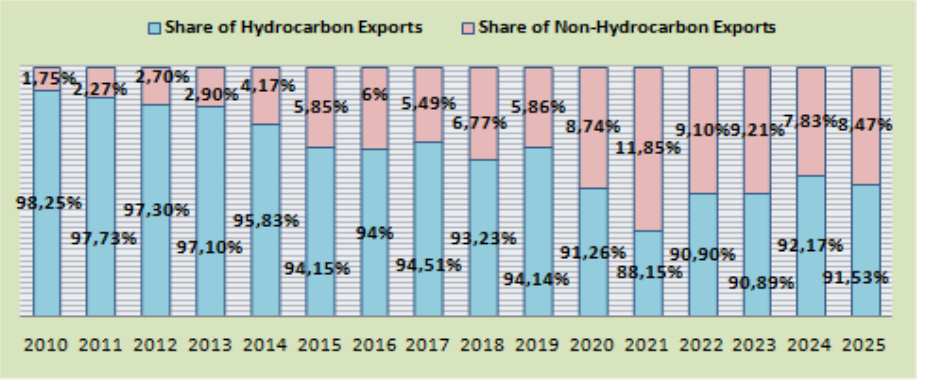
To answer the study's main problem and reach results and recommendations, it was divided into the following axes:

- The importance of hydrocarbons in the Algerian economy
- Analysis of the gas sector in the Algerian economy
- The Strait of Hormuz crisis and its repercussions on Algerian gas exports

2. The Importance of Hydrocarbons in the Algerian Economy

Algeria is among the countries with the least diversified export baskets, relying primarily on exporting a single main commodity—hydrocarbons (oil and gas). Despite adopting many development programs, liberalizing foreign trade, and providing support and facilities to exporting enterprises for non-hydrocarbon products, hydrocarbons (oil and gas) still constitute the main share of Algeria's export basket (Figure 1)

Fig. 1: Evolution of the Structure of Exports in Algeria (2010–2025)



Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the: (Bank of Algeria, 2026) , (ONS, 2026)

Figure (1) shows that the Algerian economy still depends on hydrocarbons in its exports despite improvements during the period 2020–2025, where 2025 recorded an improvement in the contribution of the non-hydrocarbon sector to total exports by 8.47%, thereby reducing the share of hydrocarbon exports of total exports to 91.53% due to the decline in oil prices. This reflects the inability of the Algerian economy to diversify its export basket and the linkage of its foreign currency revenues to fluctuations in international oil prices. Although there is an increase in the share of non-hydrocarbon exports, this increase remains unstable and weak. The Algerian economy's dependence on hydrocarbons has manifested symptoms of the Dutch disease, whereby hydrocarbon revenues weakened the contribution of other economic

sectors to the export basket (Figure 01), resulting in the petrolization of foreign trade (Ghelem et al, p276 .2014). Despite attempts by Algeria to remedy the situation and diversify its export basket by establishing the Special Fund for Export Promotion (**FSPE**) under the 1996 Finance Law to diversify exports and collect foreign currency, and by creating the National Agency for the Promotion of Foreign Trade (ALGEX) in 2004, Algerian hydrocarbon exports consist of natural gas and oil (Table 1).

Table 1: Evolution of Algeria's Gas and Oil Exports (2020–2024)

	Years	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2020-2024
Gas exports	Value (billion USD)	6,8987	11,5054	27,1956	24,3941	19,1427	+ 12.144
	Percentage %	34,46%	33,78%	45,52%	48,30%	42,32%	+ 7,86 %
Oil exports	Value (billion USD)	13,1171	22,5527	32,5447	26,102	26,0856	+ 12,9685
	Percentage %	65.53%	33,78%	54,48%	51.69%	57.68%	- 7.85 %
Hydrocarbon exports	Value (billion USD)	20,0158	34,0581	59,7403	50,4961	45,2283	+25,2125

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on: (Bank of Algeria, p134 ,2024).

Table (1) shows that the contribution of gas exports to total hydrocarbon exports recorded a continuous increase, rising by 7.86% in 2024 compared to 2020, equivalent to USD 12.144 billion. This increase is attributed to rising global energy demand and Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, which led to higher international gas prices—reaching USD 14.7 per MMBtu in 2022 compared to USD 5.2 per MMBtu in 2021 (Bank of Algeria, p134, 2024)

Algeria's revenues are affected by international oil prices since hydrocarbons constitute a main source of public budget revenues. After the decline in oil prices at the end of 2014, their contribution to total

public budget revenues fell below 50%, except in 2022 when oil prices rose internationally, as shown in Table (2)

Table 2: Evolution of the Structure of Algeria's Public Budget Revenues (2010–2025)

	2010	2012	2014	2016	2018	2020	2022	2024	2025
Total revenues Unit (billion Dinars)	4392.9	6339.3	5738.4	5110.1	6826.9	5640.9	9524.1	8302.4	7610.8
Share of petroleum taxation	%56.6	%68.7	%59	%34.9	%42.3	%34.1	%57.82	%46.26	%45.38
Share of ordinary taxation	%34.4	%31.3	%41	%65.1	%57.7	%65.9	%42.17	53.73%	%54.61

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on data from the; (Bank of Algeria, 2026) and (Ministery of Finance, 2026).

Table (2) indicates that the period 2010–2014 was characterized by petroleum tax revenues exceeding half of total public budget revenues, compared to the period 2016–2025, which explains the linkage of other macroeconomic variables to changes in international oil markets, resulting in instability of public treasury foreign currency revenues.

3. Analysis of the Gas Sector in Algeria

Hydrocarbons in Algeria are distributed between natural gas and oil, constituting on average 95% of total exports. Algeria is the largest producer and exporter of natural gas in Africa and ranked tenth globally in natural gas production in 2025 with production amounting to 103.9 billion cubic meters, as shown in Table (3).

Table 3: Evolution (Production, Consumption, Exports) in Algeria and Global Gas Production (2014–2025)

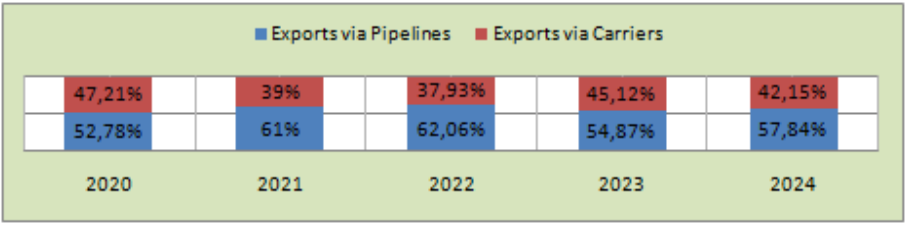
Years	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Change -2014 2025
Production (billion m³)	80.2	81.4	91.4	93	93.8	87	81.4	101.1	97.6	101.5	94.7	103.9	+%26
Consumption (billion m³)	36.1	37.9	38.6	39.5	43.4	45.1	43.4	48.2	50.3	54.2	50.5.5	52.26	%+ 44.5
Exports (billion m³)	44.1	43.5	52.8	53.5	50.4	41.9	38.0	52.9	47.3	47.3.5	44.2	45.7	+3.62 %
Global gas production (billion m³)	3445.1	3515.2	3553.6	3684.3	3856.0	3972.5	3867	4046.6	4050.4	4064.2	4124.5	4194.6	+%21

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on: (Energy Institute, pp 37- 39 , 2025)

Table (3) shows that Algeria's natural gas production experienced a continuous rise, increasing by 1.26% in 2025 compared to 2014, equivalent to 21.64 billion cubic meters, driven by the ever-evolving international market propelled by geopolitical shifts and growing demand for clean energy. Global gas demand in 2025 was estimated at 4,110 billion cubic meters (Energy Instute,pp 37-39 ,2025), reflecting the continuous rise in global gas production, which increased by 1.21% in 2025 compared to 2014, equivalent to 749.5 billion cubic meters. The International Energy Agency expects energy demand to increase by about 37% by 2027 to reach around 18,000 million tonnes of oil equivalent in the reference scenario (NPS), while growth reaches 15% in the 450 scenario with demand reaching 15,000 million tonnes of oil equivalent by 2040 (Club Energy, p 03, 2026).

Natural gas is a strategic energy source and poses a global challenge that raises both concerns and aspirations. Due to increasing global competition to maintain market shares and avoid losing them, Sonatrach seeks to maintain production rates, which allowed Algeria to retain the tenth position among the world's largest natural gas producers in 2025, the same rank it held in 2023 and 2024. The United States dominated the top ten in 2024, producing 25% of the global volume (1.033 trillion m^3). Russia ranked second with production of 629.9 billion m^3 (15.3%). The other top ten producers (Iran, China, Canada, Qatar, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Norway, and Algeria) each represent less than 7% of global production (Algeria invest, 2026). Algeria is among the top ten gas producers globally and ranks first in Africa in gas exports, exporting via pipelines (piped export) and by specialized vessels transporting it as liquefied natural gas (LNG). More than half of Algeria's exported gas is transported via pipelines, as shown in Figure (2).

Fig.2: Algeria's Gas Exports via Pipelines and Carriers (2020–2024)



Source: Prepared by the researcher based on: (Bank of Algeria, p134 ,2024).

Figure (2) indicates that the majority of Algeria's gas exports are supplied via pipelines, which have shown notable development, while Algeria is preparing to enter Asian markets after recently acquiring giant gas carriers, as shown in Table (4), and expanding its LNG shipping fleet. This is particularly relevant given the large fluctuations in pipeline export supplies, which are usually tied to long-term contracts, meaning quantity clauses were often not respected due to Algeria's concentration on the European market and the entry of new competitors such as Qatari LNG.

Table 4: Vessels and Pipelines for Transporting Algerian Gas Exports

Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Carriers			
Vessel Name	**Capacity (thousand m³)**	**Ownership Type**	
Tessala	171800	Full ownership	
Ougarta	171800	Full ownership	
Lalla Fatma N'Soumer	145000	Partnership	
Berge Arzew	138000	Partnership	
Cheikh El Mokrani	75000	Partnership	
Cheikh Bouamama	75000	Partnership	
Algerian Gas Export Pipelines			
Pipeline Name	**Billion Cubic Feet per year**	**Transit Regions**	**Length (miles)**
Pipline Enrico Mattei (GEM)	1340	Algeria – Tunisia – Italy	1025
Pedro Duran Farell Pipline (GPDF)	390	Algeria – Morocco – Spain (stopped due to political disputes between Algeria and Morocco)	325
MEDGAZ Pipline	280	Algeria – Mediterranean – Spain	125

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on: (Amel Zemouri, 2026), (Abed alhamid Marghit, p149, 2016)

Table (4) shows that Algeria is diversifying its gas transport methods, which is part of Sonatrach's comprehensive development strategy to strengthen its position in hydrocarbon transport and reduce

4. The Strait of Hormuz Crisis and Its Repercussions on Algerian Gas

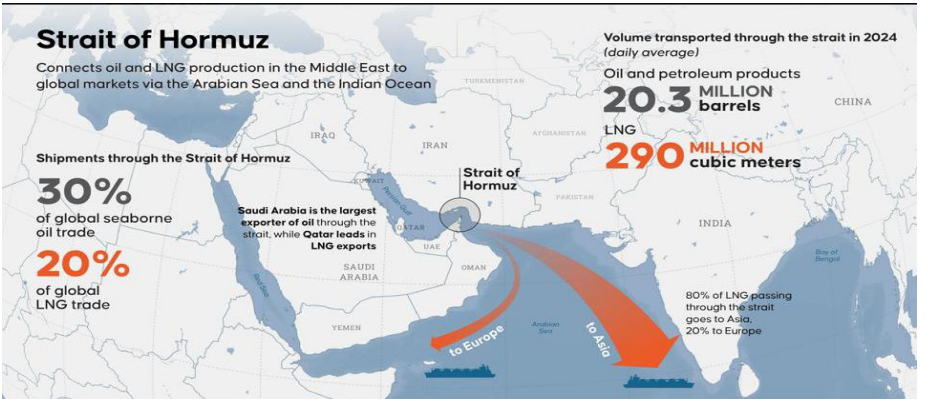
The Middle East is one of the most significant geopolitical tension hotspots globally due to its vast oil and gas reserves. In the event of a direct war between the United States and Israel on one side and Iran on the other, the repercussions of this conflict would extend beyond the region to global energy markets, including Algeria's gas sector. The main repercussions are as follows:

4.1. Benefiting from Navigational Disruptions

After Iran announced on 2 March 2026 the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and warned of targeting any ship attempting to transit the waterway, despite the US Central Command's assertion covering the entire Middle East that the strait was not closed, tanker movements in the Gulf have already been severely affected. The Strait of Hormuz,

located between Oman and Iran, is a vital artery for global oil and gas trade. In 2025, approximately 13 million barrels of oil per day passed through the strait, representing about 31% of total seaborne crude oil flows, and about 85 million tonnes of LNG were transported (Naji, p06 2026), equivalent to 20% of global LNG trade (Figure 3) that passes through the strait.

Fig 3: The International Commercial Importance of the Strait of Hormuz



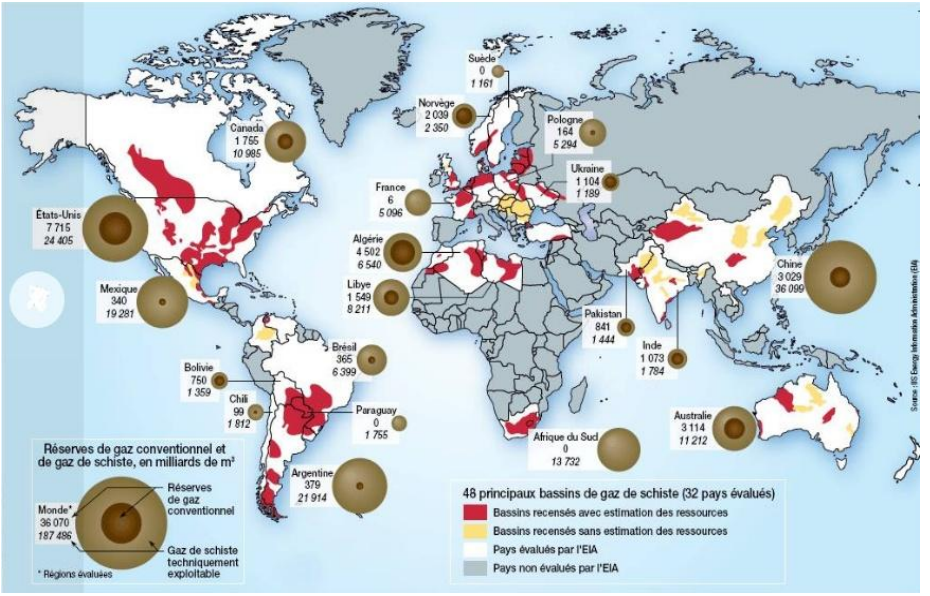
Source: (Rapier, 2026)

The closure of the Strait of Hormuz led to higher gas prices in international markets due to increased geopolitical risks, which may constitute an economic opportunity for Algeria as one of the main gas suppliers to Europe. In 2024, Europe imported from Gulf countries via the Strait of Hormuz about 1.352 billion cubic meters per day, representing 13% of the total LNG that passed through the strait in 2024 (10.4 billion cubic meters) (UNCTAD, p05, 2026). Thus, Europe's loss of this import source represents an opportunity for Algeria to expand its gas markets in Europe, as European countries will aim to diversify their gas sources to reduce dependence on unstable regions, especially after previous crises related to Russia (the Russia–Ukraine war) linked to energy. Here, Algeria emerges as a reliable strategic partner due to its geographic proximity to Europe and its pipeline network extending to

Spain and Italy, noting that Italy imports Qatari LNG valued on average at USD 4.4 billion annually (Peter Klimek et al, p13, 2026).

4.2. Gaining Some Gas Markets and Losing Others in the Future Due to Shale Gas Exploitation and Technological Development:

The US–Israeli war against Iran may change the future balance of international energy markets as importing countries search for environmentally friendly alternative energy sources and develop shale gas exploitation technologies. Global shale gas reserves are estimated at 187,486 billion cubic meters (Figure 4), which is five times the conventional gas reserves estimated at 36,070 billion cubic meters. Thus, the current situation represents an opportunity for Algeria to exploit its shale gas reserves, estimated at 2,350 billion cubic meters **Fig 4**: conclude spot contracts, and benefit from high gas prices.



Source: (Al-Siddiq, p415 , 2018)

When Russia cut gas supplies to Ukraine due to tensions between Moscow and Kyiv, this step was considered a direct threat to all European gas-importing countries. European leaders therefore bet on

shale gas to reduce dependence on Russian gas, and European industries participated in exploring and extracting shale gas resources. However, this began mainly in Ukraine and Poland (World Energy Council, p27, 2010), some European countries hesitated—France banned shale gas exploration for environmental reasons and adopted a strategy of transitioning to renewable energy. European countries plan to reduce oil and gas use entirely by 2040, which would mean the loss of one of Algeria's gas markets in the future.

The increase in production and producers of unconventional gas, under European legislation to liberalize the gas market, has become ready, and shale gas extraction in Europe may begin, which will lead to a decoupling of oil and gas prices in Europe in the future as in the United States, thereby creating a European shale gas market or a spot natural gas market. This will exert pressure on Algeria's gas export trade in the future, possibly forcing it to sell at prices reflecting a set of factors (total supply, new gas market liberalization laws, environmental concerns, costs of alternative energy sources) rather than merely the natural movement of spot oil prices, increasing the difficulty of forecasting natural gas revenues (Abed alhamid Marghit, p110, 2016).

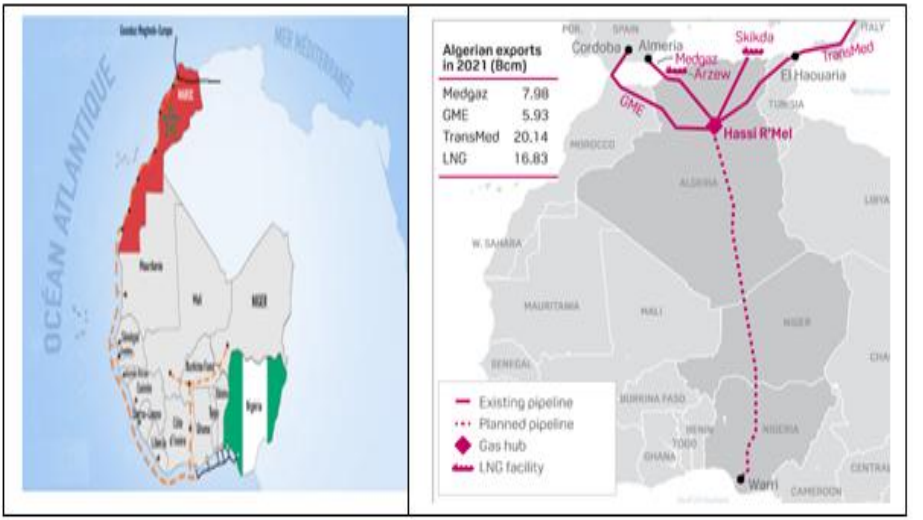
4.3. Increasing Natural Gas Revenues

Enhancing Algeria's foreign currency revenues and relatively supporting the exchange rate of the Algerian dinar against foreign currencies. The rise will not be large because the currency is not subject to pure supply and demand; the exchange rate is determined in the short term by central bank management, which relies on a basket of major currencies linked to foreign trade. In the medium term, multiple factors are considered, including the level of oil revenues, economic competitiveness, and macroeconomic balances.

4.4. Expanding Infrastructure for Gas Production and Export

The Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline project is a continental and international project that intersects African development stakes with European energy security considerations, pending the outcomes of recently announced implementation phases. The project faces a major challenge from the Nigeria–Morocco project (Figure 5), which traverses 13 countries

Fig .5: Gas Pipeline Projects (Nigeria–Algeria) and (Nigeria–Morocco)



Source: (Bouramdane, p10, 2026)

The Nigeria–Algeria pipeline length is estimated at 4,000 km (Nigeria 1,037 km; Niger 841 km; Algeria 2,130 km) and is expected to transport 20–30 billion cubic meters of gas annually. The project cost is estimated at USD 10 billion plus USD 3 billion for building gas gathering infrastructure in Nigeria. Despite many obstacles, according to statements by the Algerian Minister of Energy, only 1,800 km remain of the 4,000 km, and Algeria pledged to complete the Niger segment, removing the last obstacles given Niger's inability to bear the high cost. Algeria's desire to reach European markets through such large projects faces obstacles and challenges, especially those arising from Russian gas, as Gazprom seeks to benefit from the European market and lead in supplying it via pipelines (Arabi, p382 , 2021).

The project also faces competition from the Nigeria–Morocco Gas Pipeline (NMGP) project (Figure 05), currently designed to link Nigeria's huge gas reserves to Morocco and then to Europe to provide an alternative or complement to Russian gas for Europe. Work on this pipeline began in 2016, valued at about USD 25–26 billion, aiming to transport up to 30 billion cubic meters annually over a distance of 5,600–7,000 km across 13 countries along the Atlantic coast, including Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Gambia, Senegal, Mauritania, before reaching

Morocco (Figure 3), integrating with the existing West African gas pipeline network. Comparing the two projects, Algeria has a cost advantage and the advantage of the route passing through only one transit country (Niger), whereas the Moroccan project crosses 13 African countries, complicating realization due to political and security instability. Therefore, Algeria must demonstrate the project's importance to Europeans to obtain political support and European companies' participation in its realization.

5. Conclusion :

The Strait of Hormuz crisis constituted a challenge to the global energy market, as this passage, due to the US–Israeli war against Iran, became a center of conflict and an international focal point, being a vital corridor and a geopolitical pivot that directly affects the flow of oil and LNG from the Arab Gulf to European and Asian markets. The strait crisis represents an opportunity for Algeria to enhance its revenues and reposition itself in the European and Asian gas markets.

5.1. Testing the Study Hypotheses:

- **Hypothesis 1:**

The Strait of Hormuz crisis has strengthened Algeria's geostrategic energy position vis-à-vis European countries, particularly given its important strategic location and the large size of its gas reserves, whether conventional natural gas or shale gas.

- **Hypothesis 2:**

The persistently high domestic demand for gas in Algeria constitutes a real challenge to fully meeting the increasing European demand. Therefore, European countries should transfer gas exploration and exploitation technologies to Algeria, in addition to supporting the implementation of the Nigeria–Algeria project.

5.1. Study Findings

- An increase in Algerian gas exports helps alleviate pressure on European demand but cannot fully cover all European demand.
- The continuous rise in domestic demand for natural gas is the most significant challenge facing Algeria, with domestic

consumption estimated at 50.24% of national gas production in 2025.

- Current geopolitical changes confirm that Algerian gas has a temporary competitive advantage that allows the country to develop infrastructure, increase production, and obtain advanced technology from Western countries.

- The Strait of Hormuz crisis reduced gas supplies from Gulf countries to Europe and Asia, prompting some European countries to strengthen existing partnerships with Algeria and conclude new spot contracts, such as with Italy and Spain.

5.2. Study Recommendations

- Diversify Algeria's gas markets and avoid concentrating solely on European markets by turning toward new markets in Africa and Asia.
- Allocate part of gas revenues to diversify the economy and implement the (2016–2030) program vision.
- Alert traditional partners and European gas-importing countries to the importance of the (Nigeria–Algeria) project to obtain support for its realization, given Morocco's efforts to obstruct it despite its practical difficulties and higher cost compared to Algeria.
- Accelerate the exploitation of new gas fields and the non-associated gas project (Ghar Djebilet mine) to raise national gas production.
- Use advanced technology and acquire it from Western countries to extract shale gas and assess the operation's impact on groundwater in the desert

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