

Algerian gas and new energy wars: "Towards the imperative of employing a strategic-diplomatic approach"

الغاز الجزائري وحروب الطاقة الجديدة: نحو حتمية توظيف مقاربة استراتيجية-دبلوماسية

Djamal Djebel 1*
University of setif 2-Algeria
dj.djebel@univ-setif2.dz

Djaouida Hamzaoui 2
University of setif 2-Algeria
d.hamzaoui@univ-setif2.dz

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Abstract:

This study examines how Algeria employs natural gas as a new diplomatic-strategy in response to current geopolitical changes, and regional and international tensions, As one of the largest countries in North Africa and a crucial energy supplier, Algeria aims to adapt these conditions to its advantage, The study uses statistical data on gas reserves, production, consumption, and exports, along with a descriptive approach to analyze how international and regional tensions impact Algeria's gas diplomacy.

Results findings reveal that Algerian gas has gained importance due to increased demand following the Russian-Ukrainian War, Amidst ongoing regional issues, such as strained relations with Morocco, the diplomatic crisis with Spain, and conflicts in the Sahel and the Middle East, Algeria is strategically leveraging its natural gas resources, This approach helps Algeria reshape its position in the global energy market and restore its political influence through effective gas diplomacy.

Keywords: Gas diplomacy - Natural gas - Regional and international conflicts - Strategy.

*Corresponding author : Laboratory for Research and Studies on Colonial Massacres
Introduction

In the face of escalating tensions regionally and internationally, most recently the Russian-Ukrainian war early in 2022, and the transformations that have left it at the level of the global energy landscape energy supply, Algerian gas manifests itself as a critical energy resource, given Algeria's energy supply to various countries of the world, especially the European countries on the one hand, and the other hand, Algerian gas has become a feature of foreign policy and Algeria's international position.

This scientific paper explores Algeria's natural gas as a new diplomatic strategy and its critical importance in line with the changing events in the world and the emergence of regional and international areas and hotspots of tension, Moreover the outcomes of this situation on the restructuring of the global energy map, especially after the effects of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the functioning of energy supplies across the world's various countries as well as what is happening in the Middle East and the African Coast as these regions constitute zones of conflict and influence for the energy of the central Powers, Given these ongoing geopolitical shifts, Algeria's decision makers must exploit this vital resource and use it as a diplomatic strategy in order to create an essential position within the international community, They are moreover, attempting to participate in regional and international decision-making albeit relatively, despite their challenges and constraints, such as the availability of alternatives and gas sources and the use of modern technology related to natural gas extraction by developed countries, as well as the problem of balancing the economic and environmental aspects, and the developed countries' orientation towards zero carbon emissions.

The following problematic study poses the following question: To what extent has Algeria been able to employ a strategic-diplomatic approach to the natural gas file in the context of new international energy conflicts?

The study was divided into three main axes as follows:

Firstly: Algeria's natural gas capabilities

Secondly: New international energy wars and their impact on Algerian gas's changing approach: "From economic to strategic - diplomatic"

thirdly: The future of Algerian gas under the strategic - diplomatic approach

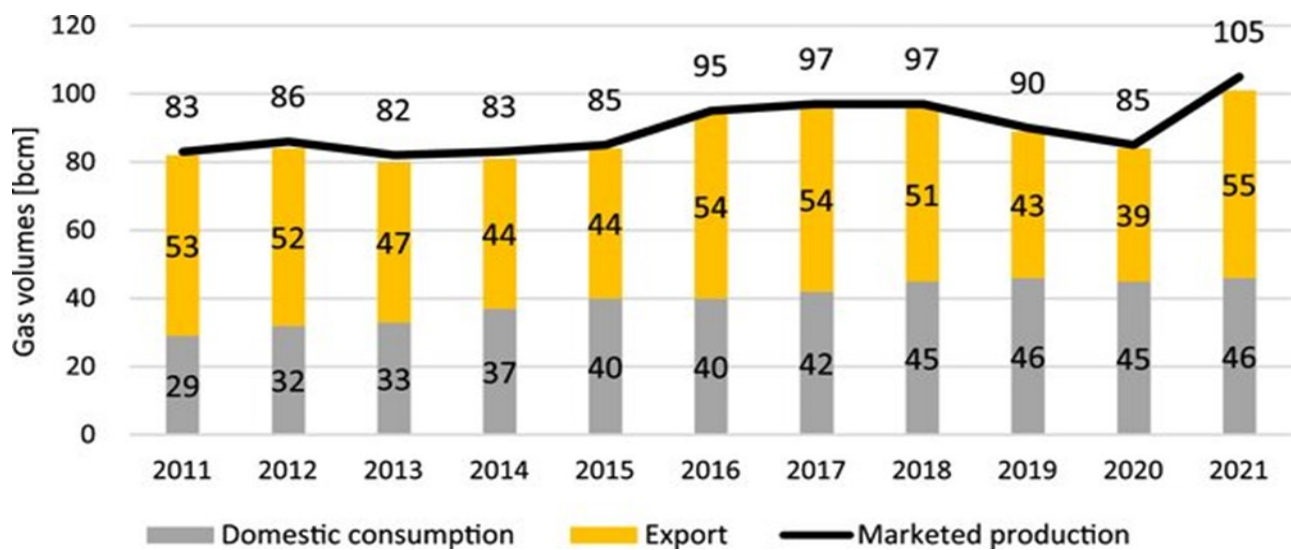
Firstly: Algeria's natural gas capabilities

Algeria has been among the world's leading natural gas producers since its independence in 1962, it has endeavoured to develop this vital sector; over successive periods, it has exported large quantities of natural gas to several countries worldwide¹. It possesses vast resources of this biomaterial, raising its position in the global energy market and contributing to strengthening its economy and increasing its national income. Algeria strives to develop the technological research sector and promote government investments. To expand their production potential and improve the processes and efficiency of natural gas extraction, and the conclusion of appropriate partnerships and contracts, all to preserve their ration reputation and importing countries' confidence in the near and long term².

1. Algerian natural gas: between domestic consumption and export

Algeria's proven combustion reserves, including oil, gas, condensate, and petroleum gas, exceed 4300 million tonnes of oil, equivalent to over 12 billion barrels. Natural gas accounts for 55% of this volume³. In 2023, Algeria ranked first as Africa's largest exporter of liquefied petroleum gas, and natural gas exports to the European Union amounted to approximately 34.9 billion cubic metres⁴.

Figure N°1. Algeria gas production, consumption and exports (2011–2021)



(Source: Imane Boukhatem, Pao-Yu Oei (2024), p26)

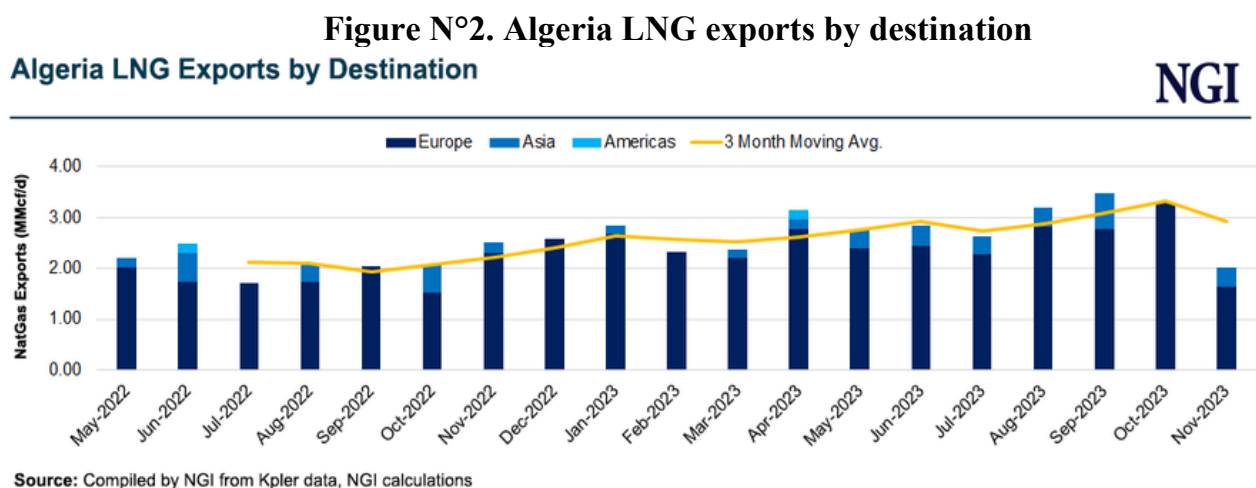
Figure N°1 shows the size of domestic consumption as well as the quantities of natural gas exported to different countries of the world from 2011 to 2021, which increased from 80 billion cubic metres in 2011 to over 100 billion cubic metres in 2021, noting that the quantities of gas exported from 2011 to 2018 exceed domestic natural gas consumption. However, the 2019 coronavirus pandemic upended the equation and affected the volume of natural gas exporting; due to the lack of global demand for incinerators in general, the situation will continue in 2020, and Algeria's natural gas exports will then rise during the first triple of 2021⁵.

In 2023, according to the Director of Economic Studies and Surveillance of the Algerian Ministry of Energy and Mines, Algeria produces about 130 billion cubic metres of gas annually, exports 56 billion cubic metres, and about 50 billion cubic metres consumed in the internal market and the remaining amount is pumped back into oil and gas wells to increase recovery ratios, In addition, Algeria plans to invest between \$20 billion and \$25 billion until 2035 to develop and exploit green hydrogen, including transport to Europe via a new pipeline to Italy, The authorities also seek to attract foreign investment to boost their projects in the oil and gas sectors and increase production⁶.

According to statistics from the Ministry of Energy and Mines, the Algerian government has announced that the country's natural gas production will increase by 10 billion cubic metres from 2024, "Sonatrach" in the same year, contracts with foreign companies worth up to \$6 billion to develop several projects would significantly increase Algeria's gas production and meet the growing demand for gas at the domestic and international market levels.

Europe is Algeria's largest customer in the natural gas sector, with gas pipelines spanning three baselines: The Maghreb Line and the Medgas Pipeline Gas Directing (LPG) to Spain and the Galsi Line heading to Italy, Annual exports of liquefied gas to Turkey, Britain, France, Italy, and Spain are an important part of the gas supply to the European continent⁷.

Algeria currently meets about 12% of European gas demand, with over 30% coverage in Spanish and Italian markets, making it the world's leading supplier of natural gas imports to these two countries, on the other hand, in the area of liquefied gas (LNG), Algeria is one of the leading countries to invest in this sector since 1964 but this type of gas industry faces significant challenges both internally and externally, resulting in a decline in its exports⁸.



(Source: Brad Hitch (2023), on: 11/07/2024, in: <https://n9.cl/32xha>)

According to figure N°2 , which shows the quantities of Algerian liquefied gas by destination during 2022 and 2023, Europe remains the Algerian liquefied gas market in varying quantities up to a maximum of more than 3 million cubic feet per day (according to the unit used in the illustration), while small quantities were exported to both America and the Asian countries, which in total does not compare to the exporter's LPG⁹.

Algeria's declining LPG exports are attributable to several factors, including¹⁰:

- Algeria's insistence on dealing with pipe gas and long-term contracts has reduced the share of liquefied gas.

- LPG prices have declined in global markets, including the US, Europe and Asia Pacific.
- Qatar and the United States of America entered the European market, creating competition for the production and marketing of liquefied gas.
- International arbitration problems faced by many gasier projects in Algeria, including disputes with Spain and Italy over contract renewal terms.

From the preceding, we can say that natural gas production in Algeria is an integral part of the national economy and has a significant impact on the international scene as well; over recent years, Algeria has witnessed ongoing efforts to increase natural gas production and develop the oil and gas industry, Algeria has modern technologies for the extraction, manufacture and export of natural gas. However, the gas industry faces multiple challenges, including technology related to the gas industry's technology and extraction. Spare parts for gas machinery, as well as international environmental challenges such as fluctuations in global market prices and global competition in the context of recurring energy crises; furthermore, Algeria had to deal with internal challenges such as economic reforms and the modernization of infrastructure to strengthen the gas sector and improve its efficiency¹¹.

2. Natural gas partnerships and contracts

In 2023 and early 2024, the National Algerian Company "Sonatrach" signed several strategic agreements to strengthen Algeria's role as a reliable supplier in the global gas market. The partnership is a strategic and vital option for development, allowing for the sharing of investment efforts and risks, especially in the areas of exploration and production, including the following¹²:

- 10-year agreement with Grayne LNG, the British company, to expand the capacity for storage and resupply of fluidized natural gas at the British company's terminal level as of January 2029.
- Signing two memorandums of understanding with the Italian complex "Eni", the first aimed at improving Algeria-Italy power networks to promote sustainable energy transition, while the second related to technological cooperation to improve the processes of emissions and gas valuation techniques, including the extension of a marine electrical cable and the upgrading of existing natural gas dilution capacity.
- She signed a medium-term natural gas supply contract with VNG Handel and Vertrip GMBH, part of the German group VNG AG.

In general, the partnerships and contracts between the Algerian national company Sonatrach and international companies for developing and exploiting natural resources include licenses for exploration and production, marketing and export agreements, and technical agreements for transferring technology and knowledge. Through this strategy, Algeria aims to strengthen its capabilities in the natural gas sector and achieve long-term sustainable economic gains.

Secondly: New international energy wars and their impact on Algerian gas's changing approach: "From economic to strategic - diplomatic"

Algeria faces significant challenges in defining its energy policies in the natural gas sector. Its trends have been affected by regional and international geopolitical fluctuations and global economic challenges, This has led Algeria to strengthen its strategies to ensure stable production and export and to strengthen international cooperation in the field of energy to ensure its position in the world's energy landscape.

1. Current international situation: issues and implications for Algeria's gas sector

This analysis explores the current international situation and its implications for the Algerian gas sector, It examines the impact of global transformations and geopolitical dynamics on Algeria's ability to adapt to the current energy situation, and attempts to adopt a strategic-diplomatic approach to ensure and restore its place in the international arena.

1.1. The consequences of the severance of Algerian-Moroccan diplomatic relations on the field of natural gas

Algeria and Morocco were economically associated with the presence of the Euro-Maghreb gas pipeline, The Algerian Ministry of Energy announced on 26 August 2021 its total commitment to cover all of Spain's gas supplies via a pipeline called "Medgas", where this tube connects directly between the two countries and extends from the coastal town of Bani Safi in western Algeria to Almeria in southern Spain, which inaugurated in 2011, means that Algeria has shifted to the use of an alternative gas pipe after being dependent on pipes passing through Morocco since 1996, morocco would lose the proceeds of the Euro-Maghreb gas pipeline as rights of passage on its territory despite Algeria's call for a new decade, on the other hand, for Algerian gas to enter the stage of diplomatic influence and shift it from economic to political¹³.

Many unknowns surround the interconnectedness between Spain and Algeria one of which is whether it is a government, Pedro Sánchez had miscalculated the consequences of changing the historical position on Western Sahara in support of her Moroccan ally, Spain had tried to Europeanize the conflict, but the leading European powers had distanced themselves, and launched diplomatic attacks on the Moroccan State to reaffirm its relations in a global context characterized by geopolitical, economic and energy tensions¹⁴.

In February 2024, the National Company of Algeria for Combustion "Sonatrach" signed a medium-term contract with the German natural gas supply company VNG, this decade comes within the framework of strengthening the strategic partnership in energy with Europe, Through this contracting, the Algerian party emphasized the great potential for broader development of trade cooperation in the future, including its extension to other areas such as hydrogen¹⁵.

Relations between Algeria, Morocco, and Spain appear to be a third party especially in the context of the current geopolitical and energy changes, which are complex and highly interlinked, As a supporter of Morocco by the two countries'

relationship, Spain is seeking a European orientation in its attitude towards Western Sahara but has found its European alliances to reverse their support, which may impact its diplomatic and economic strategy¹⁶.

In contrast, Algeria emerges as a significant player in the global energy market, especially in natural gas; it therefore seeks to establish new cooperation relations with Italy and Germany that reflect ongoing efforts to strengthen strategic partnerships, it indicates excellent potential for future development in the energy and economic fields and current regional and international tensions, underscore the importance of energetic diplomacy in defining international relations, States seek partnership opportunities to enhance the security of their energy and economy¹⁷.

1.2. The consequences of the severance of Algerian-Moroccan diplomatic relations on the field of natural gas

African countries with significant oil and gas resources are facing stifling crises and suffering from decades of instability. Structural imbalances in these countries are evident, such as persistent instability, pervasive corruption, lack of good governance, imbalances in development, increasing terrorist activities and organized crime¹⁸, based on the security crisis in the Sahel region and the successive events beginning with the war in Libya and the political changes in Tunisia military coups d'état, down to the situation in northern Mali, through the last three years, where many African States have experienced military coups d'état and the seizure of power by military officers in Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso and Chad¹⁹, democratic gains in these States since the 1990s, Algeria is an African State with geographical boundaries in the Sahel, Libya and Tunisia, security policy and the deployment of its military forces along the financial and Libyan borders, to avoid any terrorist attack on gas production complexes such as the 2013 terrorist attack on the "Tiguentourine gas complex" by terrorists of different nationalities, and in order to maintain the stability of its production of natural gas and protect its oil bases²⁰, The production capacity of the Tiguentourine complex was estimated at 24 million cubic metres per day representing 10% of the national natural gas output.

Thus, the interests of the significant conflicting Powers in the Sahel over energy sources, such as the United States of America, Russia, China, Japan and France, can be linked to a lesser extent²¹, Terrorist groups' movements under the direction of one or the other as a means of pressure on all countries neighbouring the African Sahel in order to implement its agendas on natural gas production and export destinations; this is what Algeria avoids by using all material and human resources Much of Algeria's national treasury, whose primary revenue is natural gas, is to protect Algeria's borders and achieve national sovereignty.

In the same vein, it should note that political turmoil and instability particularly in Niger, had a significant negative impact on major natural gas projects, leading to the disruption of Nigeria's trans-Saharan gas pipeline project, This project which runs 4000 kilometres from Abuja to the coasts of Algeria, connects Algeria, Niger and Nigeria with a total length of 4128 kilometres, including 1037 kilometres within

Nigerian territory, 841 kilometres in Niger and 2310 kilometres in Algeria, and will connect the pipeline to Nigeria's gas fields from The total cost of this project is estimated at between \$10 billion and \$12 billion for the pipeline and three billion for the assembly centres²², The Algerian side agreed with the Niger and Nigeria Energy Ministers to reinvigorate the project during the seventh summit of the Gas Exporting Countries' Forum held in March 2024 in Algeria.

Algeria must therefore, strengthen its existing diplomatic and security strategy with the Sahel and neighbouring Arab States to avoid the effects of political tensions and unrest in the region and possible external interventions by the major Powers, It must also promote stability and regional cooperation to enhance the region's energy and economic security and maintain its productive capacity, particularly in the natural gas sector²³.

1.3. The consequences of the severance of Algerian-Moroccan diplomatic relations on the field of natural gas

Algeria faced new competition in the European gas market due to new projects in the Eastern Mediterranean region, where an "Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum" was established in 2019, bringing together countries such as Egypt, Greece, Italy Jordan, Palestine, Romanian Cyprus and Israel at the beginning of the 2020 Greece Romanian Cyprus and Israel signed an agreement to build a 2000-kilometre marine pipeline to transport natural gas to Europe²⁴, Despite the announcement of these projects, there are parties that question adequate sources of financing as well as economic feasibility, especially as Europe tends to implement zero carbon emissions and gas disposal strategy in its energy system early in 2050²⁵.

The Egyptian authorities have discussed the issue of Algeria's accession to a forum called "Gas of the East Mediterranean", to coordinate efforts and consolidate prices to protect the interests of gas-exporting countries, especially after the visit of the Italian Prime Minister "Giorgia Meloni" of Algeria in 2023, The agreement on the completion of the second gas and hydrogen pipeline directly linking Algeria to Italy confused the calculations of the Eastern Mediterranean gas-producing countries, one of whose countries, Egypt, intends to agree with Greece, Israel and Cyprus on the completion of a gas-exporting pipeline towards Europe, Egypt's efforts to solicit Algeria to join the "Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum" are based on an essential consideration, that Algeria is a key player and a problematic figure in gas production in the Mediterranean region²⁶.

On the contrary, Algeria's thinking of joining this forum is excluded by Israel's presence among its members, Israel is known for its rigorous engagement with the entity, its full support for the Palestinian cause, and its rejection of any form of normalization, politics and the economy must often be difficult to separate, especially since the equation includes the isolation of Turkey in forum projects "Eastern Mediterranean Gas", which has strong economic ties in the field of natural gas in Algeria.

Not far away, in the same geographical region, the Middle East and the Gulf States, Algeria has always tried to adopt an economic and diplomatic strategy and build close relations with the region's States, which share the same outlook. This enables them to preserve their principles, security doctrine, and consistent position on just issues.

Under its new strategy for dealing with its regional neighbourhood, Algeria has moved towards the Arab depth to restore its momentum and presence in the Arab forum. These efforts were based on strengthening relations with key capitals in the region, such as Cairo, in addition to economic convergence with Iran, Qatar and Turkey Energy, mostly gas-producing and exporting countries, through joint energy projects and contracts. As happened with Turkey in the exploitation of natural gas to produce a substance PVC has made a new investment in the Turkish market by signing an agreement to contribute to a project aimed at producing 450 thousand tons annually on Turkish soil, in partnership with the Ronisance Holding Group, worth \$ 1.2 billion²⁷, and "Midad" Saudi Energy Company for the Development of Gas Fields in the Algerian State of Ilizi border with Libya²⁸, while Algeria's relations with the UAE have diverged owing to Israeli-UAE-Morocco rapprochement and the continuing challenges it poses to Algeria.

Eastern Mediterranean gas can be a source of European demand from the preceding. Given the proximity the distance, the abundance of gas discoveries and the desire of many countries in the region, such as Egypt, Israel and Greece, to establish a pipeline project that could fuel the European continent with more natural gas armed conflicts, including those involving Israel, Palestine, Israel and Lebanon, Cyprus, Turkey, Greece, political tensions between the States of the region and the ongoing dispute over their maritime boundaries as well as the conflict of major Powers Croatia and the United States of America, which have always sought to control the quantities of gas exported around the world²⁹, Algeria maintains its export share of natural and liquefied gas to various markets worldwide. Algeria adopts diplomacy to establish bilateral and multilateral relations in various fields, particularly energy. It culminated in the March 2024 Gas Exporters' Forum, which many analysts consider a political success before it is economic.

1.4. The Russian-Ukrainian war and its impact on Algerian gas exports

The Russian intervention in Ukraine in February 2022 was a significant motivation for EU countries to consider finding an alternative source of Russian gas. The EU plans to achieve sanctions imposed by the United States of America with the support of many European allied States by importing gas from alternative sources rationalising energy consumption, and severe thinking towards the use of renewable energy resources³⁰.

In this regard, to meet immediate needs, the European Union has decided to import about 50 billion cubic metres per year of liquefied natural gas, mainly from the United States and Qatar, as well as an additional 10 billion cubic metres of gas via pipelines, mainly from Azerbaijan, Norway and Algeria³¹.

Algeria is a significant exporter of natural gas in Africa towards Europe through an integrated network of pipelines along its coasts, Growing energy needs for gas and oil following the Russian-Ukrainian War of Algeria to take advantage of this international situation after multiple crises and the COVID-19 crisis in 2020 and 2021, Algeria is seeking to strengthen its diplomatic capacities in the energy sector including natural gas, to achieve economic objectives, including renewing the State's reserves and securing international support for its political position in matters relating to Morocco and Western Sahara Strategic step in line with Algeria's efforts to strengthen its strategic position in the international landscape³².

Based on the preceding, and given the many agreements and contracts linking Algeria to several States for the export of gas, which are consistent with specific legal time frames that reflect the dynamism of international events and the emergence of specific regional and international tensions, Arguably, Algeria found itself under the double imperative of continuing gas supply on the one hand, On the other hand the negative or positive impact of these tensions and events prompted it to try to use the gas sheet as a diplomatic strategy to impose its agendas, and achieve its internally and externally dominated objectives.³³

2. Manifestations of Algeria's diplomatic use of natural gas

As mentioned above, according to official statistics of SONATRACH, Algeria's natural gas production reached 137 billion cubic metres in 2023. Algeria consumes more than 50 billion cubic metres of local-global energy demand", spread between population consumption, and gas-dependent economic enterprises, but with recent international changes causing increased global energy demand "Algeria has found itself in an international situation where exports of natural gas to European countries are required to use diplomatically to double its profits, In order to achieve its strategic interests and objectives, we review here some of the manifestations of its diplomatic use of natural gas

2.1. Spain's continued supply of Algerian gas despite the diplomatic crisis

Despite the trade breakdown between Algeria and Madrid due to the Western Sahara issue since 2022, Algerian gas exported Spain's imports during the first quarter of 2024, outperforming its rivals from Russia and the United States according to "Espanyol" newspaper report, where Algeria's share of Spain's gas imports was 42%, while Russia's was 25.7%, and the United States 18.2% during the same period³⁴.

The Director-General of Sonatrach, Tawfik Hakkar, stated that "since the beginning of the crisis in Ukraine, gas and petroleum prices have exploded" and continued: "Algeria has decided to maintain relatively appropriate contractual prices with all its customers, but does not rule out a price audit with our Spanish customer", This is a diplomatic pressure from the Algerian side to return to the application of international law about the question of Western Sahara³⁵.

At one point, the diplomatic dispute between Algeria and Spain led to a decrease in the quantity of gas exported. However, this has remained the same as

Algeria's natural gas supply to Spain. This is due to contracts in this area, Algeria's desire as a gas exporter to preserve its economic interests, and reputation with the importing States, preserve the gas sheet for timely use by trade relations, and various issues between the two countries.

2.2. Reset the Natural Gas Export Nexus: "Orientation to Italy"

Algeria provided Italy with 13.9 billion cubic metres during 2022, and the natural gas supply to Italy rose by 6 billion cubic metres before the end of 2022 diversification of partnerships, and the possibility of supplying Italy with electricity and green hydrogen through the conclusion of several bilateral agreements between the two countries, The proportion of Algerian gas exported to Spain in July 2022 was 24.5% Compared to 48% in 2021, which indicates a decline of nearly 50%, while the remaining quantities directly went to Italy, Italy did not compromise its common political positions with Algeria³⁶.

Therefore, Algeria has not violated the provisions of its agreements with Spain concerning natural gas supply, However it was able to reset the quantities of exported gas and control the export destination in line with its position, rejecting a departure from international law, and United Nations solutions on the issue of Western Sahara They showed that their interest was in achieving their economic interests without affecting their principles regarding peoples' right to self-determination³⁷.

2.3.Maintaining the Algerian-Russian Alliance despite different positions on gas exports to Europe

Algeria became the third largest gas supplier to Europe in October 2023 Although many observers of international affairs see the Russian-Ukrainian War as enhancing Algeria's position as a gas supplier to the European Union, it posed a challenge to Algeria's principles of sovereignty, and non-interference in the affairs of States, However Algeria maintained close bilateral relations with Moscow while reassuring its European partners of its commitment to supply natural gas and increase production. Russia did not object to Algeria's position as an alternative supplier of Russian gas to Europe; considering that the issue is merely a trade issue, as leaders in Moscow realize that Algeria alone cannot meet the needs of the European market, only 10-12% of its applications met between 2021 and 2022³⁸.

Thus, Algeria's continued provision of natural gas to the European States does not jeopardize its close relations and strategic alliance with Russia but instead seeks to expand the prospects for Algerian-Russian cooperation in various areas, adheres to its long-standing policy of non-alignment and insists on the free choice of its political and economic partners, including Russia's competitors.

thirdly : The future of Algerian gas under the strategic - diplomatic approach

In order to try to look ahead to the future of Algerian gas, some scenarios based on thoughtful scientific indicators must be conceived. The impacts of the current international situation and increased global energy demand, other quantitative indicators, and the orientation of gas-exporting States are known in prospective studies of various phenomena as adopting three scenarios' future as a new strategic-diplomatic theme.

1. Directional or linear scenario

Requires the situation to remain the same. Algeria, as a gas-exporting State at the beginning of its reliance on gas as a diplomatic mechanism, will maintain this approach and pattern of diplomatic gas exploitation; there are no indications of evolution and the increasing importance of gas as a global energy resource. In our view, this scenario is unlikely given the profound geopolitical shifts that impose the opposite for many reasons we will mention it later.

2. Downward or pessimistic scenario

This depends on the perception that the importance of Algerian gas will decline for some reasons, such as the intermediate and long-term effectiveness and limitations of fossil energies. The world is geared toward renewable energies, avoiding carbon emissions, and the world's countries, especially Europe, are trying to exclude fossil energies from their energy system. It automatically leads to a decline in Algerian gas diplomacy, and this scenario is also unlikely because many recent events and shifts on the international scene have demonstrated the world's continued need for fossil energy and gas³⁹.

3. Upward or optimistic scenario

Unlike the two previous scenarios that emanate from the hypotheses of whether the situation remains the same or declines, In order to increase the importance of Algerian gas and thereby use Algerian gas as a future diplomatic strategy, It will provide Algeria with the ability to export its natural gas in line with its political interests and economic objectives without prejudice to its established principles and positions towards many international issues. We expect this to be the closest scenario for the future of Algerian gas diplomacy, according to many indicators⁴⁰, as follows:

- Successive discoveries of new gas fields in southern Algeria and Algeria's desire to raise production to 200 billion cubic metres per year means raising Gaza's revenues and exploiting the current international situation.
- The current international situation and increasing demand for gas as its prices rise.
- The Nigerian Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline Project will make Algeria a central player in North Africa and stimulate political and economic proximity to various countries worldwide.
- The futility of the Eastern Mediterranean gas transfer project to Europe.

- Slow shift towards renewable energies except in some States.
- Fossil energy sources maintain their importance as significant sources of global energy.
- The problems of transporting through sea crossings during crises and periods of tension allow Algeria to export its gas and impose conditions on its proximity to the European continent and its pipe network.
- Algerian initiatives to consolidate the position of gas-exporting countries and embrace the summit of gas-exporting countries from 01 to 03 March 2024 which many analysts consider to be more of a political than an economic achievement.
- Conclusion of an energy contract with Italy in 2023 for the completion of a second pipeline for the transport of gas, electricity, hydrogen and ammonia, a shift in the direction of Algeria's energy policy towards Italy.
- Algeria's political status was restored through the activation of gas diplomacy and participation in global decision-making, albeit relative, by securing a non-permanent seat in the Security Council for the period 2024-2025. The recent statements by Algeria's representative to the United Nations regarding the Israeli aggression against Gaza reflect the strength and position of Algerian diplomacy.
- Linking foreign policy interactions with natural gas to gain new alliances diversify the national economy and bring about global investment.

However, Algeria's challenges in this scenario and with future geopolitical changes in the international arena, such as sudden changes in the pricing of energy resources and the role of significant Powers aligned with European States, such as the United States of America, cannot be overlooked.

Conclusion

Following regional and international tensions that dominate the international landscape, Algerian gas has increased in importance. Prices have increased relatively in world markets after the Russian-Ukrainian War, and the search for alternatives to Russian gas cut-off from European countries has increased. As a Russian response to the sanctions imposed, in addition to the return of various countries of the world to the predominance of economic relations, and interests over old political interests and relations, This changing and complex global reality in terms of relations has given rise to a new role for Algerian gas in its use as a new strategic-diplomatic approach in order to achieve the political interests and strategic objectives of the State regardless of the divergence of views and differences as to whether Algeria has successfully benefited from the international arena, Exploiting this crucial international circumstance to maximize the benefit of natural gas.

Based on the above, we have reached the following results:

- Algerian gas is significant after increasing demand for it after the Russian-Ukrainian War. European countries raced on multiple visits to Algeria, enabling them to regain political standing by activating gas diplomacy and shifting their export link to Italy after the Spanish position changed from the Western Sahara file, making Italy a new energy gateway to Europe.
- Algeria's interest in establishing partnerships with its African neighbourhood in the Sahel region and supporting it financially by surveying the debts of many African countries and providing assistance is part of Algeria's strategy to secure its regional surroundings, given the close correlation between its desire to activate gas diplomacy and secure natural gas production facilities. On the other hand, openness to Arab countries by embracing large investment projects with some of the regional actors such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey.
- Algeria's invasive strategy is characterized by linking foreign policy interactions with natural gas to gain new alliances, moving out of the character of its Maghreb and African surroundings to global relations, diversifying the national economy and bringing about global investment. Thanks to its gas inflows, Algeria has rearranged its economic priorities to diversify its economy by launching large projects in the mining sector (phosphate and iron) and the agricultural sector in 2022 and 2023.
- Algeria should exploit the thirst of the countries importing natural gas and adopt a trade-off method to bring in new projects and techniques regarding the technological and spare parts factories of the energy sector, developing domestic gas industries and exporting them with high revenues.
- In light of successive regional and international tensions, such as the severance of relations with Morocco, the diplomatic crisis with Spain, the effects of the Sahel region and the Middle East region, as well as the Russian-Ukrainian war, Algeria is making steady strides by exploiting the current international situation in order to employ natural gas as one of the determinants of its foreign policy. Reset its position in the global energy map and regain its political standing through optimal activation of gas diplomacy.

Margins:

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