Subject: Would geopolitical confrontation or international/regional collaboration prevail in future cross-border energy and infrastructure projects?

ENERGY PEACE

Energy peace would outweigh in future cross-border energy and infrastructure projects through international/regional collaboration instead of geopolitical confrontation, affects mankind future and destiny of the world. The world has adequate energy sources but need to be developed. For development we need investment and investment looks for stability. Even though there are many kinds of energy resources in the world, oil and natural gas is world’s most important commodity. Energy need is increasing gradually and will continue to increase in the future to a great extent. However, energy need is one of the main reasons of conflicts between countries. These conflicts associated with realism. International society was anarchical, being dominated by individual states that were each striving to maximize their own power and security. Because these states were predisposed toward conflict and competition, international cooperation would usually prove elusive, even when the potential benefits of such arrangements were universally recognized. In the world, many wars had been realized but the root of the reasons of conflicts have not been difference of civilization or their identities, on the contrary, it has had a fact of natural resources. Furthermore, the power of energy is expressed by Michel Collon that if you want to rule the world you need to control the oil, all the oil, anywhere. His expression shows that states focus on energy resources but this situation caused geopolitical confrontations that are one of the crucial reasons of polarization among Western and Eastern states. The concept which is hard power and soft power has been determined strategies of powerful states, has been contributes to realize polarization between states. Unless peace gains importance between states, polarization between states will threaten energy security. Without energy security, cross-border energy and infrastructure projects will not be realized. Even though there are geopolitical confrontations with the help of polarization, energy peace will become main determinant in future energy projects. It is feasible through international/regional collaborations. The project, named as “Energy Peace”, contribute the creation of global energy collaboration platform, realize project to increase investment project in energy sector, solve energy security issues, and ensure energy price stabilization.

Geopolitical confrontations are one of the most critical obstacles cross-border energy and infrastructure projects. The reason of confrontations, related to realist aims, desire of obtaining power with the control of energy zones. Moreover, states realize collaboration with other one to ensure its energy security and control another states’ development but it causes conflict between states. Polarization between states appears through competitive conditions.
One of the crucial reasons of West-East polarization is geopolitical confrontation due to states’ control mechanism of region and energy resources. Polarization between states are not a new term, on the contrary, it has been from time immemorial. However, as a specific example, after the Cold War, relations between U.S. and former Soviet Union states like Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan gain importance besides U.S. interests on Middle-Eastern states and Azerbaijan increased. These regions have rich oil and natural gas reserves. Control over the Persian Gulf and Central Asia translates into control over Europe, Japan, and China. While U.S. create energy corridor to sustain its energy security, regional energy security problem appear. Thus, it causes other states to apply some strategies like doing natural resource nationalism which causes global energy price fluctuations, give harms economies.

On the other hand, there are many energy transition projects like Nabucco Pipeline Project, Arab Gas Pipeline project, Mediterranean-Stream Pipeline project which sacrificed through geopolitical confrontation. Arab Gas Pipeline (AGP) project linking Egyptian and possibly Iraqi gas to Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon was planned to be extend to Turkey; however, it is cancelled due to Syrian Civil war. In addition, Mediterranean-Stream Pipeline project to Carry Turkish supplies of various resources from Ceyhan to Eliat. Currently proposed gas pipeline from Israel and Turkey is cost-efficient but politically complicated by lingering effects of downturn in bilateral relations precipitated by May 2010 Mavi Marmara flotilla shooting incident. Those projects are cancelled. The main reason of geopolitical confrontation is associated with games of energy between states. Without balance of power in the regions, peace will not come in these regions and it will affect relationship between states negatively. Furthermore, it is a threat for cross-border energy and infrastructure projects. In order to bring peace in these regions, international/regional collaborations has to come together and it has to enable unity to ensure energy security and stability.

Energy Peace Project will be guarantor of cross-border energy and infrastructure projects with the help of international collaborations, enables balance of power between states to hinder geographical confrontations, contributes to realize energy stability. The main target of this project is hindering of geopolitical confrontations. Because of this reason, we have to establish free a global energy platform. Global actor states in energy, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations should be establishment of this platform. A global research center could be established to develop projects. To sustain the success of the project, the balance of power mechanism should be used, then no one threaten other and conflicts would hindered by deterrence mechanism.

Turkey plays an increasingly important strategic role in the transit of oil and natural gas. It is strategically located at the crossroads between oil and natural gas rich Former Soviet Union and Middle East countries, and European demand centers. In the future, Turkey which may be a peace bridge, have a critical role to solve polarization between Western-Eastern conflicts due to energy
resources and energy security. If the balance of power between states reaches balance, then deterrence mechanism will take a crucial role since it will contribute to hinder geopolitical confrontations. In addition to this, increasing energy demand and increasing global environmental issues made states more sensitive toward the environment to use less harmful energy sources like natural gas, invest alternative energy sources.

It goes without saying that primary energy consumption is increasing gradually so greenhouse gas emission increases and threatens future of the world. Because of this reason, countries have target to reduce greenhouse effects in the world. European Union states have determined target to reduce % 20 greenhouse gas emissions until 2020. Both China and U.S. have similar target to contribute to reduce greenhouse gas emission. Many other states has project to reduce greenhouse gas emission effects. At this point, the natural gas gain importance since it is more environmental energy sources. If energy peace between states realizes, then cross-border energy projects will develop and it will contribute stability and carrying of natural gas.

If energy peace in the world had reached determined target, then energy security issues would decreased. It means that global economies will take a breath through stabilized global energy prices. On account of fluctuations in energy price, economies influenced as negatively. Moreover, resource nationalism could be hindered through energy peace project. If roof of global energy peace authority ensure energy security of resource nationalist states, then their strategies can be changed. Thus, the threat of the rebirth resources nationalism risks would disappear. On the other hand, jihadist terrorism and regional terrorism are popular in recent years that threaten cross-border energy projects. So, the unity of energy security platform can initiate protection program with the help of international/regional authorities’ collaboration. It will enable states to utilize from energy price stability without fluctuation on account of geographical conflicts. It is important for economies. If energy security issues disappear, then military expenditures in energy security protection programs would disappears. It means that energy price would reduce and investment in international energy project could be financed instead of military expenditures.

One another contribution of Energy Peace project would be energy saving and preserve the environment. Energy transportation method shipping is costly and causes more energy consumption and some negative alteration in the ecology. For instance, tankers consume huge amount of fuel during carrying and it contaminates the sea. It causes to increase oil or natural gas price due to high energy transportation cost, instead of these methods cross-border energy and infrastructure projects likes pipeline projects has to be supported. If Pipeline projects had supported, then energy savings would realize and reduction in environmental contamination would not realize.

In the light of what I have said before, energy peace would become determinant factor to realize in future cross-border energy and infrastructure projects through international/regional collaboration.
Historical background of relationship between states shows us that geopolitical confrontations and impacts of realist idea would hinder investment in future energy projects; on the contrary, energy peace would bring peace between states. It is feasible through international/regional collaboration. The main determinant of success in this project would balance of power between states, disappearing of energy security problem, stabilize global energy price, new investment project to save energy resources and the environment. It looks like utopic; it is feasible through mankind creative desire with unity. It goes without saying that international/regional collaboration would main determinant in future cross-border energy and infrastructure projects.

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