Turkey’s Search for Oil May Spill Over into Conflict with Greece

by Simon Henderson
Aug 12, 2020
Also available in
Arabic

The current flare-up centers on differing interpretations of international law—a situation that should be employing lawyers but is instead deploying navies.

It’s been a while since NATO-members Turkey and Greece have been at war, but don’t rule out at least a skirmish or two. On Monday, the Turkish Ministry of Defense tweeted pictures of Turkish warships escorting the oil exploration ship Oruc Reis on route to an area of the eastern Mediterranean claimed by both countries. Then on Tuesday, Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias said his country would “defend its sovereignty and its rights.” At issue this time—but set in a context of a 100 years’ worth of grievances—is the prospect of finding oil or natural gas reserves deep below the seabed, as Egypt, Israel and Cyprus have done...

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