

Jordan's Energy Supply Options: The Prospect of Gas Imports from Israel

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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The kingdom's energy security dilemmas need to be considered in the context of its diverse geopolitical challenges, including external security threats from ISIS and domestic resentment toward Israeli actions in Jerusalem and the West Bank.

Jordan depends on imports for most of its energy requirements and has had to develop close relations with its suppliers. Nonetheless, its energy supplies have been subject to repeated disruption. In response, the Jordanian authorities hope to develop the country's own energy sources: renewables like solar and wind, as well as shale and nuclear. At the same time, a new source of energy is opening up: imports of natural gas from Israeli offshore fields in the Mediterranean Sea. This is an attractive option for the country's political authorities but is contested, at the street level, by Jordanians who are resentful of Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank.

The Jordanian government finds it difficult to make a strategic decision on energy while the country faces the threat posed by the self-proclaimed Islamic State group (ISIS), which is active along its borders with Syria and Iraq. The many refugees from these countries in Jordan place additional demands on the country's energy supply and impose a major budgetary burden. They also place further strains on the country's fragile population balance. Jordan has a large Palestinian population and Amman continues to have responsibilities for Muslim shrines in Jerusalem. Skirmishes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces concerning the holy places in Jerusalem in September 2015 have reinforced public opposition to economic dependence on Israel. Thus Jordan's energy security dilemmas need to be considered in the context of its diverse geopolitical challenges. Author Simon Henderson analyses the options facing Jordan to close the country's considerable energy supply gap...

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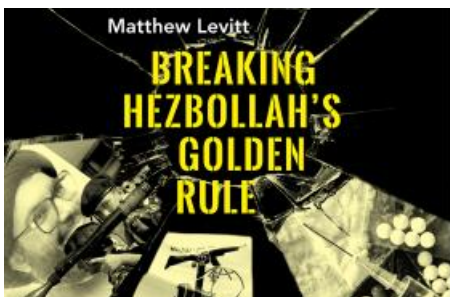
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