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- Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidenti Administrasiyasına
- ARDNŞ-a

Xülasəsi: Bolqarıstan tərəfindən "Bulgarian Stream" adlı yeni qaz boru kəməri təşəbbüsü və onun vasitəsilə gələcəkdə "South Stream" layihəsinin reanimasiyası və İGB qaz bağlantısında Rusiya təbii qazının nəqli ehtimalı barədə

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Brüsselin siyasi və sənaye dairələrindən əldə etdiyimiz məlumatlara əsaslanaraq nəzərinizə çatdırmaq istərdik ki, Bolqarıstan tərəfi "Qazprom" şirkətinin təşviq etdiyi "South Stream" və daha sonradan "Turkish Stream" layihələrini "Bulgarian Stream" adlı yeni qaz boru kəməri təşəbbüsü ilə əvəzləmək niyyətini bəyan etmişdir.

Belə ki, artıq 2 aydır ki, bu ölkənin baş naziri B.Borrisov Varna şəhəri yaxınlığında Şərqi Avropa və Balkan regionu üçün yeni təbii qaz "hub"-ın yaradılması ideyasını fəal şəkildə Aİ siyasi dairələrində müzakirə etməkdədir. O, bu barədə öz fikirlərini səsləndirərək, "Bulgarian Stream" layihəsinin tam olaraq Bolqarıstana məxsus olacağını, lakin təbii qaz həcmlərinin köhnə təşəbbüs olan "South Stream" infrastrukturunu vasitəsilə Aİ bazarına gətirilə biləcəyindən bəhs etməkdədir. "Bulgarian Stream" dəhlizi ilə Rusiyadan 10 milyard kubmetr qaz həcminin, eyni zamanda Azərbaycandan da bu layihəyə bəzi həcmərin cəlb edilməsi mümkünlüyü barədə fikirlər səsləndirilmişdir.

Türkiyə və Rusiya arasında gərginləşən münasibətlər fonunda, "South Stream" və ya "Turkish Stream" kimi layihələrin həyata keçirilməsi ehtimalının aşağı olduğu üçün Bolqarıstan Aİ daxilində öz "enerji statusunu" gücləndirmək niyyətindədir. Amma digər tərəfdən, Rusiya tərəfi bundan istifadə edə biləcəyi də istisna edilmir.

Hazırkı gedişatlarda sözügedən layihənin xüsusilə Almaniyanın "Nord Stream 2" xəttinin dəstəklədiyi səbəbindən Bolqarıstanın bu presedentdən istifadə edib "Bulgarian Stream" layihəsinin həyata keçirilməsi məqsədilə ilk növbədə Rusiyadan qaz həcmərin cəlb edilməsi qeyd edilir.

Maraqlısı da odur ki, Bolqarıstan tərəfinin fikirlərinə görə "South Stream" layihəsinin rastlaşdığı müqavimətdən fərqli olaraq bu yeni təşəbbüs nə Aİ-nin enerji və rəqabət qanunvericiliyi, nə də Rusiyaya qarşı sanksiyalar rejimi ilə ziddiyyət təşkil etməyəcəkdir. B.Borrisovun sözlərinə istinadən bu səbəbdən də onun reallaşması Aİ tərəfi üçün heç bir çətinlik yaratmamalıdır.

Bəzi siyasi ekspertlər və Aİ rəsmiləri qeyri-rəsmi şəkildə olsa da, bu təşəbbüs əsasında gələcəkdə (1 il ərzində olmasa da, orta müddətdə Rusiya ilə siyasi və ticarət münasibətlərinin yaxşılaşacağı təqdirdə) "South Stream" layihəsinin köhnəlmiş variantı olan qaz həcmərinin Rusiyadan birbaşa Bolqarıstan sahilində tikintisi ideyasının reanimasiyası ilə bağlı ehtimalın yüksək olduğunu etiraf edirlər. Avropa Komissiyası rəsmi olaraq Bolqarıstan tərəfinin bu yeni təklifinə hələ ki reaksiya verməmişdir.

Bu xüsusda, Bolqarıstan və Yunanıstan arasında qaz kəmərinin (İGB layihəsinin) inşası ilə bağlı investisiya müqaviləsinin imzalanması barədə Mərkəzin s/32-33381/03/15 sayılı, 08.12.2015 tarixli məktuba istinadən edərək bildirmək istərdik ki, "Bulgarian Stream" və Varna yaxınlığında qaz "hub"-ın yaradılmasına dair Bolqarıstanın baş nazirinin bəyanatları gələcəkdə Rusiyanın təbii qazının İGB infrastrukturunu vasitəsilə də Aİ bazarında nəql oluna biləcəyini istisna etmir.

Yuxarıda qeyd olunanlar Avropanın KİV-ində yayılmış məlumatlar ilə birgə nəzərə alınması üçün diqqətinizə təqdim olunur. ARDNŞ-ın qaz danışıqları qrupunun üzvləri bu gedişatlar barədə Səfirlik tərəfindən şifahi olaraq məlumatlandırılmışlar.

'South Stream' to become 'Bulgarian Stream'

14 Jan 2016

Euractiv, by Georgi Gotev

Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borissov said the defunct project of bringing Russian gas across the Black Sea to the EU known as 'South Stream' should be transformed into 'Bulgarian Stream', with 100% Bulgarian ownership over the pipes.

Speaking in the Bulgarian parliament yesterday (13 January), Borissov said the options for the supply of Bulgaria with Russian gas would be discussed on 27-28 January in Sofia, at a session of the Bulgarian-Russian intergovernmental commission for economic cooperation, which had not met for the last five years.

Borissov was quizzed by MPs over the fate of South Stream, the shelved pipeline project designed to carry Russian gas across the Black Sea to Bulgaria, and via Serbia, Hungary and Slovenia, to Italy (see background).

Borissov said that South Stream as such was now in history, and that instead, the priority was a gas hub called "Balkan" near the Black Sea port of Varna. This hub, according to Borissov, could be supplied by two offshore pipes from Russia with the capacity of 10 billion cubic metres of gas per year (bcm/y) each, plus gas from Azerbaijan and from local fields in Bulgaria and Romania.

Velizar Enchev, an independent MP, asked Borissov if 'Turkish Stream' could not be replaced by Bulgarian Stream. Turkish Stream replaced South Stream, but now this project also is defunct, against the background of tensions between Moscow and Ankara following the downing of the Russian jet near the Syrian border by the Turkish military.

"I am speaking precisely of Bulgarian Stream, not about a 50-50 project with a Russian company, but a project with 100% Bulgarian ownership of the pipes," Borissov responded.

Indeed, "South Stream Bulgaria" was a company in which the Russian company would own 50% of the pipes across the Bulgarian territory.

"It will be Bulgarian Stream, if the Russian side agrees to sell its gas at our border, they are welcome. And we will abide by the Third Energy Package and the sanctions of the European Commission," he said.

Borissov revealed plans to bring Russian gas across the Black Sea during the 17-18 December EU summit. The same summit however was the scene of a clash over the planned expansion of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, which brings Russian gas to Germany across the Baltic Sea. Russia's aim is to stop transiting gas across Ukraine, depleting the country of transit taxes to the tune of €3 billion per year.

Commentators quoted by Dnevnik, the EurActiv partner in Bulgaria, said that Russia was unlikely to embark on a project to bring gas to Bulgaria under the Black Sea, given the falling prices of energy and declining gas demand in Europe.

Russia, however, is believed to want to build the Burgas-Alexandroupolis oil pipeline, which would bypass the Bosphorus. A package deal including both large infrastructure projects is likely to satisfy both Sofia and Moscow.

Background

The South Stream pipeline was designed to carry 63 bcm/y of Russian gas across the Black Sea to Bulgaria, and via Serbia, Hungary and Slovenia, to Italy. Its main shareholders were Russia's Gazprom, and Italy's ENI.

On 1 December 2013, Russia scrapped the South Stream pipeline project to supply gas to southern Europe, without crossing Ukraine, citing EU objections, and instead named Turkey as its preferred partner for an alternative pipeline.

After Russian-Turkish relations deteriorated over the downing of the Russian warplane at the Syrian border on 24 November 2015, word is out that Russia may bring gas at the Bulgarian shore, just as under the South Stream project.

Bulgarian gas wars uncover hidden Gazprom strategies

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Euractiv, by Georgi Gotev

EXCLUSIVE / Gazprom stopped supplies to Overgas, a private Bulgarian gas distribution company in which it has a 50% stake. The surprising move prompted comments and provided insight into the broader strategies of the Russian gas monopoly in Bulgaria, and the local interests involved.

On 29 December, Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borissov called an urgent meeting of the country's state energy companies: Bulgargaz, Bulgartransgaz and BEH.

The Bulgarian gas grid is owned by Bulgartransgaz, which is part of the Bulgarian Energy Holding (BEH), which has amassed a debt of €250 million to the state budget. The BEH holding was established in 2008 by then-Prime Minister Sergei Stanishev, with the aim of cross-subsidising state companies at loss. Bulgargaz is the largest Bulgarian gas distribution company.

The intricacies of the Bulgarian energy trade have helped keep monopolies alive, and resist EU energy liberalisation rules.

Zeros in the form

At the meeting, it emerged that Gazprom had sent the usual form to the Balkan gas distribution centre, in which, surprisingly, all the figures for the planned supply to the Bulgarian private gas distribution company Overgas, in the period beginning 1 January, were zeros.

Overgas, the largest private energy company in Bulgaria, is owned 50% by Gazprom and 50% by Bulgarian businessman Sasho Dontchev. The company has 55,000 household clients and 3,000 industrial clients. The daily supplies to those clients amount to 1.5 million cubic metres per day, and represent some 10% of the gas consumption in Bulgaria.

The head of BEH was quoted as saying that the country risks undergoing a gas crisis, and that 200,000 people are at risk of remaining in the cold. Overgas was not invited to the meeting.

Strangely, on 30 December a statement was made by the Russian ministry of foreign affairs, not by Gazprom. It says that the usual amount of gas Bulgaria receives, 3 billion cubic metres a year (bcm/y), could be increased if needed, and that Russia "will not leave Bulgaria without blue fuel".

Following a second extraordinary meeting convened by Borissov on 31 December, also without the participation of Overgas, a solution to the crisis was announced.

Borissov said that Bulgargaz and Overgas agreed that the former will provide gas supplies to the customers of the latter. In fact, Bulgargaz, as a "public supplier" according to Bulgaria's byzantine energy law, has the obligation to make up for the missing supplies. Only Bulgargaz has access to the Chiren gas reserve, the country's only underground storage.

The relationship between the private Overgas and the state gas companies has been complicated. In 2010, Bulgartransgaz blocked Overgas' access to the gas grid. Consequently, Overgas lodged a complaint with the European Commission, which, in 2011 carried out raids at several Bulgarian gas companies, as part of a wider investigation into possible breaches of its antitrust rules, as part of its Gazprom probe, which remains ongoing. The Commission's interference helped Overgas to return to its gas distribution business. The private company

offered gas prices to its industrial clients 7-8% lower than Bulgargaz. This infuriated the state company, which saw many of its corporate clients signing up with the private competitor.

Bulgargaz had a monopoly on the supply of Russian gas to Bulgaria until 2012. Since then, instead of receiving the usual amount of 3.3 bcm/y, it started receiving 2.9 bcm, the outstanding amount of 400 mcm being supplied to Overgas.

'A plot against the government'

Speaking on 4 January, Borissov defended Gazprom and attacked the Bulgarian private company for having put its clients at risk and thus, of "plotting" against his government. He said that Russia and Gazprom were not to blame, and that the entire responsibility for the problem lay with Overgas. Borissov said that if Bulgarians had been left without heating for the New Year, they would swear at him, not at Overgas. He added that if those people would have turned to electricity for heating, this would have caused a national blackout.

Contacted by EurActiv, Overgas says they got in touch with Bulgargaz on 30 December and informed it of the situation, and that no risk of disruptions existed, contrary to what Borissov said.

Overgas writes to the Commission

In a letter to the Commission seen by EurActiv, dated 23 December 2015, Dontchev warns of what he says is a clear-cut abuse of Gazprom's dominant position at the upstream supply level, and a risk of serious and irreparable harm to competition.

"Any interruption of supplies by Gazprom Export, even for a short period, would lead in all likelihood to the permanent extinction of Overgas as the only remaining competitor in Bulgaria," Dontchev writes.

Dontchev also reveals that on 21 December 2015 Alexander Medvedev, the deputy chief of Gazprom, told him in a telephone conversation that Gazprom would cease its supplies to Overgas from 1 January 2016, irrespective of the fact that under a current contract, Gazprom is obliged to supply the company until at least 31 December 2017. **"Overgas suspects that [the alignment of interests between Gazprom and BEH] is politically motivated by Russia's desire to reanimate the South Stream project in light of current tensions between Russia and Turkey," says Dontchev.**

Indeed, there are enough indications that Bulgaria plans to bring Russian gas to its borders - just like Germany, which plans an expansion of the Nord Stream pipeline. Borissov prefers to call the project a "gas hub" instead of South Stream.

In another letter dated 30 December, Dontchev tells the Commission that the sudden cutoff is a clear-cut infringement of [Article 102 TFEU](#), and urges the EU's competition services to apply article 8 of [Regulation 1/2003](#).

Quiet divorce?

The issue of Gazprom leaving Overgas was discussed by Medvedev and Dontchev on 2 December, including the terms, the timetable and the mutual commitments.

Speaking to EurActiv, Dontchev said that the divorce with Gazprom has been "a question of efficiency".

"We are in a stage of separation. Gazprom has no interest in the distribution business," Dontchev said. He explained that under Bulgarian law, the company's board of directors

needed to convene four times a year. In fact, for the last six years, only five such meetings took place, and only three of them made decisions.

"It is impossible to work like that. We really need, every quarter, to update our investment programs, to decide new products for the market. But for six years we have been treading water," Dontchev said.

Shooting the cartoonist?

Commentators said that the whole scheme was aimed at stealing Dontchev's business, and wrecking [Sega](#), a critical newspaper, which he also owns. Borissov is reportedly unhappy with the newspaper's cartoonist, Cristo Komarnitski, who is highly appreciated by its readership, in particular for the sardonic ways in which he depicts the prime minister.

Borissov alluded to the newspaper's cartoons, arguing that the same people who tried to offend him with cartoons and critical articles came to ask for his help.

"The question is, why did they press us against the wall on the 31st [of December], at 8PM, to write contracts? Their cartoons and stories... I will refrain from commenting, it is not at my level. It was them who came to ask us to do this [make it up for the missing gas supplies]. It was them, not us," Borissov was quoted as saying.

This is not the first time that Overgas has been a pawn between Bulgarian leaders and Gazprom. In 2009, Russian media ITAR-TASS and Interfax announced that at the request of Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov, Overgas would be eliminated. Reportedly, as part of a package deal with the Bulgarian government, including the South Stream gas pipeline, Dontchev would be required to sell his shares to Gazprom and to stop financing Sega. Parvanov later denied having made such remarks.

This however did not happen, and in the meantime Overgas became stronger and stated selling gas to industrial clients at lower prices, which was regarded as a major offense by the monopolistic system in Bulgaria.

Ilyan Vassilev, a former Bulgarian ambassador to Russia, said that the current attacks on Overgas were part of a scenario to resuscitate South Stream via Bulgaria, as well as the oil pipeline Burgas-Alexandroupolis, aimed at transporting Russian oil bypassing the Bosphorus. After a local referendum in 2011, the Bulgarian government shelved the project.

According to Vassilev, who is persona non-grata in Russia, after being included in the Kremlin list mirroring the EU visa ban lists, Bulgaria has been in talks with Russia over the two big infrastructure projects since the autumn. He also said that for Russia, the real priority was the Burgas-Alexandroupolis pipeline.

On Tuesday morning (5 January), EurActiv submitted questions to Gazprom concerning its plans with Overgas. No answer was received by the time of the publication of this article. A Commission spokesperson told EurActiv that it had received "letters on the matter" and that it would look into the issues raised.