

---

# Turkey Sees No Need For 7th Nabucco Partner Now

By Orhan Coskun  
Reuters - 27/2/2008

---

The six-nation natural gas pipeline project Nabucco is "crowded enough" and there is no need at present to discuss a seventh partner, the head of Turkey's state gas pipeline company Botas said on Wednesday.

Gaz de France said earlier on Wednesday that it was still ready to join if the consortium behind the Nabucco pipeline, which is designed to help Europe diversify its gas imports away from Russia, backed its participation.

Turkey has blocked the involvement of Gaz de France because of the French National Assembly's approval of a bill making it a crime to deny that Armenians suffered a genocide at the hands of Ottoman Turks during World War I. The bill has not become law.

The participation of Germany's RWE, recently chosen as the sixth partner with Ankara's backing, has given impetus to the project, Botas chief Saltuk Duzyol told Reuters.

"I believe that we made a very good start. It is too early to talk about a seventh partner. We have just added a sixth partner... A structure with six partners is crowded enough in terms of management," he said in an interview.

Austria's OMV, Hungary's MOL, Bulgaria's Bulgargaz and Romania's Transgaz are the other partners in the project, which aims to carry natural gas from the Caspian basin via Turkey and the Balkans to central Europe.

Duzyol did not completely rule out a seventh partner.

"It is of course possible if all partners agree that a seventh partner will strengthen the project, but we have to make this decision together," he said and called on the European Union to play a more active policy on Nabucco.

PRICING Duzyol said there was not much difference between Turkey and EU countries over the pricing issue, adding that prices agreed would be completely cost-based.

"The priority goal is to have the gas that might be used in the pipeline as soon as possible. It is the gas of Azerbaijan," Duzyol said.

However, relying only on Azerbaijan will not be "feasible" and Turkey plans to involve other Caspian littoral states and other countries in the project.

"Iraq has important potential here. It should be supported and at a certain stage, Russian gas may also be used in the pipeline," he said.

Turkey sees no problems with using Russian gas in Nabucco, Duzyol added.

Duzyol said Turkey may also start purchasing gas from Egypt through swap deals, though Cairo has already signed contracts for eight billion cubic metres of its total 10 billion cubic metres gas.

"My prediction is that two billion cubic metres of gas will come to Turkey (from Egypt)", he said, adding that a gas pipeline between the two countries could start operating in the first quarter of 2009.

Botas will soon start a tender process for construction of the Egypt-Turkey gas pipeline's section in Turkey.

---