

January 14, 2019

**CAIRO DECLARATION ESTABLISHING
THE EAST MEDITERRANEAN GAS FORUM**

Upon the invitation of HE Mr. Tarek El Molla, the Egyptian Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, the Cypriot, Greek, Israeli, Italian, Jordanian and Palestinian Ministers of Energy convened in Cairo on 14 January 2019 to discuss establishing the East Mediterranean Gas Forum (EMGF).

The Ministers recognized that significant offshore gas discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean will have profound impact on the region's energy and economic development, and that new discoveries and exploitation of significant gas fields are of vital importance to the region's energy security.

They affirmed the necessity of cooperation, on the basis of international law, in the East Mediterranean between gas producers; including potential producers, buyers and transit countries in the region, to enable greater mutual understanding, and awareness of common energy challenges and interests among the East Mediterranean countries. They emphasized their commitments to set the stage for fruitful technical and economic cooperation with a view to efficiently exploit the gas potential of the region.

The Ministers also affirmed their commitment to foster cooperation and initiate a structured and systematic policy dialogue on natural gas, potentially leading to the development of a sustainable regional gas market that could unlock the full gas resource potential in the region. They also stressed the importance of encouraging adequate involvement and contribution of the gas industry and the private sector including investors, traders, financing entities and other stakeholders in this regard.

To this effect, the ministers declared their intentions to establish the *East Mediterranean Gas Forum (EMGF)* with a view to establish an international organization that will fully respect the rights of the Members over their natural resources, in accordance with international law, and will support their efforts to monetize their reserves, utilize their existing infrastructure, and build ones as necessary for the benefit and welfare of their people.

The Ministers directed their senior officials to commence talks on the EMGF structure with a view to agreeing on the details and reverting back to the Ministers with recommendations to discuss during their coming meeting by April 2019

The Ministers concurred that the *EMGF's* main objectives would include, *inter alia*, the following:

- a. Assist the creation of a regional gas market that benefits the members through security of supply and demand, optimized resource development and infrastructure cost, competitive pricing, and improved commercial relationships;
- b. Ensure security of supply and demand for the Members, optimize resource development, utilize efficiently existing and new infrastructure, ensure competitive pricing, and promote improved commercial relationships;
- c. Foster cooperation, by creating a structured and systematic dialogue on natural gas, including regional natural gas policies;
- d. Promote, on the basis of international law, a higher understanding of the interdependency and the potential benefits of cooperation through dialogue among its Members;
- e. Support producing countries, and countries with gas reserves in the region, in their efforts to monetize their existing and future reserves, through fostering cooperation among them, and with the transit and consuming countries in the region; utilizing the existing infrastructure and developing more infrastructure options to accommodate the existing and future discoveries.
- f. Help consumer countries in their endeavors to secure their needs, and together with the transit countries formulate the gas policies in the region, thereby enabling sustainable partnership among key players across the gas value chain.

- g. Ensure the environmental sustainability of gas exploration, production, transportation and infrastructure building, and promote gas integration with other energy resources, notably renewables, and in the power grid.

The Ministers confirmed that the EMGF will be based in Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt, and that any East Mediterranean country with gas reserves, a gas producer, consumer or transit country sharing the common interests and objectives of the *Forum* may join in the future after completing all the required membership procedures that will be agreed by the founders of the forum. They also declared that the *Forum* would be open for countries, or regional or international organizations as Observers, that it would promote outreach activities towards non-member countries, with a view, according to the circumstances, to foster dialogue, mutual understanding and reciprocal advantages. They also agreed that the private sector has a significant role within the EMGF, and would be invited to contribute to the Forum's activities and organizational bodies as part of a permanent *Gas Industry Advisory Group*.

The Ministers expressed their sincere gratitude to the government and the people of the Arab Republic of Egypt, for their warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the meeting.