PROBLEMS OF MUSLIM COUNTRIES

ANASTASIA OBUKHOVA. ENERGY SECURITY ISSUES OF THE PERSIAN GULF COUNTRIES (CASE OF IRAN)

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Abstract. The article examines the challenges, risks and threats to the energy security of Iran. Energy is a fundamental pillar in global geopolitics, and Iran is constantly facing challenges and threats to its national energy security. The author highlights that ensuring national energy security of the country requires efforts both from the relevant ministries and the armed forces. Iran's energy security is backed by the legislative framework, oil and natural gas reserves, and a developed pipeline network.

The longstanding isolation led to the lack of its own oil and gas technologies, which undermines Iran's energy security and disrupts the national energy balance. Electricity blackouts, as well as gas and fuel oil supply delays result in a decrease in national production. In order to improve the energy supply situation, the country needs underground gas storage facilities, technologies and investments. The author concludes that oil and gas cooperation with Russia as well as the transfer of Russian technologies could provide an impetus to resolving the issue of energy deficit in Iran.

Ensuring national energy security is among the primary state priorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI). Energy security is understood as the implementation of provisions enshrined in the country's laws for supplying consumers with fuel and electricity, the execution of international agreements, treaties, obligations, and contracts in the energy sector, and the protection of the population and infrastructure from relevant threats. The legal framework developed in Iran is designed to ensure an uninterrupted supply of electricity and fuel to the population and enterprises and to guarantee the supply of energy resources to international markets. The relevant documents outline the goals, principles, key directions, and tasks of ensuring energy security, formulate potential challenges, risks, and threats to national energy security, and explain the organizational basis for ensuring energy security.

In Iran, Article 45 of the 1979 Constitution prohibits foreign or private ownership of natural resources, and the state is the owner of all natural resources in the Islamic Republic. To manage national oil and gas resources, the Iranian Ministry of Petroleum was established in March 1980, which controls the activities of the Iranian National Oil Company (INOC). In terms of oil reserves, Iran ranks fourth in the world after Venezuela, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), and Canada, and in terms of oil production volume, it ranks fifth after the US, KSA, Russia, and Canada [1].

The vector of development for the Iranian oil and gas industry is determined by the Twenty-Year Comprehensive Strategic Development Plan of the IRI (the current one is in effect from 2005 to 2025), according to which Five-Year Economic Development Plans are formulated, containing points of the national economic strategy. The current Seventh Five-Year Plan has been in effect since March 2022 and contains forecasts for growth rates and investment volumes for key sectors of the Iranian economy. The work of Iran's oil and gas industry is regulated by the following legislative acts: a) the Petroleum Act of 1987 (as amended in 2011), which establishes ownership rights over petroleum resources; b) the Law on the Rights and Duties of the Ministry of Petroleum of the IRI of 2021 (of which INOC is a subsidiary); c) the Subsidiary Legislation on the Approval of Major Oil and Gas Contracts, adopted in 2017; d) the Gas Industry Development Law, adopted in 1972.

Iran has also developed a legal framework to attract foreign investments, foreign investors, and contractors, which includes: a) the Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Act (FIPPA) of 2002; b) the 2007 Guideline for the Implementation of Gas Pipeline Projects; c) the Iran Petroleum Contract (IPC), approved in 2016.