

The War on Lebanon and the Battle for Oil

By [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#)

Global Research, October 21, 2012

Global Research 26 July 2006

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Oil and Energy](#)

In-depth Report: [THE WAR ON LEBANON](#)

Author's Note

Recent developments in Syria and Lebanon point to military escalation, namely the evolution towards a broader regional war, which has been on the drawing board of the Pentagon since 2004.

The borders of Syria and Lebanon are surrounded. British and US troops are stationed in Jordan, The Turkish High Command in liaison with NATO is providing military support to the Free Syrian Army. Allied naval forces are deployed in the Eastern Mediterranean.

According to a recent report of the Israeli Intelligence News Service Debka:

*"US troops sent to the Jordan-Syria border are **helping build a headquarters in Jordan to bolster its military capabilities** in case violence spills over from Syria, suggesting **deepening US military intervention in the Syrian conflict.**"*

The deployment of allied troops on Syria's southern border is coordinated with actions taken by Turkey and its allies on Syria's Northern border.

Meanwhile, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu has demanded the support of NATO against Syria under the doctrine of collective security. "We will do what needs to be done if our border is violated again," he told reporters on October 13.

Foreign Minister Davutoglu pointed to the alleged violation of Turkey's border by Syria as a violation of NATO's borders. Under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, an attack on one member state of the Atlantic Alliance is considered as an attack against all NATO member states.

"In this context, we expect the support of our allies" said Foreign Minister Davutoglu, intimating that both Germany and other member states of the Atlantic Alliance should act to defend" Turkey under the doctrine of Collective Security:

"if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence ... will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area... (See full text of [Article 5 of the Washington Treaty](#), April 1949)

Moreover, the actions of Israel and Turkey are coordinated in the context of a 30 year old military alliance directed against Syria. Under this bilateral agreement Turkey and Israel agree "to cooperate in gathering intelligence" on Syria and Iran.

During the Clinton Administration, a triangular military alliance between the US, Israel and Turkey had unfolded. This “triple alliance”, which is overseen by the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, integrates and coordinates military command decisions between Washington, Ankara, Tel Aviv and NATO headquarters in Brussels pertaining to the broader Middle East.

The triple alliance is also coupled with a 2005 NATO-Israeli military cooperation agreement under which Israel has become a de facto member of the Atlantic alliance. These military cooperation ties with NATO are viewed by the Israeli military as a means to “enhance Israel’s deterrence capability regarding potential enemies threatening it, mainly Iran and Syria.”

The Latest Beirut Bomb

The bomb attack which devastated a Christian neighborhood in Beirut on October 19, resulted in 8 deaths and more than 80 wounding.

Within hours of the attack, the Western media as well as the US State Department intimated, without a shred of evidence, that Damascus was behind the bombings and the death of Lebanon’s internal security service, Brig. Gen. Wissam Al-Hassan.

Following these reports, the Syrian government was accused of have ordered the “political assassination” of Wissam Al Hassan, who is described as part of the “anti-Syrian” Saad Hariri faction. “They wanted to get him, and they got him, “ said Paul Salem a regional analyst with the Carnegie Middle East Center.”

While there is no evidence of the Syrian government’s involvement in this attack, several observers have pointed to the fact that the bombing on the Christian neighbourhood in Beirut bears a resemblance to those carried out by the “opposition” Free Syrian Army (SFA) in Syria’s Christian communities.

The October 19 Beirut bombing has the hallmarks of a false flag attack, a provocation intended to trigger sectarian warfare within Lebanon, as well as destabilize the March 8 coalition government which has the support of part of the Christian community.

The objective is to force the resignation of the March 8 coalition government.

On October 21, two days after the Beirut attack, Israel and the US initiated large scale war games which simulate “an Iranian, Syrian and/or Hizballah missile attack on Israel.”

US troops are now deployed in Israel and Jordan. British special forces have been dispatched to Jordan.

The 2006 War on Lebanon

The historical background of these recent events should be understood. In 2006, Lebanon was bombed by the Israeli Air Force. Israeli troops crossed the border and were repelled by Hezbollah forces.

The 2006 war on Lebanon was part of a carefully planned and coordinated military road map. The extension of the 2006 war on Lebanon into Syria had been contemplated by US and Israeli military planners.

This broader 2006 military agenda was intimately related to strategic oil and oil pipelines. It was supported by the Western oil giants which control the pipeline corridors.

One of the military objectives formulated in 2006 was to for Israeli to gain control over the Lebanese and Syrian Eastern Mediterranean coastline, namely to establish a coastal corridor extending from Northern Israel to Southern Turkey.

The following text written in 2006 at the height of the Lebanon 2006 war examines the geopolitics of energy and oil and gas pipeline corridors through Lebanon and Syria

Another important strategic objective for Israel is the control over offshore gas reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean, including those Gaza, Lebanon and Syria. These coastal gas reserves extend from Israel's border with Egyptian to the Turkish border.

Michel Chossudovsky, October 21, 2012

The War on Lebanon and the Battle for Oil

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Is there a relationship between the bombing of Lebanon and the inauguration of the World's largest strategic pipeline, which will channel more than a million barrels of oil a day to Western markets?

Virtually unnoticed, the inauguration of the Ceyhan-Tblisi-Baku (BTC) oil pipeline, which links the Caspian sea to the Eastern Mediterranean, took place on the 13th of July, at the very outset of the Israeli sponsored bombings of Lebanon.

One day before the Israeli air strikes, the main partners and shareholders of the BTC pipeline project, including several heads of State and oil company executives were in attendance at the port of Ceyhan. They were then rushed off for an inauguration reception in Istanbul, hosted by Turkey's President Ahmet Necdet Sezer in the plush surroundings of the Çýrađan Palace.

Also in attendance was [British Petroleum's \(BP\) CEO, Lord Browne](#) together with senior government officials from Britain, the US and Israel. BP leads the BTC pipeline consortium. Other major Western shareholders include Chevron, Conoco-Phillips, France's Total and Italy's ENI. (see Annex)

Israel's Minister of Energy and Infrastructure Binyamin Ben-Eliezer was present at the venue together with a delegation of top Israeli oil officials.

The BTC pipeline totally bypasses the territory of the Russian Federation. It transits through the former Soviet republics of Azerbaijan and Georgia, both of which have become US "protectorates", firmly integrated into a military alliance with the US and NATO. Moreover, both Azerbaijan and Georgia have longstanding military cooperation agreements with Israel.

Israel has a stake in the Azeri oil fields, from which it imports some twenty percent of its oil. The opening of the pipeline will substantially enhance Israeli oil imports from the Caspian sea basin.

But there is another dimension which directly relates to the war on Lebanon. Whereas Russia has been weakened, Israel is slated to play a major strategic role in “protecting” the Eastern Mediterranean transport and pipeline corridors out of Ceyhan.

Militarization of the Eastern Mediterranean

The bombing of Lebanon is part of a carefully planned and coordinated military road map. The extension of the war into Syria and Iran has already been contemplated by US and Israeli military planners. This broader military agenda is intimately related to strategic oil and oil pipelines. It is supported by the Western oil giants which control the pipeline corridors. In the context of the war on Lebanon, it seeks Israeli territorial control over the East Mediterranean coastline.

In this context, the BTC pipeline dominated by British Petroleum, has dramatically changed the geopolitics of the Eastern Mediterranean, which is now linked , through an energy corridor, to the Caspian sea basin:

“[The BTC pipeline] considerably changes the status of the region’s countries and cements a new pro-West alliance. Having taken the pipeline to the Mediterranean, Washington has practically set up a new bloc with Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey and Israel, ” (Komerzant, Moscow, 14 July 2006)

Israel is now part of the Anglo-American military axis, which serves the interests of the Western oil giants in the Middle East and Central Asia.

While the official reports state that the BTC pipeline will “channel oil to Western markets”, what is rarely acknowledged is that part of the oil from the Caspian sea would be directly channeled towards Israel. In this regard, an underwater Israeli-Turkish pipeline project has been envisaged which would link Ceyhan to the Israeli port of Ashkelon and from there through Israel’s main pipeline system, to the Red Sea.

The objective of Israel is not only to acquire Caspian sea oil for its own consumption needs but also to play a key role in re-exporting Caspian sea oil back to the Asian markets through the Red Sea port of Eilat. The strategic implications of this re-routing of Caspian sea oil are farreaching.

What is envisaged is to link the BTC pipeline to the [Trans-Israel Eilat-Ashkelon pipeline](#), also known as Israel’s Tipline, from Ceyhan to the Israeli port of Ashkelon. In April 2006, Israel and Turkey announced plans for four underwater pipelines, which would bypass Syrian and Lebanese territory.

“Turkey and Israel are negotiating the construction of a multi-million-dollar energy and water project that will transport water, electricity, natural gas and oil by pipelines to Israel, with the oil to be sent onward from Israel to the Far East,

The new Turkish-Israeli proposal under discussion would see the transfer of

water, electricity, natural gas and oil to Israel via four underwater pipelines.

<http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1145961328841&pagename=JPost%2FJPostArticle%2FShowFull>

“Baku oil can be transported to Ashkelon via this new pipeline and to India and the Far East.[via the Red sea]”

“Ceyhan and the Mediterranean port of Ashkelon are situated only 400 km apart. Oil can be transported to the city in tankers or via specially constructed under-water pipeline. From Ashkelon the oil can be pumped through already existing pipeline to the port of Eilat at the Red Sea; and from there it can be transported to India and other Asian countries in tankers. (**REGNUM**)

Water for Israel

Also involved in this project is a pipeline to bring water to Israel, pumping water from upstream resources of the Tigris and Euphrates river system in Anatolia. This has been a long-run strategic objective of Israel to the detriment of Syria and Iraq. Israel’s agenda with regard to water is supported by the military cooperation agreement between Tel Aviv and Ankara.

The Strategic Re-routing of Central Asian Oil

Diverting Central Asian oil and gas to the Eastern Mediterranean (under Israeli military protection), for re-export back to Asia, serves to undermine the inter-Asian energy market, which is based on the development of direct pipeline corridors linking Central Asia and Russia to South Asia, China and the Far East.

Ultimately, this design is intended to weaken Russia’s role in Central Asia and cut off China from Central Asian oil resources. It is also intended to isolate Iran.

Meanwhile, Israel has emerged as a new powerful player in the global energy market.

Russia’s Military Presence in the Middle East

Meanwhile, Moscow has responded to the US-Israeli-Turkish design to militarize the East Mediterranean coastline with plans to establish a Russian naval base in the Syrian port of Tartus:

“Defense Ministry sources point out that a naval base in Tartus will enable Russia to solidify its positions in the Middle East and ensure security of Syria. Moscow intends to deploy an air defense system around the base – to provide air cover for the base itself and a substantial part of Syrian territory. (S-300PMU-2 Favorit systems will not be turned over to the Syrians. They will be manned and serviced by Russian personnel.)

(Kommerzant, 2 June 2006)

[Tartus](#) is strategically located within 30 km. of the Lebanese border.

Moreover, Moscow and Damascus have reached an agreement on the modernization of Syria's air defenses as well as a program in support to its ground forces, the modernization of its MIG-29 fighters as well as its submarines. ([Kommerzant, 2 June 2006](#)). In the context of an escalating conflict, these developments have farreaching implications.

War and Oil Pipelines

Prior to the bombing of Lebanon, Israel and Turkey had announced the underwater pipeline routes, which bypassed Syria and Lebanon. These underwater pipeline routes do not overtly encroach on the territorial sovereignty of Lebanon and Syria.

On the other hand, the development of alternative land based corridors (for oil and water) through Lebanon and Syria would require Israeli-Turkish territorial control over the Eastern Mediterranean coastline through Lebanon and Syria.

The implementation of a land-based corridor, as opposed to the underwater pipeline project, would require the militarisation of the East Mediterranean coastline, extending from the port of Ceyhan across Syria and Lebanon to the Lebanese-Israeli border.

Is this not one of the hidden objectives of the war on Lebanon? Open up a space which enables Israel to control a vast territory extending from the Lebanese border through Syria to Turkey.

It is worth noting that the US War Academy had already contemplated the formation of a "Greater Lebanon" which would extend along the coastline from Israel to Turkey. In this scenario, the entire Syrian coastline would be annexed to an Anglo-American Israeli protectorate.(See Map of The New Middle East below).

Israeli Prime minister Ehud Olmert has stated that the Israeli offensive against Lebanon would "last a very long time". Meanwhile, the US has speeded up weapons shipments to Israel.

There are strategic objectives underlying the "Long War" which are tied to oil and oil pipelines.

The air campaign against Lebanon is inextricably related to US-Israeli strategic objectives in the broader Middle East including Syria and Iran. In recent developments, Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice stated that the main purpose of her mission to the Middle East was not to push for a ceasefire in Lebanon, but rather to isolate Syria and Iran. (Daily Telegraph, 22 July 2006)

At this particular juncture, the replenishing of Israeli stockpiles of US produced WMDs points to an escalation of the war both within and beyond the borders of Lebanon.

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Related article on Lebanon:

[“Triple Alliance”: The US, Turkey, Israel and the War on Lebanon](#), by Michel Chossudovsky - 2006-08-06

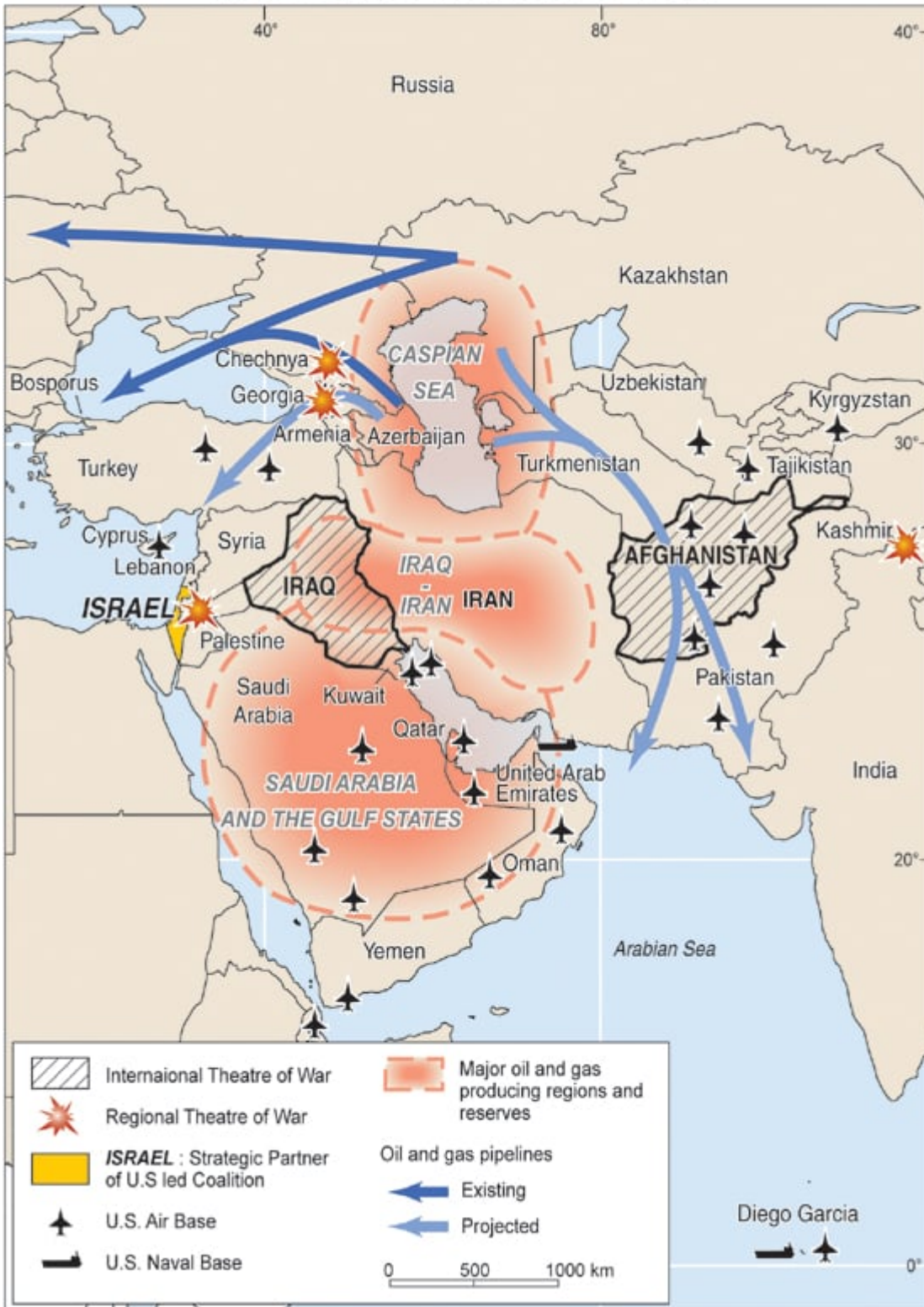
Revised, 28 July 2006.

Annex

The BTC Co. shareholders are: BP (30.1%); AzBTC (25.00%); Chevron (8.90%); Statoil (8.71%); TPAO (6.53%); Eni (5.00%); Total (5.00%), Itochu (3.40%); INPEX (2.50%), ConocoPhillips (2.50%) and Amerada Hess (2.36%). (source BP)



MIDDLE EAST THEATRE OF WAR



© Map by Eric Waddell, Global Research, 2003. [\(click to enlarge\)](#)

MAP OF THE NEW MIDDLE EAST



[Map: click to enlarge](#)

Note: The following map was prepared by Lieutenant-Colonel Ralph Peters. It was published in the Armed Forces Journal in June 2006, Peters is a retired colonel of the U.S. National War Academy. (Map Copyright Lieutenant-Colonel Ralph Peters 2006).

Although the map does not officially reflect Pentagon doctrine, it has been used in a training program at NATO's Defense College for senior military officers. This map, as well as other similar maps, has most probably been used at the National War Academy as well as in military planning circles.

For details on th Campaign against the pipeline see http://www.bakuceyhan.org.uk/more_info/bp_pipeline.htm

See related articles:

[The Militarisation of the Eastern Mediterranean: Israel's Stake in the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline](#)

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[Is Israel running out of Bombs? New Deliveries of WMD "Made in America"](#) The Replenishing of Israeli WMD stockpiles points to escalation both within and beyond the borders of Lebanon, by Michel Chossudovsky

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