

Geopolitics and Energy Cooperation in Northeast Asia: Perspectives from the UA and Northeast Asia

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- ❖ **Competition is likely to increase insecurity in the region and could lead to more serious instability.**
- ❖ **Regional cooperation is required to maximize the resources that exist in Northeast Asia, and to provide a better basis for policy planning on the supply of cost-effective, stable and cleaner energy for the region.**



 Because resources reservations exist only in some of the member countries, regional cooperation in this area has been regarded as quite sensitive issue.

 In fact, regional energy cooperation is widely expected not only to improve energy security but also to provide momentum for stronger economic cooperation and enhanced political stability in Northeast Asia.

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- ✦ **An intergovernmental framework for energy cooperation in Northeast Asia would be the first step towards addressing a number of the challenges.**
 - ✦ **Although there is growing consensus that an intergovernmental institution is essential for regional energy projects, there is still reluctance**
 - **Tradition of bilateral arrangements in the region**
 - **Concern about a multilateral approach could act as a constraint on the energy policy options and national interest of individual countries.**

Different interests

China

- It appears that the Chinese government prefers bilateral arrangements, and is doubtful that a regional intergovernmental mechanism is really necessary to improve the country's energy security, in view of the size and rapid growth of Chinese energy market.
- However, if it looks likely that the costs of staying outside a multilateral framework will exceed the benefits of doing so, Chinese policy makers are likely to make a pragmatic decision to join the mechanism.

Different interests

DPRK

- **The DPRK has much to gain from regional energy cooperation, as multilateral financing and technical assistance would help solve its present energy supply and distribution constraints.**
- **A regional institutional framework for energy cooperation would provide a reliable basis for the DPRK to improve its energy security.**

Different interests

Japan

- **Despite being active in regional cooperation with ASEAN countries, Japan seems reluctant to establish multilateral relations with Northeast Asia.**
- **Japan is likely to opt for bilateral cooperation with Russia, at least as long as it does not have diplomatic relations with the DPRK.**

Different interests

Mongolia

- **The Mongolian government is very supportive of regional economic cooperation because of the country's landlocked situation.**
- **Mongolia also has potential for the development of energy resources, and would benefit from investment, infrastructure development and accelerated economic growth.**

Different interests

ROK

- **The ROK government is also very supportive of regional economic cooperation.**
- **However, without a border with Russia, the ROK depends on energy cooperation with its neighbors in order to take part in any pipeline or electricity transmission projects.**

Different interests

Russia

- **Regional energy cooperation in Northeast Asia would enable Russia to accelerate the economic and social development of East Siberia and the Russian Far East, in particular, and to diversify its energy export markets.**
- **On the other hand, it is often assumed that competition between importers of Russian energy would benefit Russia more than a cooperative framework. However, with minimal coordination among the consumers could also benefit Russia, in the sense that it would enable Russia to create win-win partnerships with both strategically and commercially important neighbors, and to spread risk.**

Different interests

USA

- *Regional NEA energy cooperation can be the reason of the decrease of American influences in the region.*
- *When USA try to secure Russian energy resources, energy cooperation with Mongolia and DPR Korea is not essential for USA.*
- *How much NEA energy cooperation is important for USA? Is it essential for USA?*

Different interests

USA

- *It is not easy for USA to cooperate with DPR Korea as member countries of an intergovernmental framework for energy cooperation in this region.*
- *USA, possibly Japan also, may concern about Chinese success in the regional cooperation, especially in energy cooperation.*

Different interests

- ✦ Even though all the member countries have overall common sense on the multilateral cooperation framework, individual countries may have its own different perspectives.
- ✦ Geopolitical impediments in particular are not easy to resolve. And these are not energy stories.
- ✦ Under the this kind of situation, it may take long time to build an intergovernmental framework for energy cooperation in NEA region accommodating all the countries in the region, as well as international organizations, and all the interested countries.

Different interests

- ✦ Therefore we should try to find the way to harmonize different perspectives on NEA energy cooperation. Otherwise, we should try to find the way to decouple NEA energy cooperation from complicated geopolitics in the region. This is the times to invite intelligence and wisdom.
- ✦ Obvious one is that all the decisions regarding participation to the mechanism is totally devoted to the individual countries.
- ✦ But current mechanism should do its best to share information and opportunities with non-member countries and recommended to invite all the parties concerned to every meeting and conference organized by the mechanism.

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Thank you very much.