

Energy, Security, Mediterranean

Multilateral cooperation as a development tool.

An Interview with Nouredine Boutarfa, CEO of the Algerian Sonelgaz and President of Med-Tso

Mediterranean region is characterized since years by a strong political agitation on the southern shore and by a sensible economical crisis in the northern one. Energetic politics and infrastructures can contribute to grant **security and development in the Mediterranean, and so its social and economical development** very substantially. So argues **Nouredine Boutarfa**, CEO of the Algerian Sonelgaz and President of **Med-Tso**, the Association among the transmission systems operators from 18 Mediterranean countries: pretty much the entire basin.

Could you explain why Energy might have such a significant role?

“Today, for the first time, Energy world has to face radically changes in such short time. Real challenges, dictated by the technological evolution and by the ongoing geopolitical, economical and social changes.

From a technological and market point of view, changes deal with the role of fossil fuel (not only for the new opportunities offered by the gas sector evolution), the growing penetration of not-controllable renewable energies (such as sun and wind), the innovation in transport systems and in the sector of electricity, the need to reduce pollution and environmental impacts, the new climate needs and more over.

It's a very revolution. And the Mediterranean is in the **middle** of it, in a moment of true economical and social turmoil which awake hope and raise concerns at the same time.

There is an only way to make these hopes get real: to collaborate all together **to build common solutions which can grant more security and more development**. Well, in this moment, energetic sector offers the best opportunities, because, in any case, it imposes to involve in a common process all the ongoing evolution factors. We have always to remember that energy is the first world economy resource, the essential element to grant adequate development and wellness levels, but also culture and individual and social freedom”

So, the real problem is to orient the evolution through common interest instead of particular interests, such as national or industrial. It's not an easy thing! Especially in a moment in which contrapositions seem to prevail.

“And in this very moment it's important to work, focusing on the several opportunities that still are presents and that are particularly relevant for the electricity sector.

For example: since several years the consumes of the northern shore of the Mediterranean are decreasing, while they're in strong increase in the Countries on the southern shore. This changing of scenario has already had an impact on the criteria of planning and development of electric systems, and it confirms the need of shared regional energetic policies, founded on security, flexibility and efficiency. But, in order to make them effective, it needs to share also large interconnection infrastructures among the Countries, so as to integrate the energetic systems and sharing the resources. With this goal in 2012 Mediterranean Transmission System Operators ([Med-Tso](#)) was born, associating system operators from 17 Countries, basically the principal of the entire Mediterranean basin”

Are we mostly talking about electricity grid?

“We are talking about everything, because the electricity is the finest form of energy, the more flexible and the cleaner one for the consumers. The realization of basic infrastructures as the electricity ones, involves all energetic markets, so, indeed, it grants a more equal and shared access to all kind of primary resources, creates development and employment, improves life quality. In few words, indeed, wellness and security”

