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Ankara challenging Cyprus' energy exploration doesn't stand up to international scrutiny

Turkey's EEZ bluff



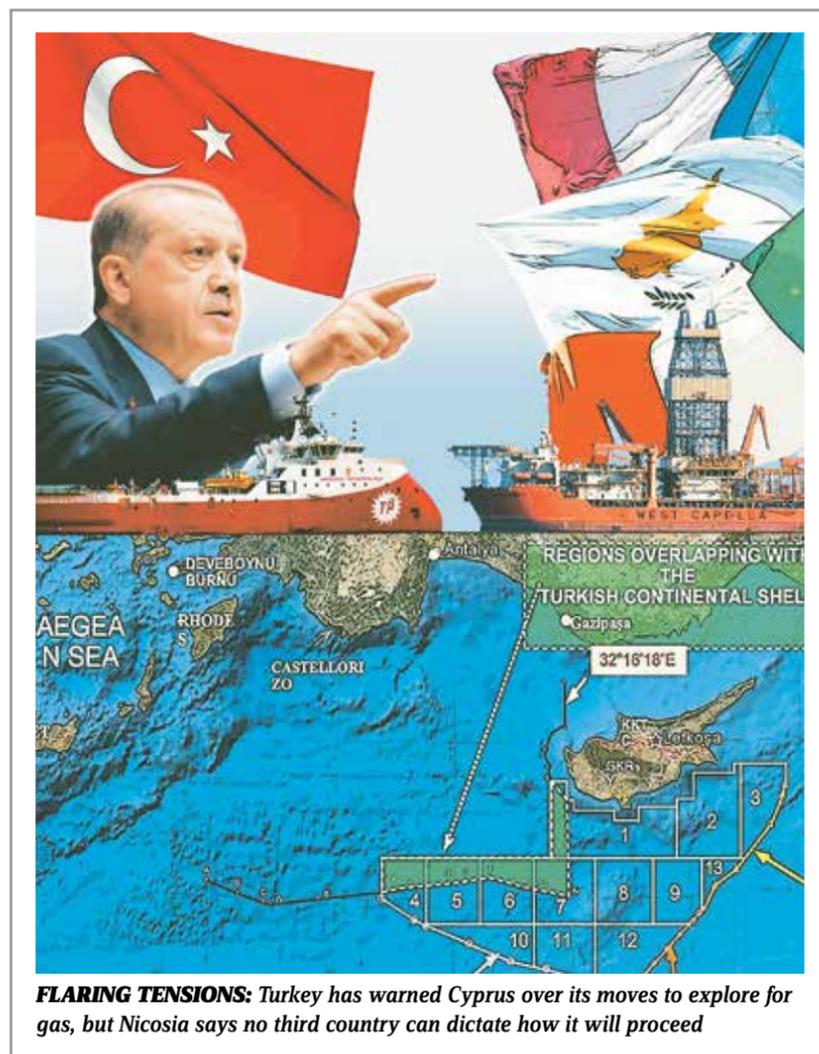
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◆ Nicosia will have to confront these contradictory positions

◆ Turkish PM says Cyprus energy moves are 'untimely and dangerous'



FLARING TENSIONS: Turkey has warned Cyprus over its moves to explore for gas, but Nicosia says no third country can dictate how it will proceed

Turkey is doing everything it can to disrupt the government's oil and gas exploration with flawed logic on its legal right to do so.

Experts say that Turkey's arguments are nonsensical as it wants to have its cake and eat it.

Ankara is raising tensions over the island's gas exploration whilst trying to mount a legal argument to dissuade major oil companies from taking part.

Turkey may not have ratified the United Nations law of the seas (UNCLOS), but is still bound by its laws, say experts.

Cyprus declaration of its EEZ and delimitation agreements with neighbouring countries is in accordance with UNCLOS and internationally recognised.

Most international lawyers consider UNCLOS provisions on maritime boundaries and undersea resources as part of customary international law.

Thus, they are binding on all states whether they have acceded to UNCLOS or not.

Turkey has concluded continental shelf and EEZ boundary agreements with Bulgaria and Ukraine, utilising UNCLOS principles.

"In effect, these reinforce the relevance of UNCLOS to Turkey. It cannot choose to apply it preferentially," said energy expert Charles Ellinas.

He said sooner rather than later, Cyprus will have to confront these contradictory positions and possibly go to international court arbitration. >6-7

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