

Egypt Shuts Gas Pipeline to Israel

Contributed by Tom McGregor
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Egypt is terminating its contract to supply natural gas to Israel, which ends a joint venture that has been a cornerstone of the peace process between neighboring states.

The Kansas City Star reports that, "Ampal, an Israeli partner in the East Mediterranean Gas (EMG) joint venture that operated the pipeline between the two countries, announced Sunday night that Egyptian suppliers notified EMG that they were terminating the gas supply. A spokesman for EMG could not be reached, and the company would not confirm that it had ended its contract."

Finance Minister Yuval Steinitz of Israel expressed "great worry" about news of the Egyptian termination. His office explained the cancellation would set a "dangerous precedent that darkens the peace treaties and the atmosphere of peace between Israel and Egypt."

According to the Kansas City Star, "an Israeli official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said it would be the "final bit that breaks the camel's back in the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt."

He added, "the peace deal between us and Egypt has been on very shaky ground and now the final earthquake has happened. It appears the new Egyptian government is giving all the signals that is no longer interested in the partnership and agreements it has established with Israel. Even though Israel and Egypt would like to keep peace on a military level, their governments may not let them. I'm not saying it will come to blows soon, but it is clear that Israel can no longer lean and rely on Egypt in a significant way."

To read the entire article from the Kansas City Star, link here:Mcgregor@chinadaily.com.cn