



Report: Suleiman to Tackle Petroleum File during Greece Visit

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President Michel Suleiman is scheduled to travel to Greece on December 6 and 7 on an official visit where he will meet with his counterpart Karolos Papoulias, reported al-Liwaa newspaper on Saturday.

It said that the talks are set to focus on the petroleum file due to Greece's relations with Cyprus, its located on the Mediterranean, and connection to the Exclusive Economic Zone.

Suleiman is expected to present Lebanon's concerns over the file ahead of Cypriot President Demetris Christofias' upcoming visit to Lebanon in early 2013.

He was initially set to travel to Lebanon at the end of December, but the trip was delayed for undisclosed reasons.

Lebanon and Israel are bickering over a zone that consists of about 854 square kilometers and suspected energy reserves there could generate billions of dollars.

The cabinet approved in September the proposed borders of Lebanon's Exclusive Economic Zone in the Mediterranean.

In early November, the cabinet approved the appointment of the six members of the petroleum authority and in June, Lebanon was able to restore 530 square kilometers of a maritime zone that it considers it to be within its zone.

Media reports said that the United States and the United Nations acknowledged Lebanon's rights to control the 530 square kilometer disputed area after prolonged diplomatic and political efforts.

Lebanon has been slow to exploit its maritime resources compared with other eastern Mediterranean countries. Israel, Cyprus and Turkey are all much more advanced in drilling for oil and gas.