



The “Energy Security” Concept and Definition

Energy is an essential element of economic growth and environmental sustainability, as the seventh goal of the Sustainable Development Goals is to “Ensure that everyone receives reliable and sustainable energy services at affordable costs.” In addition, energy resources are of utmost importance in shaping the features of the geopolitical scene, and have extremely significant impacts on the international relations; since it still is a source of regional crises and wars. It is not possible to imagine the continued prosperity of industrialized countries without ensuring access to various energy

resources, hence the concept of “energy security” has become part of the approaches to international security, international relations, and soft power strategy for the countries keen to improve their public diplomacy.

The concept of “energy security” is one of the pillars of the security concepts that began to take shape and take its place within the different variables appeared post-Cold War era. The concept of “energy security” became like those marks constituting the content of national security and the foreign policies of countries. The increasing demand for oil and gas resources from developed and

developing countries has led to the urgency of including “energy security” in national, regional and international security Systems. The foreign policy strategies of several countries deal currently with issues of energy security, development of energy infrastructure, and the formation of a common energy system as major geopolitical factors. Some researchers even went on to assert that the concept of “energy security » emerged as a result of conflict and competitive relations between countries that lead to realizing the importance of securing the country’s energy needs.



In light of the above-mentioned, and in line with the emphasis on the importance of “energy security” concept at all national, regional and international levels because of its political and developmental dimensions that affect the interests of most countries around the world, the International Agency for Energy Security, which is based in the United States of America, established on 09/06/2022 by launching its research arm, “Saif Bin Helal Center for Studies and Research in Energy Sciences”, to

study risks and opportunities in “Energy Security” on the national, regional and international levels through scientific research and analysis, so that energy becomes one of the tools of international cooperation and its soft power instead of being a tool of conflict by emphasizing the principle of mutual interdependence between countries that export energy and countries that import and consume it; and to be a means of achieving progress and comprehensive development.



One of the problematic issues raised by the concept of “energy security” is how to define the concept. Despite the huge number of studies on the concept of “Energy Security,” there is still a deficiency in the approach, as the focus is on only one aspect, the economic or technical aspect and nothing else.

On the other hand, we find that international organizations have given different definitions of the concept, and there are also definitions put forward by countries, and here we find that the concept of Energy Security is interpreted differently by groups of energy-importing and energy-exporting countries. Thus, the concept differs based on the scope of interests of both groups. Each country has its own perception for energy; where governments choose the concept of energy security that justifies their policy.

Here, we must know what is meant by the concept of “energy security” from the international organizations’ perspective on the one hand, and the countries’ definition of “Energy Security” on the other hand. In fact, there is no specific definition, as the definitions are multiple, **however it can be stated as follows:**

The International Energy Agency defines the concept of “energy security” as the continuous and uninterrupted availability of energy sources.

It means: preserving the safety of various energy sources, ensuring the safety of production sources, and ensure the delivery of energy products to their users.

We at the International Agency for Energy Security define the concept of energy security as: preserving the safety of various energy sources, ensuring the safety of production sources, and ensure the delivery of energy products to their users.

Based on these definitions, we find a difference in the concept of long-term energy security as a means of energy supply in economic development and environmental requirements, and short-term energy security as a way to enable the current energy system to respond immediately to sudden changes in the balance between supply and demand. It is worth noting that energy security in the short and long term requires a diverse and comprehensive set of initiatives and compatible policies to meet market objectives and ensure a safe path to providing energy sources.

We find that the United Nations defines energy security as: the state in which energy supplies are available all the time, in different forms, in sufficient quantities, and at appropriate and reasonable prices. Thus, energy security issues fluctuate between abundant supplies at all times and at appropriate prices, and this concept is a traditional concept that serves the interests of energy consumers in favor of its producers.





While the European Commission identified four main pillars on which European energy security is based:

- Working to diversify energy sources, which would reduce dependency on a particular resource or country.
- Managing the application item by introducing different concepts related to the principle of energy usage and with the aim of reducing energy consumption as much as possible.
- Strong management and control of external supply by entering into strong partnerships with the main countries, on which the European Union depends to secure its oil and gas requirements.
- Working to avoid crises in the energy market, through the conviction that achieving security of supply necessarily requires markets to be strongly regulated and not affected by crises as much as possible.

As for countries, energy security occupies a prominent place in the foreign policy priorities, especially for energy importing countries. We find in a statement made by former US President George W. Bush in March 2001 saying: Energy security should constitute a priority in American foreign policy. Senior officials in industrialized countries such as the European Union, Russia, and China have adopted the same opinion, focusing on the importance of energy issues and the extent to which the availability of its sources affects the foreign policy of countries; for energy resources are often a fundamental determinant in the foreign policy orientations of countries, especially when it comes to exporting countries, and since energy resources are a fundamental cause of the conflicts and wars that humanity has known.





The general concept of American energy security is: working to reduce dependence on energy resources that are imported from outside the United States of America, through promotions of different types of locally produced fuels, such as ethanol, and working to reduce risks and high prices through the diversity of suppliers. The United States of America aims to rely on biological alternatives for alternative energy of fossil fuels, one of the most important components of American national security.

The Russian energy security concept is based on: the principle of achieving security of demand, high prices, long-term and sustainable commitments and supplies, safe access to global markets, especially to the European continent without obstruction from transit countries, working to extend energy and gas pipelines to the heart of the European Union, as well as strongly working on creating a balance in Russian energy markets to prevent the Russian bear from being tied to a single market.

The Chinese energy security concept is based on the necessity of securing energy imports through moving on both the internal and external paths with the aim of diversifying supplies and achieving energy security.

By analyzing and understanding these previous concepts about energy security, and the difference in their concept from one country to another, it is possible to formulate an appropriate definition of energy security concept, which is (the availability of the required quantities in global markets at appropriate, stable and sustainable prices, with the necessity of working to develop the available energy sources, through technology, search for new sources that meet the growing need for energy is a must, in addition to rationalizing energy usage and providing appropriate guarantees to preserve the environment.

In fact, "energy security" brings together many variables and factors, including economic, political, security, and environmental, strategic...etc., thus raising a number of geostrategic challenges at all internal, regional and international levels, which is in line with the new concept of energy security, including the environmental, security and political scopes, in addition to economic aspects. This is what the Saif Bin Helal Center for Studies and Research in Energy Sciences will do during the next stage.