LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE - ECONOMIE (TUNISIA) · TUNISIA · OFFSHORE

# IACE urges Tunisia to become energy platform hub

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The Institute of Arab Managers and Executives (IACE) has called on Tunisia to reposition itself from a transit country into a value-creating energy platform, structured around four strategic pillars: energy transition, international partnerships, industrial development, and governance reform.

The recommendation, issued by IACE, reflects growing concern that Tunisia is not capturing sufficient economic value from its geographic and infrastructural position in the Mediterranean energy corridor. Rather than serving primarily as a conduit for energy flows originating elsewhere, the institute argues Tunisia should anchor itself as an active hub where energy is processed, managed, and exported with greater domestic value addition.

The four-pillar framework proposed by IACE addresses both the structural and institutional dimensions of this shift. The energy transition pillar signals an expectation that Tunisia align its ambitions with regional and global decarbonisation trends, potentially incorporating renewables alongside its existing hydrocarbons base. The partnerships pillar points toward attracting foreign investment and deepening bilateral or multilateral energy cooperation agreements. The industry pillar focuses on building domestic capacity — refining, processing, and services — that would retain economic benefit within Tunisia rather than exporting raw flows. Governance reform, the fourth pillar, is presented as an enabling condition for the other three, underscoring persistent concerns about regulatory clarity and institutional efficiency in the Tunisian energy sector.

Tunisia's offshore sector has seen declining output in recent years, and the country has struggled to attract the volume of upstream investment needed to reverse production trends. Against this backdrop, the IACE platform concept represents a strategic pivot — acknowledging that domestic reserve replacement alone may not be sufficient, and that Tunisia's value proposition to international energy partners must broaden beyond exploration acreage.

The call also arrives as regional energy dynamics are shifting, with North Africa drawing increased attention as a supplier and transit zone for European gas security following disruptions elsewhere. Tunisia's existing pipeline infrastructure and Mediterranean coastline position it as a credible candidate for a more active platform role, provided the governance and investment climate reforms advocated by IACE are implemented. The institute has not, based on this announcement, specified a timeline or legislative roadmap for the transition, leaving the proposal at the level of strategic advocacy rather than enacted policy.

### Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

This is a policy advocacy statement — no contracts, tenders, or block awards have been announced. Norwegian service companies should monitor Tunisia's regulatory and licensing environment closely, particularly any follow-on government response that translates the IACE framework into concrete upstream or infrastructure procurement. Relationship-building with Tunisian energy ministry contacts and NOC counterparts is the appropriate near-term step.

#### PARTNER ANGLES

- **Subsea/FPSO:** Monitor whether the platform-country strategy prompts offshore licensing rounds that could require subsea installation or floating production assets in Tunisian waters.
- **Pipeline:** A platform-hub model centred on transit infrastructure could generate pipeline expansion or interconnection tenders if governance reforms materialise.
- **Drilling:** Reversal of Tunisia's upstream investment decline would require new drilling campaigns; track any licensing round announcements that follow IACE's governance reform recommendations.

- **LNG:** If Tunisia pursues LNG import or export infrastructure as part of its transition pillar, early engagement with energy ministry planners would position suppliers ahead of formal tender stages.
- **Service:** An industry-pillar focus on domestic capacity-building may create demand for technical training, well-services partnerships, and local-content programme design.

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