



Energy storage for resilience azerbaijan

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Azerbaijan's hosting of COP-29 offers a unique chance to unite countries around common challenges--particularly the balance between fossil fuel reliance and green energy investments--while pushing for a global agenda rooted in sustainability and resilience.

A challenging path lies ahead, yet Azerbaijan's strategic and geopolitical position makes it uniquely suited to bridge critical divides at COP-29. Three key aspects of Azerbaijan's location underscore its significance: first, its role as a geopolitical bridge linking the South Caucasus with both East and West, facilitating diverse climate diplomacy; second, its evolving position as a leader in the global energy transition; and third, the environmental and cultural landscape of the Caspian Basin, offering a localized case study in adaptation and sustainable practices.

By holding COP-29 in a region so strategically connected to energy flows, Azerbaijan's location provides an opportunity to encourage cooperative and inclusive climate resilience and adaptation strategies. In a time of instability, Azerbaijan's role as a bridge between the EU, Central Asia, and the Middle East makes it a critical player for building new alliances and mitigating regional energy dependencies, setting a precedent for future climate negotiations in geopolitically sensitive regions.

For instance, the country's first large solar power plant, Garadagh (230 MW), is being developed with Masdar, while the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) have jointly loaned \$114 million (out of the \$262 million needed for the project). Similarly, the Absheron and Khizi wind generation plants, developed with ACWA Power, benefit from a \$167 million EBRD loan (out of the total project cost of \$348 million).

These projects underscore Azerbaijan's commitment to becoming a regional leader in renewable energy, as well as its potential to anchor a larger energy transition across Europe and Central Asia.

Statements and views expressed in this commentary are solely those of the author and do not imply endorsement by Harvard University, the Harvard Kennedy School, or the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs.

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