

## Europe's Gas Grab

Behind the closed doors of company boardrooms and government offices the Euro-Caspian Mega Pipeline is being planned and promoted. This huge piece of infrastructure would carry gas over 4,000 kilometres from the Caspian Sea to Southern Italy. And the pipeline plans don't end there. Pressure is building to also suck gas across the Caspian from Turkmenistan, and from Iraq and Iran. This would create a significant resource grab as Central Asian and Middle Eastern gas fields would be locked directly into the European grid.

The Euro-Caspian Mega Pipeline would give corporations and politicians further control over our energy and lives, and threaten both human rights and the environment from the Caspian to Central Europe.

Europe's gas grab is being created by politicians like President Jose Barroso. He is one of the European politicians driving the gas grab. Barroso recently gave Azerbaijan's fossil fuel dictator Ilham Aliyev a warm welcome in Brussels and praised the "progress" the country had made on human rights and democracy – ignoring the series of fraudulent elections, violent policing of protests and many political arrests. In the same meeting, Aliyev promised Europe two trillion cubic meters of gas to be delivered via the Euro-Caspian Mega Pipeline. Azerbaijani citizens have spent years calling on European politicians to support their struggle for democracy, but Europe is more interested in securing the gas grab.

## The UK's Gas Grab

To feed its new generation of gas-fired power stations, the UK is not just relying on extreme energy techniques like fracking, but also intends to increase gas imports. This policy means the UK government is befriending the autocrat Ilham Aliyev instead of supporting the Azeri people. The UK government is heavily lobbied by groups closely associated with the Aliyev regime – like The European Azerbaijan Society (TEAS).

TEAS provides secretarial support to the Azerbaijan All Party Parliamentary Group, framing the issues discussed and ensuring that human rights and democracy are not mentioned. The previous chair of the APPG, MP Mark Field, was recruited as a member of the TEAS advisory board in 2011, and paid £6,000 a year for the role. Current APPG chair Christopher Pincher has been taken on two all-expenses paid trips to Azerbaijan - which cost at least £6,575, and attempted to silence UK Parliamentary criticism of the repression. Revenues from oil and gas, which should belong to the citizens of Azerbaijan, are buying the silence of UK MPs.

## BP's Gas Grab

The close relationship between the UK and the Azeri regime is particularly important for British company BP – the largest international oil company operating in the region. People like Al Cook, Vice President of the Caspian Shah Deniz gas field, play a crucial role in ensuring the money from Azerbaijani gas flows straight to the accounts of international oil companies and the corrupt Azeri elite.



# EUROPE'S GAS GRAB

**“It's big – 56 inches wide! Why is it 56 inches? Because that's as big as we can possible make it. It's that big because of our confidence”**

Al Cook, BP Vice President, talking about the size of his Euro-Caspian Mega Pipeline

**“The Euro-Caspian Mega Pipeline is big. It would lock Europe into fossil fuels for at least the next 35 years and put over a billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere by 2048. But people all along the route are talking about this gigantic infrastructure. This pipeline may be big but our resistance can be bigger!”**

Goksen Sahin, Climate Activist, Turkey

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Design by Sara Nilsson  
Illustration by India Harvey and Richard Hougueuz

# The Dash For Gas

## Caspian Plaza, Baku, Azerbaijan

In central Baku investigative journalist Khadija Ismayilova is finishing her daily broadcast on Radio Liberty. As a critic of Azerbaijan's dictator Ilham Aliyev she is barred from the state media and is currently under threat of imprisonment after she refused to pay a fine for participating in a peaceful demonstration. If she is imprisoned she will join over 80 other political prisoners. Aliyev's repressive regime is funded by fossil fuels - the Euro-Caspian Mega Pipeline is an important part of his plans for holding onto power. If it's built, it will suck gas from Azerbaijan to Italy, and in return the Aliyev elite will make billions while Azeri citizens are left with crumbling infrastructure and unaffordable healthcare.

## Çalabas, Ardahan Province, Turkey

Bulldozers could soon arrive at the village of Çalabas. Surveyors have already appeared and are measuring plots of land. Ten years ago, this village on the Ardahan Plateau faced major disruption when the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline was built here. Diggers tore up grazing land and the rural area became a temporary industrial zone. A flawed compensation process and lack of jobs meant the people of Çalabas didn't benefit. Local activist Ferhat Kaya spoke out about it and was arrested and tortured by the Jandarma paramilitary police. Plans for the Euro-Caspian Mega Pipeline threaten the people of Çalabas once again.

## Somers Town Community Centre, Kings Cross, London, UK

At the annual general meeting of the Greater London Pensioners Association, Ewa Jasiewicz, one of the No Dash For Gas activists, watches as Betty Cottingham reads out a motion condemning the death of thousands of people every year from fuel poverty, while energy companies continue to make enormous profits. The pensioners' motion identifies increased gas consumption as a cause of both soaring heating bills and climate change. The government's plan to build new gas-fired power stations fuelled by increased gas imports and domestic fracking is a direct threat to staying warm in winter. Instead the pensioners argue for properly insulated homes and democratically controlled renewable energy systems. The motion is passed unanimously.

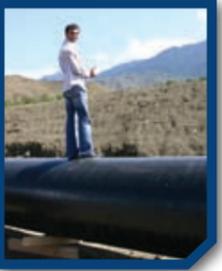
**Tweet:**  
@ChrisPincher and @MarkFieldMP → tell them to stop taking money from the pro-regime European Azerbaijan Society and not to put fossil fuels before human rights.

<http://platformlondon.org/TEAS>

“ The Euro-Caspian Mega Pipeline will serve the interests of oil and gas multinationals and financial markets. It has nothing to do with access to energy for European citizens. This pipeline is one of the gas mega-projects that communities in Italy are opposing as a threat to their way of life, and to economic activities that are based on agriculture, tourism and fisheries along the beautiful coast of Puglia. // Elena Gerebizza, Italy ”



“ Living along the route of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline I saw what the free movement of oil and gas meant for the people of Turkey: environmental destruction, loss of livelihoods and heavy repression along the militarised route. I was arrested and tortured for speaking out against the BTC pipeline. If the Euro-Caspian Mega Pipeline goes ahead, people living along it will experience the same repression. // Ferhat Kaya, Turkey ”



“ Just like fracking, the Euro-Caspian Mega Pipeline is a part of the UK government's dash for gas. It will raise fuel bills in the UK, crash carbon targets and prevent us reaching the clean community controlled energy we need to avoid climate disaster and have affordable energy to live. // Ewa Jasiewicz, UK ”



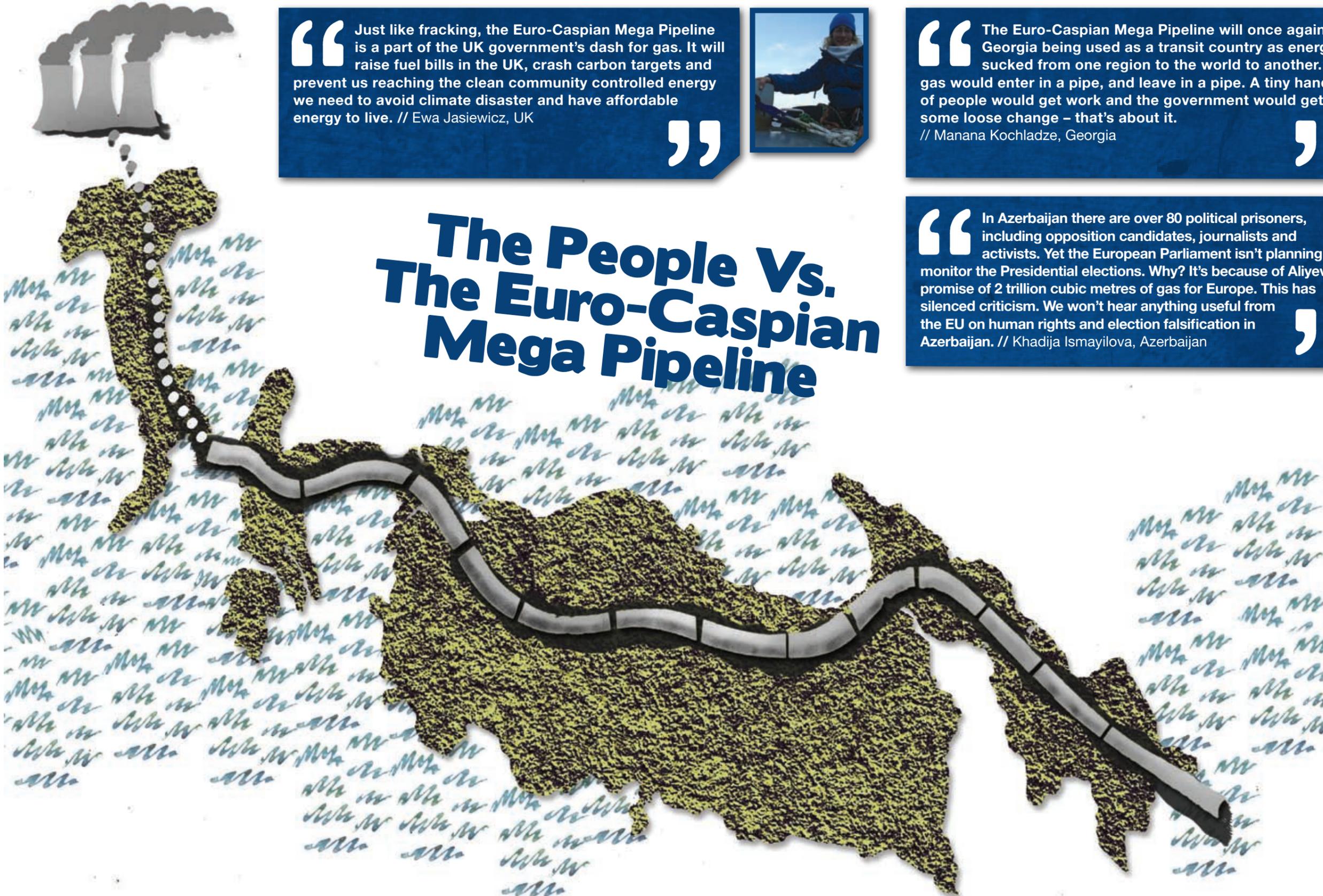
“ The Euro-Caspian Mega Pipeline will once again see Georgia being used as a transit country as energy is sucked from one region to the world to another. The gas would enter in a pipe, and leave in a pipe. A tiny handful of people would get work and the government would get some loose change – that's about it. // Manana Kochladze, Georgia ”



“ In Azerbaijan there are over 80 political prisoners, including opposition candidates, journalists and activists. Yet the European Parliament isn't planning to monitor the Presidential elections. Why? It's because of Aliyev's promise of 2 trillion cubic metres of gas for Europe. This has silenced criticism. We won't hear anything useful from the EU on human rights and election falsification in Azerbaijan. // Khadija Ismayilova, Azerbaijan ”



# The People Vs. The Euro-Caspian Mega Pipeline



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