

IADC Briefing Book

Operations in Politically Unstable Countries



Supplying the world's energy needs is a huge task and one that is not undertaken lightly by the world's energy companies. Oil and gas exploration has continued for decades in established regions of the world. However, a growing world population and its larger energy needs demands that the industry look beyond long-established regions for exploration, drilling and production. In recent years, operations in countries considered to be "volatile" or "unstable" have received attention for potentially offering a dangerous environment for workers. Dangers of pursuing work in these countries include politically difficult environments, general civil unrest, local populations unsupportive of outside companies drilling activities, terrorist actions and militant activism.

Key Messages

- Supplying the world's energy needs is a huge task and one that the world's energy companies take very seriously. Drilling and oil and gas exploration has continued for decades in the established regions of the world such as the North Sea, US Gulf of Mexico and the Middle East, among others. As the world population grows, so too does the need for abundant, reliable and affordable energy. By necessity, the oil and gas industry has looked beyond established and recognized basins to meet these increasing demands for energy.
- There is oftentimes a focus on the political environment in countries perceived to be unstable. But equally as troublesome and less talked about are issues related to infrastructure – like access to roads or reliable utilities, which make operations in these countries difficult.
- Worthwhile to note that legislation and regulation vary country to country. Specifically in geographies deemed politically unstable, working with local governments can present a challenge where no precedent for drilling operations currently exist.
- IADC member companies take every precaution to ensure that there is no risk to their workers safety and that they are highly trained to work in politically unstable countries. They also work collaboratively with host countries to ensure operations follow all local legislation and regulations regarding drilling activity.
- IADC member companies have crisis plans in place to deal with unexpected situations that may arise. These crisis plans include contingencies for evacuating workers and securing the equipment and the drill site.

Resource

1. Journal of Energy Security: Protecting Offshore Oil and Gas Installations: Security Threats and Countervailing Measures:
http://ensec.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=453:protecting-offshore-oil-and-gas-installations-security-threats-and-countervailing-measures&catid=137:issue-content&Itemid=422

