

Middle East crisis shows Ghana needs to diversify energy sources – Energy expert

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By [Ghana News](#)



Lawyer and energy expert Lom-Nuku Ahlijah has called for urgent diversification of Ghana's energy mix, warning that the country's heavy dependence on oil leaves it vulnerable to global price shocks.

His remarks come amid escalating military exchanges involving Israel, Iran, and the United States, which have heightened fears of a broader regional conflict. The situation has already disrupted global energy markets, with the Strait of Hormuz a critical artery for international oil transit, reportedly shut, raising concerns over supply shortages and price volatility.

The developments have triggered an emergency cabinet meeting in Ghana, as authorities assess the potential economic fallout and consider policy responses.

Speaking on the issue on JoyNews' AM Show on Monday, April 6, Mr Ahlijah stressed that Ghana's continued reliance on imported fuel leaves it highly exposed to external shocks.

Ghana must significantly diversify its energy sector, he said, explaining that reliance on imported fuel inevitably exposes the country to global market dynamics.

He noted that countries such as China and several European nations are making substantial investments in renewable energy, a path he believes Ghana must urgently follow.

"For example, now, countries like China and many global, or even European, countries are moving significantly to renewable energy," he explained.

According to him, Ghana is well-positioned to take advantage of solar energy due to its abundant sunlight, and greater investment in this area could transform both the power and transport sectors.

“One of the inputs we have in Ghana, which we are blessed with, is that sun. Investments in renewable energy are important,” he said.

“If you have significant investment in renewable energy, like solar, you can drive change in terms of electric vehicles, electric buses, and so on, so that you are powering them by other sources.”

Mr Ahlijah also highlighted the country’s long-standing plans to incorporate nuclear energy into its generation mix, noting that progress must be accelerated.

“Ghana, for instance, we’ve been on a journey since 2007 to include nuclear energy in our generation mix,” he stated.

He warned that Ghana’s current energy structure remains overly dependent on thermal power, which is closely tied to fossil fuels and global oil prices.

“Today, we have a situation where your power sector is about 70 percent thermal,” he said.

“Thermal meaning they are relying on fossil fuels, which essentially is oil and oil-related things... which means that so long as it’s volatile, we are exposed.”

Beyond renewables and nuclear, he pointed to untapped hydroelectric potential as another avenue for diversification.

“We have other hydroelectric sources that we have not used, apart from Akosombo and Kpong dams. The Energy Commission has done studies. They know other water bodies that are ripe and possibly available for investments in hydro, obviously, but that means that you are reducing your dependence on thermal,” he explained.

While acknowledging ongoing solar initiatives by the Volta River Authority and Bui Power Authority, he described them as insufficient.

“I know, for example, VRA is currently doing some solar, but it is negligible. Bui Power also... it is negligible. We need to increase other sources of fuel that power electricity and transportation,” he said.

He cautioned that without decisive action, Ghana will remain vulnerable to external shocks, particularly as long as thermal power dominates and the transport sector relies heavily on petrol and diesel.

Meanwhile, he noted that some members of OPEC have agreed to increase production from 1 May in an attempt to stabilise global prices. However, he warned that such measures offer only temporary relief.

“There can even be new conflicts tomorrow, which will affect oil and gas as well. So it’s one of those things where it doesn’t matter,” he said.

Mr Ahlijah urged policymakers to look beyond short-term measures such as fuel levies and taxes and instead prioritise long-term structural reforms in the energy sector.

Finally, on the domestic policy front, Lom-Nuku Ahlijah emphasised the need for long-term solutions:

“The outcome of the cabinet meeting is important. We’re likely to get feedback on what the government is proposing. But the conversation should not focus entirely on levies and taxes. As a matter of priority, we must diversify our energy sector,” he concluded.