

**NOBLE ENERGY ANNOUNCES SIGNIFICANT NATURAL GAS
DISCOVERY AT TAMAR WELL OFFSHORE ISRAEL**

HOUSTON (January 17, 2009) -- Noble Energy, Inc. (NYSE: **NBL**) announced today a natural gas discovery at the Tamar prospect in the Matan license, offshore Israel. The Tamar #1 well, located in approximately 5,500 feet of water, was drilled to a total depth of 16,076 feet to test a subsalt, lower-Miocene structure in the Levantine basin. Formation logs identified more than 460 feet of net pay in three high-quality reservoirs. The thickness and quality of the reservoirs encountered were greater than anticipated at the well location.

Charles D. Davidson, Noble Energy's Chairman, President and CEO, said, "Tamar represents our first exploratory well offshore Israel in more than five years, and we are extremely excited by the results. This is one of the most significant prospects that we have ever tested and appears to be the largest discovery in the company's history. Early indications are that the resources identified are very substantial, at least equal to our pre-drill estimated gross mean resources of over three trillion cubic feet. Subject to the collection of additional data, the resource estimate for Tamar could further increase. This discovery continues to highlight the potential of our global programs and further demonstrates the significant value generated from our best-in-class exploration efforts."

"We were also very pleased with the drilling operations of this well, despite the uncertain conditions that exist when drilling in a highly under-explored area, with the nearest well control over 60 miles away," Davidson added.

Production testing at Tamar will be performed after the well is completed. Noble Energy and its partners may keep the rig to drill up to two additional wells in the basin. Pending positive test results, one well could be an appraisal at Tamar. In addition, the partners are considering drilling a second subsalt, lower Miocene prospect.

Noble Energy operates the well with a 36 percent working interest. Other interest owners in the well are Isramco Negev 2 with 28.75 percent, Delek Drilling with 15.625 percent, Avner Oil Exploration with 15.625 percent and Dor Gas Exploration with the remaining four percent.

Noble Energy is a leading independent energy company engaged in worldwide oil and gas exploration and production. The Company operates primarily in the Rocky Mountains, Mid-Continent, and deepwater Gulf of Mexico areas in the United States, with key international operations offshore Israel, UK and West Africa. Noble Energy is listed on the New York Stock Exchange and is traded under the ticker symbol NBL. Visit Noble Energy online at www.nobleenergyinc.com.

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The United States Securities and Exchange Commission permits oil and gas companies, in their filings with the SEC, to disclose only proved reserves that a company has demonstrated by actual production or conclusive formation tests to be economically and legally producible under existing economic and operating conditions. We use certain terms in this news release, such as "resources," that the SEC's guidelines strictly prohibit us from including in filings with the SEC. Investors are urged to consider closely the disclosures and risk factors in our Forms 10-K and 10-Q, File No. 1-07964, available from Noble Energy's offices or website, <http://www.nobleenergyinc.com>. These forms can also be obtained from the SEC by calling 1-800-SEC-0330.

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