

At Arm's Length: Soviet-Syrian Relations in the Gorbachev Era

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Though the impact of the Soviet Union's "new thinking" has been less dramatic in the Middle East than in other regions of Third World conflict, its effects are nonetheless beginning to be felt. An important development in this regard has been signs of decreasing Soviet support for Syria, the Arab state most opposed to a political settlement with Israel and the one best equipped to obstruct such a solution.

In this Policy Paper, John Hannah examines the developing shift in Soviet-Syrian relations. He provides; a broad analysis of the sources of Gorbachev's "new thinking" and its relevance for the Middle East; a description of the growing political strains between Moscow and Damascus arising from their diverging policies; an examination of the changes and continuities in Soviet-Syrian military ties; an evaluation of Gorbachev's approach to relations with Syria; and a discussion of the significance of the shifts in the Soviet-Syrian relationship and their implications for U.S. policy.

- **38 pages**

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