

The Soviet Union and Mideast Diplomacy

by [Dennis Ross \(/experts/dennis-ross\)](#)

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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In-Depth Reports

This premier issue of Policy Focus focuses on the Soviet role in Mideast diplomacy.

As the U.S.-USSR summit approaches, the Middle East has suddenly appeared on the agenda. For the first time, the Reagan Administration must deal with the unpleasant prospect of recreating a Soviet role in the Mideast peace process through an international conference.

This premier issue of Policy Focus focuses on the Soviet role in Mideast diplomacy. Addressing that topic is Dennis Ross, executive director of the Berkeley-Stanford Program on Soviet International Behavior, and Harvey Sicherman, consultant to the Secretary of the Navy and former special assistant to Secretary of State Alexander Haig. Articles on the past record of Soviet and Syrian involvement in the peace process have been prepared by the Institute's research staff.

The overall conclusion is clear -- the only constructive Soviet role is one of benign approval from the sidelines. It is highly unlikely, however, that the Soviet Union will consent to play such a role. In that case, Secretary Shultz recently expressed it best: "The way to go in the Middle East is not a big conference but direct negotiations between Israel and Israel's neighbors."



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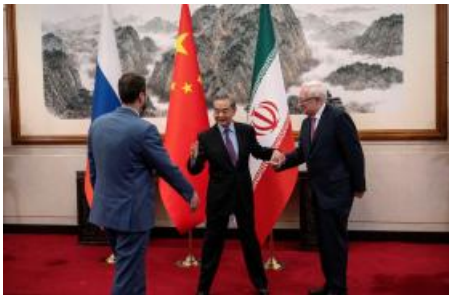
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Michael Eisenstadt,
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Richard Nephew

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