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# Is Russia Trying to Play Kingmaker in Lebanon?

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Anna Borshchevskaya is a senior fellow at The Washington Institute, focusing on Russia's policy toward the Middle East.



Articles & Testimony

**To expand its strategic influence on the Mediterranean, Moscow is exploiting Beirut and Hezbollah's crisis at a time when the West seems uncertain about how much to intervene.**

In the backdrop of Russian police rounding up the country's own politicians and journalists at a peaceful conference, it seems only fitting that Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov welcomed a Hezbollah delegation in Moscow. After all, Hezbollah has its own distinguished history of harassing and killing opposition journalists. Unlike Western states, the Kremlin does not consider the Iran-backed and Lebanon-based Hezbollah a terrorist organization. Lebanon is important to Vladimir Putin's aims to expand Russian influence in the Middle East. The country is now in the midst of its worst economic and political crisis in decades and experts note that Hezbollah is losing popular support. Is Moscow now trying to play kingmaker in Lebanon by using Hezbollah?...

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