

# The Evolution of Russian Strategy Toward Israel: From Non-Recognition to Pragmatic Engagement

by [Anna Borshchevskaya \(/experts/anna-borshchevskaya\)](/experts/anna-borshchevskaya)

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



[Anna Borshchevskaya \(/experts/anna-borshchevskaya\)](/experts/anna-borshchevskaya)

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



Articles & Testimony

**An in-depth look at how the two countries developed such a complex strategic relationship, and why Ukraine may present them with the most serious bilateral test of the Putin era.**

**T**he following is an abstract of an article originally published by the Institute for National Security Studies. To read the full text, download the PDF above or [visit the INSS website](https://strategicassessment.inss.org.il/en/articles/the-evolution-of-russian-strategy-toward-israel-from-non-recognition-to-pragmatic-engagement/)

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Offering an overview of the last thirty years of Russia-Israel relations, this article focuses on the Kremlin's strategies, tactics, and interests toward Israel, as well as points of friction between the two states, especially under Vladimir Putin. The author first reviews Russia's approach to the Middle East in the 1990s as an extension of its overall domestic and foreign policies. It then turns to Putin's personal outreach to Israel, with the further expansion of economic, cultural, political, and other ties, alongside his simultaneous and pragmatic rehabilitation of Stalinism. Finally, the article discusses how the Syria intervention affected the power dynamic and interests of both Russia and Israel, and how the Ukraine invasion may further transform the relationship.

*Anna Borshchevskaya is a senior fellow in The Washington Institute's Diane and Guilford Glazer Foundation Program on Great Power Competition and the Middle East.* ❖

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