

# Russia's Strategy Toward Post-Assad Syria

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

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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

Anna Borshchevskaya is the Harold Grinspoon Senior Fellow at The Washington Institute, focusing on Russia's policy toward the Middle East.



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**To keep Moscow from simply reestablishing control in Syria, Washington needs to employ a carrot and stick approach with Damascus, facilitate Ukrainian commercial opportunities in the region, and tackle Russia's so-called "ghost fleet," among other initiatives.**

**T**he following is an excerpt from prepared remarks submitted to the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa. To read the full testimony, download the PDF on this page.

Chairman Lawler, Ranking Member Cherfilus-McCormick, honorable members, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. With the fall of Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad, the United States has a once in a generation opportunity to reshape the balance of power in the Middle East. His fall opens a window, but it will not stay open for long. Syria is an integral part of great power competition. It is in the best interests of the United States to ensure Russia does not reestablish a foothold in Syria, because what happens in Syria historically does not stay in Syria. The East Mediterranean is vital to Russia. That's why the goal of control there is a consistent and centuries-old goal for Russia. It will long outlast Vladimir Putin. My testimony focuses on three key issues of vital importance to the United States... ❖

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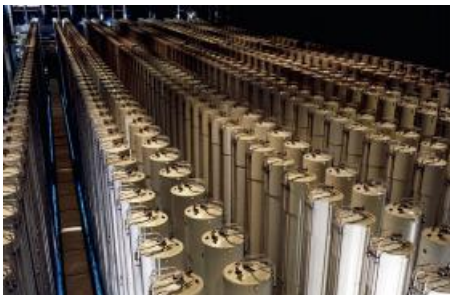
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