

Securing Syria's Transformation by Diminishing Russia's Influence

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Russia has been quietly reconsolidating its military patronage, energy ties, and future business prospects in Syria for more than a year, but Washington has multiple options for countering Moscow's long game.

The following is an excerpt from testimony submitted to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (aka the U.S. Helsinki Commission). To read the full testimony, download the PDF on this page.

Chairman Wicker, Co-Chairman Wilson, honorable members, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. As a daughter of Jewish refuseniks, this is a special honor for me. For many families like mine living in Moscow and dealing with the weight of antisemitism, the United States was a beacon of hope that shone even through the Iron Curtain. So it's a special privilege to speak with you today as you continue elevating the importance of human rights and fundamental freedoms on the world stage. I'm here to underscore why it is so important to get Syria right. First, it's been over a year since the fall of Moscow-backed dictator Bashar al-Assad ushered in a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reshape the balance of power in the Middle East in favor of the United States. Russia's position in Syria temporarily weakened with the fall of Assad. But this brief window may now be closing; Assad's fall was not the turning point for Russian influence in Syria many in the West thought it might be. Failure to realize that will harm U.S. strategic interests... ❖

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