

Russia, the Iran War, and the Middle East

by [Keith Kellogg \(/experts/keith-kellogg\)](#), [Anna Borshchevskaya \(/experts/anna-borshchevskaya\)](#), [Matthew Tavares \(/experts/matthew-tavares\)](#)

July 9, 2026, starting at 12:00 noon EDT (1600 GMT)

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



[Keith Kellogg \(/experts/keith-kellogg\)](#)

Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Joseph “Keith” Kellogg has served Senior National Security Advisor and Assistant to President Trump, National Security Advisor to Vice President Pence, and Special Presidential Envoy for Ukraine.



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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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Matt Tavares is a former analyst for the Pentagon, focusing on Russian military strategy and U.S. foreign policy.



Brief Analysis

Join us for an expert conversation exploring how the Iran war will change Russia's ambitions in the Middle East. Featuring Keith Kellogg, Anna Borshchevskaya, and Matt Tavares. Watch live starting at 12:00 noon EDT (1600 GMT) on Thursday, July 9, 2026.

What does the Iran war mean for Russia's ambitions in the Middle East? Some argue that the changed regional landscape may foretell further Russian withdrawal, particularly as Moscow's losses mount from its invasion of Ukraine. Other analysts argue that Russia's longstanding ties to Tehran, oil windfall from the Iran war, and commercial ventures with other regional states leave it well-positioned for a resurgence in the Middle East, especially if the Ukraine war pauses.

What will the Iran war mean for great power competition in the Middle East? How will the U.S.-Iran memorandum of understanding and other recent developments shape Moscow's policies in the region going forward? Will Ukraine's escalating attacks tie the Kremlin down, limiting what it can do in the Middle East? And on the military front, what has Moscow learned about how America fights? To discuss these and other questions, The Washington Institute is pleased to announce a virtual Policy Forum with Keith Kellogg, Anna Borshchevskaya, and Matt Tavares, to be moderated by veteran journalist and author Christian Caryl.

Lt. Gen. (Ret.) **Joseph "Keith" Kellogg** is a highly decorated U.S. Army officer who served until December 2025 as Special Presidential Envoy for Ukraine. Previously, he served in the first Trump administration as Senior National Security Advisor and Assistant to the President, as well as National Security Advisor to Vice President Pence.

Anna Borshchevskaya is the Harold Grinspoon Senior Fellow in The Washington Institute's [Diane and Guilford Glazer Foundation Program on Great Power Competition and the Middle East](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/about/research-programs/guilford-glazer-program-great-power-competition-and-middle-east) (<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/about/research-programs/guilford-glazer-program-great-power-competition-and-middle-east>), focusing on Russia's policy toward the region. Her publications include the 2026 report [After Ukraine: Prospects for a Russian Resurgence in the Middle East](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/after-ukraine-prospects-russian-resurgence-middle-east) (<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/after-ukraine-prospects-russian-resurgence-middle-east>), coauthored with Matt Tavares.

Matt Tavares is a former Defense Department official with two decades of experience in U.S. national security affairs. His current private-sector work focuses on emerging technologies and the evolving nature of armed conflict.

Christian Caryl is a columnist with *Foreign Policy*, a contributing editor with the *National Interest*, and author of *Strange Rebels: 1979 and the Birth of the 21st Century* (<https://www.amazon.com/Strange-Rebels-1979-Birth-Century/dp/0465065678>). Previously, he worked as an editor in the opinions section of the *Washington Post* (2017-23) and as a foreign correspondent.

The Policy Forum series is made possible through the generosity of the Winkler Lowy Foundation. ❖

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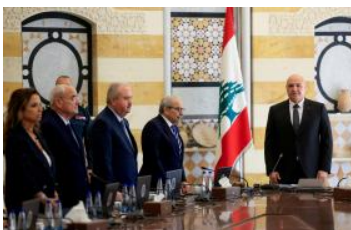
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