

The Russian Way of War in Syria: Threat Perception and Approaches to Counterterrorism

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Articles & Testimony

Putin's Russia and the West have never shared the same goals or threat perceptions regarding terrorism and other regional issues, so Washington should craft its Syria policy accordingly.

The following is an excerpt from a chapter originally published in the Foreign Policy Research Institute compilation *Russia's War in Syria: Assessing Russian Military Capabilities and Lessons Learned*. *To read more, download the PDF or visit the FPRI website (<https://www.fpri.org/article/2020/09/about-the-book-russia-war-syria/>).*

Putin's Syria intervention shows that Russia's way of war is evolving to adapt to new realities, while the fundamental values that underpin the reasons for the war in the first place remain largely unchanged. Whether Russia itself became more secure as a result of the Syria intervention is debatable. As mentioned earlier, 2010 saw the highest number of terrorist attacks in Russia, five years before the Syria intervention. Russia also experienced two major terrorist attacks after the intervention—the downing of the Metrojet in November 2015 after it took off from Sharm al Sheikh and the April 2017 St. Petersburg metro bombing. More to the point, the root cause of Russia's terrorism problem remains internal. As liberal opposition leader Ilya Yashin has written, “No single politician or government agency can guarantee today that the Islamic state which [Ramzan] Kadyrov has created in Chechnya will not be transformed over time into another ISIS”... ❖

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