

Russia in the Middle East Motives, Consequences, Prospects

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Since becoming president in 2000, Vladimir Putin has reinvigorated Russia's Middle East ties, a trend underscored by his bold military intervention in the Syria crisis. Through these and other regional moves, he has sought to gain ground at the West's expense while bolstering the Kremlin's legitimacy against domestic pressures -- an approach echoing the Soviet-era strategy of developing relations with U.S. foes and friends alike, including Iran, Israel, and Jordan.

In this new Policy Focus, Anna Borshchevskaya guides readers through Moscow's recent engagement with the Middle East, discussing the Syria deployment, the Turkey shutdown crisis, and other key developments. An assertive U.S. response to Putin's provocations, she concludes, is essential not only to promoting regional stability, but also to empowering moderate forces on the Russian home front.

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