

## US-RUSSIA CONFLICT IN MIDDLE EAST

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### Abstract

The study concentrated on the key areas of Russian influence which Russia sought to safeguard against American hegemony and attempted to pinpoint the areas in which the United States and Russia contended in the Middle East and the Arab world. System analysis in international relations was utilized in this study since it is pertinent to the subject. The primary subject the study seeks to address is, "What are the internal and external variables that directly promote Russia's increasing position in the global system?" The study came to the conclusion that Russia was able to retain its zones of influence without the help of American hegemony because of its reforming efforts.

**Keywords:** US, Russia, Middle East, Rivalry

### 2. INTRODUCTION

The basic argument behind Russia's foreign policy is that the Middle East's geostrategic position prevents the World Order from developing independently of the region. Russia views the Middle East as a key region for maintaining the balance of power. Maintaining the proper pace of peace and stability, Russia strives to avoid directly interfering in the internal affairs of those nations via its Middle East policy. In an effort to get the maximum reputation and respect, this is done. In actuality, Russia wanted to protect its spheres of influence against invasion. In opposition to the US domination over the Middle East, especially the Arab area, by developing closer ties with nations like Iran, it fights the US by enlarging its spheres of influence in the Middle East. Russia started upholding the ideas of non-intervention and the fight against terrorism after the upheavals of the Arab Spring. Adopting such a policy is a strategy for regaining its active duties alongside the American presence, as well as for gaining support and legitimacy to keep its place in vital sectors [1].

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The research by Andrej Kreutz looks at the objectives and plans that the former Soviet Union and Russia had

for the vast majority of the Arab Middle Eastern nations. Before the fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, the author claims that Russia had been a prominent player in the area for more than a century and had made efforts to reassert its influence in a number of nations[2]. Kreutz claims that Moscow has no desire to wage war against the US or other nearby Western countries. Due to its proximity to its borders, Russia is particularly concerned in ensuring peace and stability in the region. In addition to wanting to see a just and reasonable resolution to the Arab-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli conflicts that takes into account the interests of both the Arabs and the Palestinians, Moscow wants to see improved ties with Israel. In his research for a significant position in the globe, Mohammed Majdan focused on Russia's proactive role in crisis management and containment As Russia supports a multi-polar world, it also rejects the domination of one pole [3]. The study focused on Putin's substantial role in the development of Russia's internal political structure and his initiatives to develop a foreign strategy that would enable Russia to regain its preeminence. Russian Policies towards the Middle East is the title of a study by Ahmed Saied. Saied examined the nation's overall foreign policy, which updated the objective of creating a safe world order based on international law as well as the Russian position in the region. He also emphasized Russia's involvement in other regional issues including the Syrian war and Iran's nuclear programme.

In his research, Nourhan Alsheikh examined several problems in the Arab area and emphasized Vladimir Putin's accomplishment in creating a strategy that allowed him to get Russia out of the instability and upheaval it was experiencing [4].

Karim Mufti argued in an analytical research that attention should be paid to the rise of strong regional

actors like China and Russia. He also emphasized the geopolitical goals behind Russia's steadfast return to the Middle East, and he illustrated its stance on the Iranian nuclear problem and the Syrian conflict

#### 4. FOREIGN POLICY OF RUSSIA

Russia has a prestigious place on the global stage. Its powerful military capabilities and strategic position have greatly impacted its economic standing, which is shown by its advancements in technology and science. Since 2000, Putin's reforming measures have allowed Russia to firmly re-enter the world political scene and grow into a significant player in shaping international affairs. These strategies have enabled Russia to successfully overcome all of its challenges, including the threat of disintegration and secessionist movements. Particularly in the age of globalization and technical advancement, Russia was allowed to adopt stances in world affairs that benefited its objectives [6]. Putin was able to implement a policy that intended to increase the authority of the central state, increase its strategic skills and influence on political and economic institutions. He also embraced a strategic strategy to make the most of the nation's resources, notably its oil and gas, in an effort to revitalize the Russian economy and improve the standard of living for its population. Russian foreign policy, which progressively restored Russian prestige in an effort to increase security, directly mirrored this [7].

- The following are the major characteristics of Russian foreign policy:
- The effort to reverse unilateral polarity and start the multi-polarity trend.
- Encouragement of democratic practices has been the main goal of improvements to the nation's foreign policy and the tactics used to support and strengthen democracies.
- Join the Commonwealth of Independent States in dialogue.

In order to combat terrorism and keep an eye on the proliferation of WMD, President Putin emphasized Russia's dogged pursuit of constructive collaboration. This goal would be reflected in measures to prevent political conflicts from occurring, which would harm the goals of the new Russian policy. President Putin emphasized once more that in order to set the rules of

the game, powerful countries could not exclude Russia from global politics and the economy [8].

With the assistance of this strategy, the nation will be able to compete with the world's superpowers and aim to join a number of international political organizations. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum and the Group of the Major Industrialized Countries are two examples of this. Although Russia has achieved tremendous economic gains, it now has to speed up economic development via indicators if it wants to regain control over the price of oil and gas. Russia is regaining her former splendour and has been able to completely capitalize on all of the opportunities by taking on more responsibility in international affairs and convincing the world that she has been able to overcome her fragility and instability. Russian foreign policy should be seen as national, and Russia should be given back its former stature.

- Improve strategic ties with long-standing allies including China, Iran, and India as well as friendships with those powerful nations in world affairs; Increase Russian influence, achieve strategic plan, and reestablish political and economic stability.
- Reach agreements with neighbouring nations that will help bring about peace and make a peaceful policy appealing.
- Co-operate with Commonwealth of Independent States members.

Through its management of some crises, like the Georgian conflict, Crimea's recovery, and eastern Ukraine, Russia has significantly increased its political presence. It is evident that the notion of "priority interests," or, to put it more specifically, that Russia's interests come first, is the cornerstone of Russian foreign policy in the Middle East, particularly in the Arab world. The relationships between various Arab nations and Russia may be used to illustrate this. Several people do not see relations with Russia as a secure option to connections with the United Governments, and as a result, some Arab states maintain complicated relations with Russia while also forging ties with the US, which would place constraints on Russian activities in the region<sup>13</sup>. Based on these fluctuations and inconsistencies in ties, one can get the conclusion that Russia's position on the

issue is vague and that the country's interests could lead it to make a different decision than what is expected. Russian regional expansion is influenced by US policies and the dynamics of regional internal exchanges. No matter how hard Russia tries, it is unable to stray from some aspects of its relationship with the United States. The two sides' views may converge, changing everything, and the Arab nations would then adopt a denunciation-only stance [9].

## 5. US-RUSSIA STRATEGIC RIVALRY

Russian policy aims to coordinate its foreign policy including its domestic goals in light of the perceived notion and realization that the world has evolved and that foreign policy may change in a way that enables major countries to work cooperatively to actually solve their internal problems—especially financial ones, which are directly linked to other problems—at the expense of other stakeholders through peaceful means. The US strategy and Russian policy share many of the same objectives. Russia is attempting to position its navy in the Mediterranean as a result. We could see a significant Russian entry into regions where the United States has failed with the help of a Syrian military base. The distinctive features of Russian strategy in the Middle East include;

Russian policy is now again active and prominent in world affairs, particularly since it was able to overcome its economic crises. Given that a substantial return was anticipated and that this return carries messages, it is possible that Russia would use every tool at its disposal to retain its spheres of influence, particularly given the Syrian situation [10].

Fill the void, especially given that the majority of analysis points to the likelihood that the United States is about to end its presence in the region after being on the verge of abandoning its presence in some areas, and that the Middle East's issues have not been resolved by the US, which has approved of Russia's robust presence to fill the hole after its departure.

After the turmoil and instability that the so-called Arab Spring caused, it is imperative to guarantee that the area is stabilized as quickly as possible. Saudi Arabia set the example for this development, demonstrating a keen interest in the Syrian issue in order to avoid having a significant negative impact on the region. As a result, Saudi Arabia is prepared to make up for

Russia's loss in Syria in an effort to prevent the region from further disintegrating. Many rumours surround the possibility of Saudi Arabia providing financial support for the so-called Arab Spring. Russia opposes a number of US actions in the area, including the building of the missile shield, this it claims is aimed entirely at Russia and not at any other region since it feels that these regions are under Russian influence [11].

Although they have different dimensions, some people think that the US's objectives in the region and the increased activity of Russian foreign policy in the region and the achievement of some Russian strategic interests—which do have political overtones that frame Russia's relations with its allies—are essentially comparable. First, it seems that Russia wants to preserve the current situation in the Middle East, which was formed following the Arab Spring upheavals. Russia also believes that the US is supporting colored revolutions in the region, which may be a sign of the end of the Cold War. Both the forces in favor of and against the colored revolutions make up its parties. The belief that American interests are threatened by Russian interests is the second factor. The advice is for Russia's partners to avoid the United States. All of the area's active players, including States and non-State entities, are covered by the third dimension. Examples include think tanks, civil society groups, and the US's instruments for sowing unrest across the targeted region [12].

## 6. ROLE OF RUSSIA IN ARAB WORLD

Politicians in Russia see the Middle East as a crucial geostrategic region that can contribute actively and significantly to world affairs. Due to Iran's geostrategic and geopolitical significance, Russia has obviously taken on a role in the Middle East by backing its nuclear program. Russia now intends to establish a strategy in the region by turning Iran into a strategic ally. Along with Syria<sup>20</sup>, Georgia, Ukraine, and the Crimea are other crisis zones where Russia is attempting to increase its involvement. Russia wants to take advantage of chances and use its political know-how. Given the US's betrayal of its partners, it believes that the results of the Arab Spring may be utilized to further its own objectives [13]. A prominent example of this is how it has handled President Bashar al-Assad in the present situation in Syria. Russia

actively participated in the conflict. , backed military operations, kept up its Tartus naval station, and built air bases in Latakia in order to earn the respect of its allies. For instance, the United States' reputation with its allies was weakened when it abandoned Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. In order to achieve military deals on weapons and other energy-related activities, it tried to develop these relationships. Because Iran and Russia cooperate closely, the latter had a better chance of strengthening its economic links with Iraq (in exchange for the American failure). Along with its policies toward Iran, which reflect its positive ties with other nations like Iraq, this was also the case (in exchange for the American failure). These positions refute the idea that Russia has lost the ability to protect its allies and use force to influence international affairs [14]

## **7. FUTURE PRESPECTIVE OF US-RUSSIA RELATIONS**

Due to a well thought-out plan for its reappearance in the Middle East, Russia has been able to make a significant comeback on the global stage. It was highlighted that Russia has made enormous strides in the previous 10 years in terms of its connections with critical regions including Central Asia, East Asia, the Brix Group, and the influence of international choices. Also apparent is Russia's persistent stance on the Syrian problem and its strong ties to American failures like Iraq. Thus, it is feasible to see the scope of Russia's vision for intensifying Russia's involvement in international events and expansion of its influence in the Middle East are in its best economic and military interests [15].

It is hard to avoid the American presence in the Middle East given all these shifts in Russian views toward the area, particularly the Arab world. Even if the United States were to allow Russia some wiggle room, their rivalry would still be driven by how the world is changing and intensify to suit the various interests of each nation. Although Russia has undertaken diplomatic efforts, fiercely criticized the US stance, and disagrees with US policy on a number of issues, the US presence and influence in nations like Iran and Syria cannot be diminished. Russia's foreign policy has not fundamentally changed in reaction to the US confrontation or full challenge, whether in respect to the Middle East or other matters. Several things

support this, but the most significant one is that the Russian leadership sees American activities as endangering Russian interests. In order to actively engage, Russia is well aware that doing so will allow it to reclaim some of the positions of power that it has lost in the area [16].

Despite Russia's increasing desire to reclaim its global stature, The United States cannot relinquish key spheres of influence and may do so at any time. Instead, it chooses to remain silent in the face of Russia's expanding dominance. Alliances that accomplish shared objectives may be seen as a result of changes in global circumstances. The interests that cause foreign policy to vary its direction, rather than constants, determine whether foreign policy is successful. Regardless of its reason for action, Russia is acting strategically and diplomatically in ways that serve its interests and those of the United States in the area, according to developments and world events. Therefore, regardless of how Russia attempts to take advantage of the opportunity, American goals collide with them, taking into consideration the many ways that each party maintains its interests. Russia positions itself as a state that does not aim to intervene militarily or violently in the affairs of other nations via crises and revolutions [17].

As a result, individuals have different perspectives on Russia than they do on the US. As we know it based Russia thought the movements of Arabs are being influenced by outside groups that the United States has sponsored. As a consequence, in the case of ongoing and widespread loss, which necessitate the appearance of supportive teams in opposition to the rejection powers and exacerbate tension. Contrarily, the Middle East is marked by balance, which underscores the legitimacy of its friends. As a result, the region's political history and allies' positions increase the likelihood that America will be seen as a threat to the region's stability, which presents another chance for Russia to boost its self-assurance and uphold its interests. Russian hostility to US policies extends beyond only the Middle East.

NATO expansion on the Russian border was opposed by President Putin, showing his disapproval of American hegemony or a single pole. Russian positions in the Arab world may benefit from this.

Additionally, in order to enhance its position and improve its performance in international affairs, Russia is expanding its diplomatic efforts to China, India, and the major Asian nations. Given that these alliances may push Russia in a number of ways, notably economic ones, Arab states see Russia as a competitive ally to the United States as a result of such Russian acts [18].

As a result of abandoning its regional friends in times of crisis, this division may have an impact on American ties with them. Furthermore, others believe that Russian policy is practical, particularly after restructuring, and that it has made greater progress in terms of advancing national interests, therefore its influence on world affairs is growing. After losing faith in its friends and governments, the Arab Spring area lends legitimacy to this claim. As part of its efforts to combat terrorism, Russia has also signed several agreements and deepened its ties with allies in the Arab world. These agreements include the sale of Israeli drones to Russia moreover, the establishment of contact lines among Russian Intelligence Agencies and their Middle Eastern counterparts. In the Arab world, Russia has grown more and more competitive with the US. Due to its power to alter the rules of the game, it won't give up the leadership position it has in international affairs, which has sparked a huge weapons race. The nation has a different approach to crisis intervention than the United States, which favours using military force and direct action.

No matter how far along their ties have gotten, Russia and the US relationship is characterized by a need to exercise caution. Russian efforts to retake the top rank in the international arena have been persistent, especially after Russia abandoned its ideology and started to believe that the world is dominated by the interests of a few nations. As a result, this change in global politics now serves interests in control and power. Their history has been defined by this competition. Putin has chosen to use a combination of strong and soft power to achieve its objectives.

## 8. CONCLUSION

Unprecedented volatility in the US-Russian relationship with respect to the Middle East has recently emerged. Patterns and structures have endured despite the Middle East's long history of

infamous volatility brought on by wars, revolutions, civil unrest, military coups, and regional and international competition. There were state structures, connections among Arab countries, and interactions between the Arabs and Israel. Disputes between the US and the USSR during the Cold War. Putin's declaration of the new foreign policy tenets of Russia aims to eliminate one-pole dominance, build a multipolar international order, and restore Russia's leadership engagement in global events and developments, signaled the start of a new era for Russian foreign policy. In an effort to alter public impressions of the new Russia—one that has attempted to regain its old dominance while demonstrating via the management of crises and its foreign policy that it has no desire to be a hegemon—Russia has altered its foreign policy, particularly in the Middle East. Instead, its participation aims to establish a mutually advantageous strategic relationship with regard to the economic and development aspects. Given the issues brought on by the Arab Spring and the US military's missteps in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Caucasus, the world is ready to reject uni-polarity. Throughout these crises, it changed the balance of power and opted for a more gentle strategy rather than one that included using force.

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