

Israel and Russia are Not on The Verge of War. They are Allies!

There are no circumstances under which Russia will go to war with Israel over Syria. Doing so would be wholly contrary to Russia's policies and strategic interests.

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The alternative media community, especially its social media iteration, is experiencing collective psychosis in hallucinating that "Israel" and Russia are on the verge of war with one another.

The prevailing narrative is that Israeli "Defense Minister" Lieberman's threat to destroy Syria's air defense systems is tantamount to a declaration of war against Russia, with the assumption being that Moscow is on a crusade against Zionism and has thus become Tel Aviv's worst enemy.

There's no diplomatic way to say this, but the presumptions on which such a crazy conclusion has been reached are absolutely and utterly wrong.

Far from being Israel's hated nemesis like many in the alternative media community wishfully pretend that it is, Moscow is one of Tel Aviv's closest allies, and this is entirely due to President Putin's deliberate policies. Not only does he enjoy a very strong personal friendship with Netanyahu, but President Putin also sees a lot of opportunity to advance his country's interests in Israel through the large Russian diaspora there.

Russia wants to compete with the US for influence in Israel for several interrelated reasons.

Firstly, Judaism is one of Russia's four official religions as stipulated by the 1993 constitution, thus partially making Russia a "Jewish State" in the technical-legal sense. To be fair, though, Russia is also an Orthodox, Muslim, and Buddhist country too by the same measure.

Coupled with the Russian diaspora in Israel, Moscow seeks to leverage these religious-personal connections in order to acquire greater clout over the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, which in turn would be expected to boost Russia's global Great Power prestige (which is exceptionally important to its leadership).

As a "reward" for its positive involvement in helping to resolve this seemingly intractable issue, Russia might expect Israel to grant its state companies important contracts in building, servicing, and/or investing in any potential Eastern Mediterranean pipeline from the offshore Leviathan gas field to the EU, which would exponentially increase Moscow's

influence on the global energy market and consequently on world affairs in general.



To be absolutely clear, I respectfully disagree with this approach for principled reasons, though I understand why Russia has embarked on it, and what it hopes to reap from its multifaceted engagement with Israel.

Returning to the current context and topic of this article, there's no way whatsoever that Russia would ever even consider lobbying a volley of nuclear missiles at Israel no matter what Netanyahu does in Syria, even if he delivers on his government's threats to destroy the country's air defense systems.

In such a frightful scenario, Russia would assuredly issue a sharp diplomatic rebuke against Israel and probably take symbolic measures to express its disapproval, but it won't ever preemptively intervene and stop Israeli jets from bombing Syria because its mandate is strictly to fight terrorism, and not defend Syria's borders from outside state aggression.

Moreover, it's an open fact that Russia and Israel have established mechanisms to coordinate their military action in Syria so as to avoid inadvertent clashes, which is hardly the behaviour that anyone would expect from two parties on the brink of an all-out nuclear exchange against each other.

Let's face it — Russia and Israel are high-level and comprehensive strategic allies with one another, though this by no means signifies that Moscow is incapable of “balancing” its relations between Tel Aviv and Damascus.

In fact, it's this very tricky diplomatic “balancing act” which might actually be somewhat restraining Israel from taking more aggressive action in Syria, as it understands that there's a certain limit to what it can do and “get away with” before it overly embarrasses Russia and negatively impacts on bilateral relationships.

Everyone knows that Russia has deployed S-400 air defense missiles in Syria, and this fact was reported on with much fanfare and enthusiasm in the alternative media community, both through its professional outlets and on social media. Many people naively assumed that this would put a stop to Israel's occasional strikes in Syria, yet several high-profile ones

have occurred in the time since, in spite of the presence of the S-400s.

This can only be interpreted as proof that Russia has no desire to overstep its anti-terrorism mandate and defend Syria's external borders, nor would it even want that heavy responsibility if Damascus offered it.

In addition, the fact that these strikes happened without any noticeable interference from the Russian side can be taken as visible confirmation that the mechanisms earlier described between Moscow and Tel Aviv are working properly in avoiding any inadvertent clashes between the two sides.

This does not mean, however, that Russia condones Israel's illegal military activity in Syria (especially its latest bombing), but just that it passively stands by and chooses time and again to avoid becoming involved in what Moscow sees as a strictly bilateral issue between Tel Aviv and Damascus.

Nevertheless, a blatant act of state-on-state aggression such as attempting to obliterate Syria's nationwide anti-air defense systems wouldn't be tolerated by Russia, and would probably compel President Putin to freeze relations with "Israel" due to the unacceptable diplomatic embarrassment that Netanyahu would have inflicted on Moscow.

Netanyahu, for his part, is keenly aware of the limits of what he can and cannot do in Syria without risking Russia's genuine ire, so it is extremely unlikely that he will carry through on his Defense Minister's threat. That being said, however, Israel — being the quintessential rogue state that it is — might backstab Russia by doing this anyhow so long as its leadership believes that the "cost-benefit" calculation "justifies" such action.

The only realistic scenario for that to happen would be if Israel was convinced — whether "rightly" or wrongly — that Iranian and Hezbollah activity in Syria posed an "imminent threat" to its interests that would surpass any perceived indirect negotiating/"balancing" benefits vis-a-vis these parties that Tel Aviv's alliance with Moscow provides.

It's been speculated that Russia is very understanding of Israel's concerns about Iran and Hezbollah in Syria, and that Moscow might even be discretely pressing for Damascus to draw up a "face-saving" plan for ensuring these forces' post-war withdrawal from the country, so if that's the case, then Israel has no reason to further escalate its aggression against Syria under the false pretexts of combating these two Resistance actors.

The fact that Tel Aviv issued its latest threats, however, indicate that this speculation might not be entirely true, since it would logically follow that any successful Russian efforts on this front would negate whatever "reason" Israel might have for jeopardizing its mutually advantageous alliance with Moscow.

Another possible explanation might be that Syria doesn't agree with Russia's rumored suggestions in this respect and therefore isn't going along with them, which from Tel Aviv's perspective might cause it to recalculate that its alliance with Moscow is disposable because it has failed to bear fruit on one of its most important fronts.

Much more likely, however, is that there isn't any secret Russian-Israeli understanding to conspire against Iran and Hezbollah's post-war presence in Syria, and that Israel's latest threat was issued independently of its relationship with Russia, though of course only time will tell what the truth really is.

To get back to the topical issue at hand, any large-scale state-to-state attack that Israel might launch against Syria probably wouldn't be stopped by Russia, but it would definitely ruin the relationship between Moscow and Tel Aviv. Russia isn't going to go to war against Israel for the sake of saving Syria and formally going beyond its specific mandate, no matter how much millions of people might wish that it would under those circumstances.

Even so, Russia is a proud and dignified civilization-state which won't accept the global humiliation that would ensue from passively allowing such a massive aggression to occur under its watch, despite it legally not being Russia's responsibility to protect Syria's external borders or to prevent state aggression against its military, which is why it would be forced to freeze all ties with Israel in response.

In that scenario, Russia's "balancing" policy would come to an abrupt end and Moscow might reactively realign its regional priorities with the Resistance Bloc of Iran and Hezbollah instead of remaining "impartial" like it currently is, though still taking care not to do anything which could be perceived as stoking Israel's paranoia that Russia might also be in the process of becoming a "threat" to it too.

To wrap everything up, no realistic case can be argued that Russia is on the verge of war with Israel. Historical facts such as the unprecedented Russian-Israeli Strategic Partnership, the public existence of bilateral military coordination mechanisms in Syria, and the sincere personal friendship between President Putin and Netanyahu, categorically disprove any such claims.

While it might be "fashionable" to pretend that Russia is opposed to Israel, that's simply not true at all, no matter how much people in the alternative media community might deeply wish for it to be so. Even in the disastrous event that Israel decides to launch an all-out conventional attack against Syria and escalate its presently ongoing Yinon Plan of divide-and-rule "Arab Spring" Hybrid War into something much larger, there's no way that Russia would intervene, although it would clearly be displeased and would have to take appropriate diplomatic countermeasures in order to save its prestige.

The bottom line is that supporters of the Syrian Arab Republic mustn't let their optimistic well wishing desires cloud their analytical judgment and objective appraisal of reality, because failure to do so will only result in the creation of an alternative universe totally divorced from the world in which we truly live.

And that, folks, leads to legitimately "fake news" such as the hysterical claims that Russia is about to go to war with Israel.

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