

# Russia Slowly but Surely Putting an End to the American Empire?

Chipping away at the edges

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*Over the past few weeks, some [dramatic stories](#) and a potential [nuclear war](#) have taken the media's attention away from the [non-story](#) that is the Russiagate-election scandal. But as attention veers away from the Russian hacking narrative, why are genuine stories regarding Russia's actual influence in the world almost completely ignored?*

Russia is slowly but surely nabbing small but significant pieces of the American empire. Not only did [Russia foil](#) the U.S. military establishment's plan to dominate Syria by inserting its military in the country and [setting up a quasi-no-fly-zone](#) of its own, but Russia is also acquiring pieces of the global chessboard through other means.

Let's start backward. Washington's violent, stalwart ally and regional power player Saudi Arabia has been cozying up to Russia over the course of the year amid Russia's [demonstrable successes](#) in Syria. As *Al-Jazeera* [explains](#):

"In late May, then Deputy Crown Prince [Mohammad bin Salman](#) went to Russia to discuss with President [Vladimir Putin](#) the oil market and the situation in Syria. The visit came just three weeks before Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef was removed and bin Salman took his position. While in Moscow, the latter said that **'relations between Saudi Arabia and Russia are going through one of their best moments ever.'**

"Two months later, Moscow and Riyadh signed a **preliminary military cooperation agreement worth \$3.5bn.** The Saudis have requested transfer of technology to accompany the signing of the deal." [emphasis added]

Al-Jazeera also notes that Saudi Arabia helped provide a platform for Egypt to negotiate between Moscow and the Syrian opposition, which held huge significance for Russia:

"The importance of this step for the Kremlin is obvious. Russia is extremely interested in concluding an agreement on de-escalation zones, the implementation of which is not possible exclusively within the framework of the tripartite initiative of Russia, [Iran](#) and Turkey, without the involvement of other actors. **From this perspective, the role Saudi Arabia played in the signing of the two Cairo agreements between Russia and the Syrian opposition on East Ghouta and Rastan is very important.**"

This brings us to the next point. Turkey, a NATO member, was for [some time](#) one of the heaviest backers of the Syrian opposition in their attempt to overthrow the Syrian

government, a Moscow ally. Turkey was so entrenched in its desire to overthrow the Assad regime that they were [allegedly supporting ISIS](#) in more ways than can be counted. The Turkish government is now [working closely](#) with both Tehran and Moscow to secure a questionable de-escalation process. [Russian-owned](#) media outlet *Sputnik* claims that according to a regional newspaper, Turkey will be ceasing its support for large elements of the Syrian opposition.

Where is the U.S. during all of this? Practically nowhere to be seen, to put it simply. Unsurprisingly, Turkey even [expressed its desire](#) to join a security bloc dominated by Russia and China, snubbing the E.U. and NATO in the process.

Russia now also has a [strong presence in Libya](#), an oil-rich country the U.S. helped destabilize in 2011 to prevent its leader from [independently enriching the African region](#) independent of the U.S. and NATO powers. Russia has provided political and military assistance to Libyan General Khalifa Haftar, who controls a significant chunk of Libyan territory. Moscow is also [involved](#) in the diplomatic settlement between Haftar and the U.N.-backed Libyan government and has been attempting to create good relations with parties on both sides of the conflict.

But how – and why – did Russia find itself in Libya, as well? As [explained](#) by Chatham House, an independent policy institute based in London:

“The real driving forces behind Russian involvement in Libya are a mixture of ambition, opportunism **and anti-Western sentiment.**” [emphasis added]

In this context, it makes a lot more sense that Western powers are all of a [sudden so much more interested](#) in working with Haftar considering he is emerging as a significant Libyan figure and potential Russian client.

And one cannot talk about Libya without mentioning Egypt, another country in the region with which Russia has strengthened ties. Chatham House speculates that Russia was only able to assert itself in Libya through Egypt’s direction and recommendations that it support Haftar in the first place. [Russia and Egypt](#) are also improving their ties in relation to trade and economic cooperation and have been holding joint naval drills and military exercises over the past few years. Further, Russia has [allegedly](#) deployed its own Special Forces in Egypt with a specific eye on the Libyan conflict.

Russia also distances itself from the practices of the U.S., which allows it to become a more viable option for states in the region which desire less control over what they do. As *Forbes* [notes](#):

“Military cooperation with Moscow matters to Cairo. US arms deals don’t allow for secondary sales– what Egypt buys has to stay in Egypt. **No such strings come with Kremlin arms deals,** and in the context of crony Egyptian capitalism arms deals with Russia can appear more attractive. **Some of Moscow’s weapons are better suited for Egypt’s needs** than American ones, and from an Egyptian perspective, a Russian MIG-29 is also simply easier to maintain than an American aircraft.”

The U.S. is also [concerned](#) that Russia is injecting itself into Afghanistan (again), as well as

increasing its military cooperation with [Pakistan](#). Another prime example of Russia's growing presence in the region is the fact that even though it has had strong American backing, Iraq reportedly [wanted to turn](#) to Russia for air cover in its war against ISIS.

All that being said, Russia's influence extends exceedingly further than the Middle East and its neighbors, [such as Ukraine](#). Just days ago, in an unusual show of force, Russia [reportedly flew](#) its nuclear-capable bombers close to the Korean peninsula at roughly the same time the U.S. and South Korea were conducting their annual military exercises.

Russia has a huge hand in South America, too, which is arguably one of the reasons why the U.S. is so [desperate to "intervene" in Venezuela](#). As *Anti-Media* explained two weeks ago:

"As is [usually the case](#), Washington's desire to undermine yet another country has pushed that country into the open arms of America's cold war rival, Russia. Reuters [just released](#) a 'special report' citing inside sources who revealed the South American nation is turning to Russia for cash and credit it needs to survive following American sanctions and offering prized state-owned oil assets in return."

Russia's hand in this country was greatly facilitated by the late Hugo Chavez, who cemented a \$4 billion arms-for-oil-deal in 2006 with Russia while [actively rejecting](#) American corporations. As *Anti-Media* explained further:

"South America, [once part of America's almighty empire](#), has slowly but surely fallen out of the hands of the American elite and is playing by its own rules...Ecuador has also been looking to [enjoy a close relationship](#) with Russia for some time now and will look to expand this [relationship in the coming months](#).

"Russia also has a [quasi-military relationship](#) with Peru, Argentina, and Nicaragua, as well as close economic ties with Mexico and Brazil. This has shaken the cage of U.S. anti-Russian paranoia over the course of the last few years."

These are just a few examples that demonstrate the American empire is slowly breaking off piece by piece and being acquired by America's Cold War rival Russia in the process. Most famous of the examples is undoubtedly the fact that Russia is also [one of the leading nations](#) in the so-called BRICS coalition, which has attempted to provide a buffer to American dominance of the financial order.

The next time the media decides to rattle on with the alleged interference carried out by Russia in the 2016 election, remember what is really at stake and that the true motives for confronting Russia are not rooted in concerns about democracy in any way, shape or form. Instead, the powers-that-be are concerned with the need to prop up a failing empire that Russia is continuously challenging.

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