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# Review of Russian Foreign Policy (1991-2024): From Western Cooperation to Great Power Identity

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## Abstract

Russian foreign policy is a piece of conundrum which is covered by its national interest. The policy has been changed timely following pragmatic approach. The study examines in the initial phase of the post-Soviet period, Russia endeavored its hard and sole to integrate with the “civilized” Western world. But this integration did not achieve Russia’s national interest which led Russia to an anti-west-centric approach, the multi-polar world. In the stage Russia strategically engaged with Asia and the Middle East to reconstruct its post-soviet transitional period’s subdued image. In relation to former post-soviet republics, Russia gained modest profile in terms of security and economic. However, for showing great power identity, Russia directly betrothed in Syrian and Ukraine war which demands Russia needs a seat in great power table.

**Keywords:** Russia, Post-Communist, West-centric, Anti-west, Great Power

## 1. Introduction

The Russian communist regime was founded as the result of Russian revolution of 1917 and remained until its ultimate dissolution in 1991. However, the process of dissolution and mass reformation was initiated at the end of 1990. After around 70 years of totalitarian communist regime Russia became an independent and sovereign country in 1991. Throughout the transition period, Russia’s primary focus was to safeguard the territorial integrity, assure primacy of Russian borders, protect nuclear weapons, foster economic development, and aspire to become a technologically advanced democratic industrial nation on the global stage (Lynch, 2002, p.162). A pragmatic approach was implemented by- the newly established democratic administration to restructure its foreign policy. After approximately seven decades of a totalitarian communist regime, there was a significant amount of reconstruction. It was contended that the government should implement the most advanced reformations on the premise of liberal democracy and market economy otherwise, the new Russian federation would not be visible as the civilized state in the world. The study examines why and how did Russia accept the West as their friend in the interim period of post-communist Russia and then after post-soviet decade why and how did the Russian foreign policy shift to a great power identity?

## 2. Road to Pro-Western Foreign Policy and Kozyrev doctrine

Russia's road to Western policy could be considered by pragmatic approach. Pragmatic approach is an approach which is practical approach relies on real-world phenomena (Cochran, 2019, pp.1-12). Following the collapse of the communist dictatorship, the Soviet people urged that the government must undertake a comprehensive restructuring of the communist system of governance and move forward to market economy and liberal democratic government. In the expansive, Gorbachev provided some major reformations namely Glasnost and Perestroika. After the fall of the communist regime, Andrei Kozyrev designed a pro-western liberal foreign policy which is comparable with Francis Fukuyama's (1989, p.4) observation, as he mentioned, it's possible that what we're seeing the end of history in general, rather than only the cold war or a specific epoch of post-war history; specifically, the culmination of humankind's intellectual development and the spread of western liberal democracy as its ultimate form. Fukuyama claimed, the end of the Cold War was the end of history and following ideological evaluation process liberal democracy and market economy reached at the final stage of human history.

It is worthy that, Russia's pro-western or road to liberal foreign policy was rooted in Gorbachev's effort. He endeavored to fridge the hostile relations between the USA and the Western world. He believed peace and harmony should be established in the international system (Kumar, 2018, p. 213). He signed INF, CFE and START arms control treaty in late 1980s and at the beginning of the 1990s with the USA and the Western World. Later from communism to democratic transition period, Yeltsin government did not have an ambitious foreign policy aimed at dominating global politics. The policy can be described as a modest policy shaped by Western liberalism, which Kozyrev worked hard to implement during the transition period.

Kozyrev doctrine promotes Russia's integration with the West. The doctrine argues Russia is a part of the West but its liberal values were eradicated by the authoritarian communist regime. (Tsygankov, 2016, pp. 65-66). Russia should merge with Western politics and economic order. Kozyrev pointed out that our country's has a natural affinity with the USA and other Western democratic nations, but they were seen as adversaries by the totalitarian USSR. (Tsygankov, 2016, a, p.59). He advocated Russia should strengthen its inherent partnership with Western nations and strive to attain a prominent stature analogous to that of France, Germany, and the US within the next 10-12 years.

According to him, natural partnership with the West would be increased by the mass membership of the Western organization, radical market oriented economic reform and isolation from the soviet values. His pro-western liberal foreign policy was essentially designed to align with the nation's interests. President Yeltsin and his pro-western reformist team: Gennady Burbulis, Boris Nemtsov, Yegor Gaidar, Andrei Kozyrov and Anatoly Chubais were supposed that new government's neo-liberal reformations like free market economy, and free trade system led to getting strong economic assistance from the west (Tsygankov, 2016, b, p.214). It was claimed that economic assistance and partnership with the West would promptly rejuvenate Russia's economy. In the way national interest was amalgamated with the integration of the West following foreign policy objectives. In June 1992 Russia joined IMF and World Bank, and the following month it also became a member of the G-7. During the initial stages of Western integration, there was conjecture about the possibility of Russia becoming a member of the Western security alliance NATO. In the stage President Yeltsin and his foreign minister Kozyrev requested substantial foreign investment from Western countries. During the G-7 conference in July, Yeltsin declared the \$24 billion stimulus program would not be adequate to save Russia rather, Russia would require several hundred billion dollars of foreign direct investment to protect its economy. (Tsygankov, 2016, c, p.74). But the Western countries were in a fear of Russian political situation to invest billions of dollars. Later, in order to attract a large influx of foreign investment from Western countries, Kozyrev devised the Strategic Democratic Initiative (SDI). But SDI did not achieve its desire goal. Following political instability, the West invested to Russia less than post-communist European countries.

Table 1: External Aid and Investment: Russia and Other Recipients, 1990

Country	World Bank Lending Divided by GDP in 1990 (%)	Direct Investment Divided by GDP in 1990 (%)
Hungary	5.1	32.2
Czech Republic	2.0	12.6
Poland	6.6	11.0
Estonia	1.5	8.6
Turkmenistan	0.4	7.7
Kazakhstan	1.4	1.8
Azerbaijan	0.8	1.1
Russia	0.8	0.6

Source: M. Steven Fish, "The Determinants of Economic Reform in the Post-Communist World," *East European Politics and Societies* 12, no. 1 (1998): 38.

During the Tokyo G-7 Summit in July 1993, President Bill Clinton of the USA announced \$43.4 billion assistance program aimed at revitalizing the Russian economy. With the assistance of the US, Russia attempted to restructure of a total \$70 million debt of Soviet era but the effort was failed for London club (Tsygankov, 2016, d, p.75). Nevertheless, Russia made a deliberate effort to get significant access to the economic market of the European Union, but ultimately it was unsuccessful due to the uncooperative stance of the EU leaders. With the symbol of Western cooperation Russia joined Atlantic Cooperation Council in 1991 and obtained observer status of the Atlantic Assembly in April 1992. In 1992, Russia abstained to exercise its veto power at the United Nations on the proposed military intervention by the United States against its traditional ally Yugoslavia. Even, Moscow tacitly endorsed the UN economic sanctions imposed on Yugoslavia due to its committed atrocities against Bosnian Muslims.

In January 1993 Russia and the USA signed START-2 treaty. To get further integration with the West, Russia upheld US economic sanctions on Iraq and Libya, and covertly supported US airstrikes on Iraq in 1993. (Tsygankov, 2016, e, p.77). Historically, Yugoslavia, Libya, and Iraq were the longstanding allies of Russia. But in these days, Russia took a pro-Western state for the sake of more convergence with Western countries. Simultaneously, in order to institute a personal connection with the Western countries, Yeltsin visited the UK, Canada, France, and the US. Yeltsin believed that fostering collaboration at both the individual and institutional levels would lead better cooperation with the West. But Yeltsin's cooperative approach failed to achieve the utmost level of collaboration between Russia and the West as desired by Russia.

### 3. Policy Toward Post Soviet Republics

Russia's primary priority was for its post-Soviet republics in ensuring the security and geopolitical stability, as well as protecting the rights and well-being of its Russian-speaking minority populaces in the post-soviet states. To ensure these demands, Russia founded the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in 1991. The Alma Ata protocol of 1991 is regarded as an expanded incarnation of the CIS. Prior to the treaty Russia, Ukraine and Belarus signed the Beloveha Accord on 8 December 1991 and recognized the Commonwealth of the Independent States (CIS). They invited other republics to join CIS. On December 21, five central Asian republics: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan along with Armenia, Moldova and Azerbaijan joined CIS. On 21 December 1991 by signing Alma Ata protocol Russia officially recognized its former republics as an independent state. Yeltsin government declared the relation with its post-soviet republics would be on the basis of reciprocated cooperation and respect. In the purpose and principles of the CIS charter declared Commonwealth should be founded on the principle of equal sovereignty among its members. The omphalos aim of the Commonwealth is to provide the progress and improvement of friendly ties, good neighborliness, inter-ethnic harmony, trust, reciprocated understanding, and equally advantageous collaboration among its fellow states ("Charter of the CIS" 1993, p.59). Yeltsin declared Russia's relation with CIS as the "close foreign countries" and Kozyrev noticed them as "our relatives" (Timmermann, 1992, p.167). Russia envisioned extensive integration with the former Soviet republics, aiming for a high degree of economic integration through a common economic market. This included a collective security pact, collaborative peacekeeping and conflict resolution efforts, a shared external border, and a coordinated foreign policy. (Lo, 2002, p.75).

Simultaneously, Russia prioritized the well-being and protection of Russian-speaking individuals residing in Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Russia issued a warning, stating that, former Soviet nations must provide equal rights for their minority populations. Kozyrev emphatically asserted that, if the Russian communities in these nations face oppression by any government, our government would respond lawfully and if necessary, we would undertake military intervention against these states. (Timmermann, 1992,a, p.169). The most important aspect of the integration was Russia's economic amalgamation with the CIS states. To strengthen economic integration among the CIS states, in 1993 leaders of the CIS implemented various significant actions, such as the creation of a regional market, the adoption of common customs laws, the development of a unified tax system, the implementation of a price system, and the implementation of collective measures to address economic challenges in the Ural and Caspian Sea region. (Jayashekar, 1993, p.2000). But due to leadership rivalries, ethnic conflicts and individual groups high ambitions, the goal of the better economic coordination of the CIS states did not achieved its desired goal.

Table 2: The Economic Development of the CIS member states (In percentage of 1991)

Country	National Income	Industrial	Consumer goods output	Retail trade turnover	Paid services	Wholesale industrial price index
Russia	-20	-18.8	-15	-39.1	-36	2049
Ukraine	-15	-9	-9	-22.8	-25	2500
Belarus	-11	-9.6	-5	-26.1	-28	2465
Kazakhstan	-14.2	-14.8	-21	-38.5	-48	2469
Uzbekistan	-12.9	-6.2	100.4	-31.3	-42	1396
Turkmenistan	-	-16.7	-14	-38	-33	1094
Kyrgyzstan	-26	-26.8	-36	-67	-42	1764
Tajikistan	-31	-24.3	-28	-72.1	-68	1423
Azerbaijan	-28.2	-24	-24	-63	-68	1423
Armenia	-42.6	-52.5	-54	-72.7	-72	1047
Moldova	-21.3	-21.7	-16	- 49.4	-48	1311

Source: Delovoy Mir, Moscow, March 2, 1993

Table 3: The Economic Development of the CIS States

	1989	1990	1991	1992
GDP	3	-4	-8	-20
Industrial production	2.3	-3.4	10.1	-18.2
Consumer goods production	7.7	6.5	-4.5	-15
Agricultural production	1.5	-2.6	-6.9	-10
Capital investment	5	1	-12	-45
Trade turns over	8.4	10.5	-9.6	-36.7
Paid services	7.4	5.2	-18.5	-35.9

Source: Delovoy Mir, Moscow, March 2, 1993

However, the Payment Union and investment cooperation were not effective. The Customs Union (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan signed in 1995) was the sole entity which attained a moderate level of economic integration in which bilateral relations reached in a progressive level.

Russia's integration with CIS did not attain in a possible maximum level. It is claimed that, Russia always explores Russia's relations with the CIS would be on the basis of reciprocated cooperation, equality and reverence as mentioned in the charter but in reality, Russia endeavored to establish its hegemony in these states. On the other hand, Ukraine and Belorussia's westward foreign policy provided their expectation to join with the West. Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan also expressed their interest with the West. Russia's imperial pattern with liberal foreign policy created a complex policy with the CIS which led to Russia into a hegemonic character to the CIS. Aman Tulev, the minster of CIS cooperation said, we have lack of authority, jurisdiction, and resources to implement a genuine and effective policy of cooperation with the CIS nations (Lo, 2002, a, p.77)."

#### 4. Primakov Doctrine and Multipolarity

After the NATO bombing in Yugoslavia and its subsequent expansion in Eastern Europe, along with the US military intervention in Iraq, Russia transformed its foreign policy by moving away from a Western-centric strategy and instead pursued a multi-polar world. In these days Russian leaders were identified that, the Western-centric foreign policy posed numerous challenges for Russia and the policy decreased Russian influence over the world but the US and Western countries reaped greater economic, security, and political benefits from Russia. On the contrary Russia moved for Eurasianism and enhanced vigorous cooperation with China. On 23 April 1997 Russia and China signed for new multipolar world shaping new order. The assertion stated that Russia and China would work together to encourage the diversification of power in the globe and for the formation of a new global scheme (“China-Russia Joint” 1997, p.97).”. The goal of the Multipolar world is to provide counter-hegemony against the Western world. Following anti-western dream BRICS (2006) and Eurasian Economic Union (2015) were established to prevent Western hegemony in the Eurasian region.

#### 5. Russia’s Road to Great Power Identity

The construction of Russian great power identity is shaped by its historical and cultural approaches (Ponsard, 2007, p.7). In the post-soviet regime Russian great power identity was robustly introduced by the president Vladimir Putin. Since his presidency he promised to back Russian great power again. In 2000 Russian foreign policy doctrine clearly stated that, Russia is promised to maintain its global power status and secure its position as a leading center of the civilized world. Russian direct involvement in the Syrian civil war is the best example of the great power identity. This involvement denotes that, Russia intends to regain its global ranks again. Ukraine is the second battle ground where Russia fights against the Ukraine and the Western block. Russia intends to prove that Russia never wants to see NATO expansion in Ukraine which would be a security threat for Russia.

#### 6. Russia-Ukraine Conflict: Historical Review

Russia has a robust ethnic and cultural relation with Ukraine. During the USSR, the Ukraine was one of the crucial states for economy, geopolitics, technology and food of Soviet Russia. After the termination of the USSR, in 1991 Ukraine gained independence from Russia and in the post-communist transformation the Western influence was expanding day by day. In the stage, the country was divided ideologically between pro-Russian and pro-western blocks. The ideological conflict led them precarious political condition which made orange revolution (2004-2005) and later Euro Maidan Revolution (2013-2014). latter Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014 significantly deteriorated the Russia-Ukraine relationship. Russia claimed the annexation of Crimea was held by the Crimean people’s choice. It was their demand to join with Russia. At the same time the war in Donbas clearly divides the country into ethnically and the culturally (Zhurzhenko, 2014, p. 249).

In May, following referendum the pro-Russian Donetsk and Luhansk declared their independence. The Ukraine mentioned the vote as “a criminal farce” organized by the Russian federation (“Ukraine rebels hold,” 2014, May 11). The political crisis was directed at armed conflict between the pro-Russian and the Ukrainian armed forces. In February 2015, through the efforts of the Germany and the France, Russia and Ukraine signed Minsk Accords but the accords failed to stop escalation in Luhansk and Donetsk regions. It is worthy that, NATO and its Western counterparts perceive Russian influence in Ukraine as a threat to NATO and Western values. In 2016 to protect Baltic states and eastern European countries NATO deployed its four battalions in eastern fragment of the Europe from future Russian attack (Brown, 2016). At the beginning of 2017, the USA sent its two tank bigarades to Poland to boost NATO presence in the region (“Eucom Commander: U.S,” 2017). Russia perceives the presence of NATO and the deployment of the US troops in close propinquity to its borders as a direct threat to its sovereignty. In response, in September Russia made a large-scale military exercise in Vladivostok, it was the largest military exercise after the end of the USSR. (Gorenburg, 2018). In retaliation to Russia, Ukraine participated in a large-scale of military exercise with the USA and the NATO in the western part of Ukraine in October 2018 (“War in Ukraine”, 2024). Later in the Ukrainian presidential election was held in March-April 2019, pro-western Zelensky secured an impressive 73% of the votes, which was an unexpected and decisive victory according to election forecasts. (Hosa and Wilson, 2019). Zelensky’s commitment to building a precise relation with the EU and to

reforming of army in accordance with NATO standards along with the integration of NATO provided a unequivocal anti-Russian stance. Since his accession of power, he pigeon-holes NATO as the true safeguard for Ukraine against Russian aggression. In the mid-June of 2021 he urged to become a member of NATO. On 14 June 2021 He demanded to president Biden to provide clear “yes” or “no” statement to become a NATO membership for Ukraine (Polityuk, 2021). Russia sees the expansion of NATO in Ukraine would be a direct threat to its national sovereignty. In the spread-out tensions Russia started deploying its large scale of military armaments near eastern and northern Ukraine.

### *6.1 Russia's Especial Operation Against Ukraine: The Quest for Great Power Identity*

On 24 February 2022 Russia initiated its “especial operation” against Ukraine as mentioned Russia. Russia claimed their operation against the NATO expansion and Russia has no way without this operation. Aftermath of the operation the USA and its allies highly criticized the operation and it labelled as the “invasion against a sovereign country”. Till today the USA and its allies imposed more than ten thousand economic sanctions against Russia. Now Russia is the world most sanctioned country in the world. Russian invasion of Ukraine destroyed Russia's relations with the Western block. It is worthy that, flowing the US leading, all Western countries are united against Russia's Ukraine policy. The whole western block is fighting against Russia on the Ukrainian battlefield. At the annual anniversary of the Russia-Ukraine war, Mr. Putin declared the West provided 150 billion USD for the Ukraine against Russia. It's our security question and we do not give up our accurate right from the war (“Russia's Putin delivers”2023).

During Soviet period, Soviet Union had a great attachment and control over the Eastern, Central and Baltics Europe. Following the collapse of the USSR, the US and its allies categorized Russia as a waning force in Eastern Europe, lacking of aptitude to exercise hegemony over the eastern section of Europe. Consequently, they believe that Russia should not have the leverage to negotiate as a major power with the United States. But Russia believes still Russia is a great power and will remain as a great power (Kanet, 2007, p.14). Russia perceives invading Ukraine as a great opportunity to prove that Russia still a great power that has enough capability to protect its national interest in Ukraine. The integration of Crimea, Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia region of Ukraine with the Russia is the result of proving Russian great power identity.

## **7. Relation and the Muslim World**

The neo-liberal west-centric foreign policy of Russia stayed away from the Muslim world. During the Kozyrev period, Russia was much busy reconstructing its economy and politics. Consequently, the government did not get much time to pay attention to reinstalling a robust bilateral relationship with its traditional allies Iraq, Libya and Syria. Russia's silence for the US military intervention in Iraq created a fridge relationship with Iraq. Russia's adoption of a west-centric foreign policy resulted in the loss of its lucrative arms trade worth billions of dollars from the Middle East.

### *7.1 Russia and the Post 9/11 Muslim world*

After 9/11 attack in the USA, the global politics has changed radically. The USA government accused Al-Qaeda for this. Osama Bin Laden, the founder of Al- Qaeda who had a good intimacy with Mullah Omar. It is claimed that the United States provided support to Osama bin Laden and his group, Al-Qaeda, during the Soviet-Afghan conflict. The USA government demanded to Mullah Omar to back Bin Laden for 9/11 attack. But Mullah Omar refused the USA government's demand. Consequently, on 7 October 2001 the USA and its allies begun “war against terrorism” against Afghanistan. The war propagandized Islam as the source of terrorism leads the rise of Islamophobia. Still the western Muslims are fighting against this hatred idea. For the hatred idea western world becomes insecure for the Muslims. After 9/11 Russia finds itself as the key trusted ally of the Muslim world. The insecure situation of Western Europe was not extended to Russia. President Putin stated, terrorism must not be associated with any specific religion or cultural tradition rather it associated with global criminal networks involved in the trafficking of weapons and drugs. In 2003, interview with Aljazeera he said, our Muslim population is indigenous to our region and they do not have any other homeland, unlike the Muslims residing in Western

Europe. He added historically millions of Muslims are living in Russia and they believe Russia is their original homeland. Mr. Putin pointed out that tensions are already grown up in sundry parts of the world where unscrupulous people tried to use Islam as a cover for their own criminal activities, and warned against interethnic conflicts which can spark from such situations. Putin's approach to Islam and Muslim sends a brotherly message to Muslim world against western Islamophobic discourse shaping Putin is the friend of Muslim world.

### *7.2 Russia and Iran*

Iran has emerged as a key ally of Russia since the period of multi polarity. The relationship between Russia and Iran is complex, involving strategic collaboration, economic connections, and underlying tensions. Their collaboration have been strengthened in recent years due to overlapping goals and a mutual aspiration to disrupt the current US driven global power structure. In the Syrian civil war both countries backed Assad regime against Sunni groups. Both countries oppose US dominance in the Middle East. The current bilateral commerce between Russia and Iran is approximately valued at \$2.5 billion. Iran is internationally isolated due to its nuclear program. Russia plays a crucial role in safeguarding the nuclear program.

The imposition of US sanction has significantly altered the dynamics of the Iran-Russia relationship. Mentioning Western sanctions Lavrov noticed, Iran and Russia will take practical steps against this illegal sanctions (Henry Rome, 2022). This sanction lead Iran and Russia's armaments trade in a new height. Iran exports more than 70% arms from Russia. Iran bought the powerful S-300 air defense system from Russia in order to safeguard its nuclear power complex.

Ideologically Iran is constructed by Shia Islam. In Middle East Shia is the second largest Muslim group after Sunni group. The group demonstrates a vigorous anti Western value compared to the Sunni group. Putin asserts that Russia seeks amicable relations with any Middle Eastern nation, while in practice, Russian policy aligns with the "Shia Axis" in the region. It is because of Iran, Russia defined Muslim brotherhood and Islamic State as the terrorist organization but not Shia Militia Hezbollah. Russian presence in the Shia axis is growing day by day. In the current Russia-Ukraine war, Iran is one of the most pivotal countries in the world that provides military drones and technology against Ukraine, as repeatedly mentioned by the US and Ukraine, though Iran denied this obligation. However, the longevity of Russia-Iran partnership will hinge on the evolution of regional dynamics and the adeptness of both nations in managing their individual global obstacles.

### *7.3 Russia and Turkey*

The relationship between Russia and Turkey is complex and multifaceted, encompassing both cooperation and competition. They share a long history entwined by geopolitical interests and regional ambitions. For centuries, this two nations have been maintaining rival relations, engaging in numerous wars over territorial control and influence in regions like the Black Sea and the Caucasus. In recent years, especially under the leadership of President Erdogan, Turkey and Russia have actively pursued pragmatic partnership based on mutual interests in sectors such as energy, trade, and security. Particularly the unsuccessful coup attempt in 2016 and the unresolved agreement to purchase of F-35 fighter jets from the United States, Turkey opted to establish a big profile partnership with Russia. On the contrary, the handover of Russia's S-400 air defense system to Turkey is a significant accomplishment of President Putin. Economically both countries made a mutual commitment to increase their bilateral trade volume to \$100 billion during Kazan Summit of 2021. The future of Russia-Turkey relations is ambiguous, especially considering the ongoing conflict of Russia-Ukraine. In the war Turkey appeared as a two sides player, Turkey energetically criticized Russia's invasion against Ukraine but it constantly maintained strong diplomatic relations with Russia. Despite this character, Russia upholds vigorous relation with turkey by considering anti-US approach in the war.

### *7.4 Russia and Palestine*

The Palestine crisis is connected with the nerve of Muslim world. Consequently, Russia maintains a positive relation with Palestine. Throughout the history, Russia has maintained a positive and strong relationship with the



Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and its founding leader, President Yasser Arafat. Following the onset of the Syrian Civil war, the level of collaboration between Russia and Palestine has intensified greatly. From 2014 to 2020 President Mahmud Abbas visited Russia eight times. Both states maintain annual head of state meetings. In the Israel-Palestine peace process Russia proposes two-state solution for sustainable peace in the arena. However, Russia acts as a peace mediator between Israel and Palestine including Middle East countries. Russia's Palestine policy is a component of its broader strategy aimed at cultivating a positive perception of Russia across the Muslim world. In the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, Russia upholds an anti US-Israel stance and demanded complete ceasefire of the war.

### *7.5 Russia-Turkey-Iran coalition*

The coalition of Russia, Turkey, and Iran have betrothed in a complex partnership, particularly in the context of the Syrian Civil War and Middle East politics. The coalition is a new model of "Eurasia" Bilateral relations. Since 2017, these countries have directed the Astana peace process, aiming to find a political solution of Syrian war. In the Astana format of 2019 these three countries collaboration on on Syria issue, particularly the elimination of ISIS of Syria region is the foremost result of the Astana formation in which Russia gets benefits from Iran and Turkey (Truevtsev 2019, 11 July). This timely triparty alliance summit in Moscow, Ankara and Tehran promote new order against Western command in the Middle East. Despite their cooperation, the three countries have quite different ideas for Syria issue. Russia aspires to retain the Assad regime; Iran seeks to maintain its influence through ally militias; and Turkey prioritizes ending Kurdish autonomy along its border. Though this regime is not powerful in terms of attacking to US regime rather in terms of politico-economic cooperation the significances is very high. They claim for the extraction of the US troops from Eastern Euphrates to foster peace in the region according to Astana Process Summit on 20 July 2020. However, Under Russian leadership Iran and Turkey are getting united under one umbrella to decrease the US hegemony in Middle East. It's a victory of Russia to bring Iran and Turkey under one umbrella against US stance in Middle East.

### *7.6 Islamic Intergovernmental Organization and Russia*

Russia's association with the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) elevated its status in the Muslim world. In 2003 Russia gained observer status of OIC. Putin stated that Russia's involvement in OIC will not only expand the organization's opportunities, but also bring new skills and leverage to Russia's large Muslim community. However, Russia's connections with the Arab League and OIC can be seen as a regular and routine effort that lacks of significant impact in resolving issues such as the Israel-Palestine conflict. Nevertheless, Russia's involvement in these institutions foster a favorable perception throughout the Muslim world.

## **8. Conclusion**

The first phase of the Russian overseas policy of the post-soviet eon was characterized by the effort of struggling to integrate with "civilized" Western world, the recipe of Kozyrev doctrine. But the recipe was failed in achieving Russian security, welfare, autonomy and identity. Later Primakov's doctrine advocated multipolar world approach which led to anti-west centric policy, aimed to increase Russia's global influence. Conversely, Russian economic amalgamation with the post-soviet republics was one the major goals in the post-soviet era foreign policy. However the integration did not reach in a promising level because of its leadership rivalry and ethnic conflicts of the CIS states. Russian reconstruction of the post-soviet era gained its modest liberal image during the period. In search of great power identity, Russia involved with two major wars, Syrian civil war and Ukraine war. By involving Syrian war, Russia returned as a protuberant actor in Middle East politics. The war in Ukraine remains ongoing. The war unequivocally demonstrates that Russia is not a declining power, but rather a burgeoning great power with the capacity to sustain the conflict for an extended period.

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