

# DALLAS

Private Analytics & Reconnaissance Company

## PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF RUSSIAN-IRANIAN RELATIONS FOLLOWING THE IRANIAN- ISRAELI CONFLICT

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## ABSTRACT

The events of the Iranian-Israeli conflict have sparked discussions about whether Russia has proven to be an unreliable ally that betrays its partners. However, this study seeks to examine Iranian-Russian relations through the lens of Russian interests at this juncture of the war between Russia and Ukraine.

In particular, the analytical assessment includes a series of papers from the private analytics and reconnaissance company DALLAS' database that shed light on the state of Iranian-Russian relations. The conclusion is that the alliance between these two countries is based on their political regime similarities, which is sufficient to bolster their efforts on the international stage.

However, this cooperation is one-sided, with Iran primarily playing a supporting role. Iran has successfully fulfilled its supporting role and is doing everything possible to assist Russia in strengthening its capacity to prolong its aggressive war with Ukraine.

The analysis goes on to detail Russia's stance on Iran during the Middle East conflict and examines Russia's geopolitical objectives. It finds that, rather than offering military aid to its partner, Russia has attempted to take full advantage of the Iranian-Israeli confrontation.

In particular, it was in the Kremlin's interest to portray itself to the American side as an aide and interlocutor on all matters in world affairs, thereby creating a further pathway for itself to escape from international isolation while simultaneously completing three crucial tasks:

- shifting the focus of global attention away from Ukraine;
- redirecting US military aid;
- increasing oil prices to boost the Russian economy.

It has been determined that the Russian Federation's main strategic interest in the Middle East is to maintain constant tension in the region.

This analysis also presents conclusions about the media coverage on this issue in the context of a possible information operation by the Russian Federation aimed at showing proof of its distancing from Iran. It has been determined that this operation may be fictitious and deceptive in nature, creating a false picture of reality and pursuing two goals:

- the possibility of maintaining dialogue with the US, which has taken the side of Israel in the conflict;
- and, as a result, to return to the strategy of mediator in the conflict to break out of international isolation.

The conclusions suggest that the Russian Federation is not planning to abandon Iran. The current Russian strategy of waging hybrid wars around the world requires the use of the parties to the conflict as its proxies. This role is assigned to Iran — and it will not be particularly important for the Russian Federation whether Iran has a nuclear program or whether the government there changes; the main task of the Russian Federation remains to keep Iran dependent on limited Russian assistance.

Russia may continue to promise to supply air defense systems or offer to supply its UAVs, which are essentially modified Iranian models that Russia has successfully scaled up production of.

This overview may be useful for journalists, investigators, international relations specialists, and researchers of Russia.

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## ABOUT DALLAS PARK

**DALLAS Private Analytics & Reconnaissance Company** is a private team of security experts and analysts united by a common mission: to expose Russia's military economy, its military-industrial complex, and foreign actors who contribute to upkeeping its operations. Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Western countries have imposed widespread sanctions aimed at undermining its military and industrial capabilities.

Since 2014, our team has consistently exposed or helped expose key elements of Russia's war economy — in close cooperation with the media and intelligence services. Our team manages a global network of verified sources, many of whom are based in Russia, China, and the EU. Thanks to these contacts, as well as powerful signal intelligence, we are able to track the Kremlin's war infrastructure in real time.

On our website, [dallas-park.com](https://dallas-park.com), we have created a unique database based on leaks from Russian information resources and email dumps from Russian officials, military personnel, and defense industry companies.

We collaborate with journalists, investigators, and researchers around the world to publish high-profile investigations about Russia and its partners around the world. We also support media professionals in investigating supply chains, sanctions circumvention schemes, and the activities of hidden figures who contributed to Russia's war against Ukraine.

# INTRODUCTION

When Israel and Iran went to war on June 13 with unprecedented missile attacks, the rest of the world was surprised and concerned about further escalation. However, behind the scenes of the clash, a silent beneficiary emerged: the Russian Federation.

Even when Iran, Moscow's long-time ally, was attacked by Israel, backed by the US, the Kremlin's response was limited to a formal condemnation. For Russia, which is embroiled in a protracted and failed war in Ukraine, the conflict between Iran and Israel represented a rare convergence of geopolitical opportunities: a chance to shift the world's attention, undermine the West's distribution of resources, increase oil revenues, and capitalize on its participation in diplomatic processes.

It is noteworthy that Moscow's reaction to the Iranian-Israeli war, far from being a direct demonstration of solidarity, followed the fall of another of its allies, shared with Tehran – the Assad regime in Syria. This highlights a growing trend: Russia has become weak in the geopolitical arena, and it is increasingly likely to abandon its friends in the face of direct threats, prioritizing its own strategic interests.

Russia criticized Israeli and US strikes on Iran as a violation of international law, despite the fact that it is regularly launching missile strikes on peaceful Ukrainian cities, and expressed fear about the possibility of a nuclear catastrophe. Despite a strategic partnership deal with Iran that runs until 2025, and despite Iranian drones reinforcing Russian offensives in Ukraine, Moscow has refused to provide direct aid to Tehran.

This refusal to intervene revealed a cold strategic calculation. The war in Ukraine has consumed Russian military resources. Even if Iran had asked for military aid, Russia would not have been able to fight on two fronts. Moscow's first interest is the preservation of the lands it has gained in eastern and southern Ukraine, rather than Iran's nuclear ambitions. Furthermore, Putin's dictatorship seeks to maintain delicate relations with the US in light of Trump's peace efforts to resolve the war in Ukraine.

Furthermore, the Iranian-Israeli conflict has provided significant benefits to the Russian Federation. Videos of missile strikes on Tehran and Tel Aviv dominated global news, and Russia's war in Ukraine, which was condemned by the civilized world, briefly disappeared from the top pages. Western governments and major media outlets switched their focus, reducing the

urgency of stronger sanctions against Russia and more military assistance to Ukraine.

The conflict has directly impacted US arms shipments. Modern technologies, such as air defense interceptors and drone defense ammunition, which were originally planned for Ukraine, have been moved to support Israel and US troops in the Persian Gulf. The weakening of Ukraine's defense capability directly benefits Russia's expansionist desire.

Russia, which is under tough Western sanctions, still exports huge amounts of oil — mainly to China, India, and some countries in the Global South. The turmoil in the Middle East has generated concerns about supply disruptions across the Strait of Hormuz, forcing oil prices to rise. Even a slight but continuous rise in prices boosts the Kremlin's revenues, allowing it to fund the war and avoid lowering the price restriction on Russian oil in new sanctions packages.

Ironically, Russia has utilized armed conflict to present itself as a prospective mediator in peace negotiations. Moscow's offers to broker peace between Iran and Israel may not be convincing, but they have significant symbolic value for Russian propaganda. Russia is projecting itself in the region not as an aggressor in Ukraine, but as a «peacemaker» in the Middle East, attempting to lessen its pariah status.

The paper investigates why the Iran-Israel war revealed that Russia has lost its geopolitical might and has become an unreliable partner, while it has utilized it to strengthen its own position. In this context, we examine Russian-Iranian relations, using intercepted electronic correspondence between Russian officials from the DALLAS PARK website to shed light on how the Kremlin promotes its own interests in the Middle East and utilizes its allies for these purposes.

# ANALYSIS OF RUSSIAN-IRANIAN RELATIONS BASED ON DALLAS PARK INTELLIGENCE

At the time of publication of this report, DALLAS users have access to email dumps from a number of important Russian figures, which provide insight into Russian-Iranian relations. In particular, they deepen knowledge about the level of economic and military cooperation between the two countries.

In the context of economic cooperation, two sources are available to users of the DALLAS website:

- The first source is the email archive of **Alexander Babakov**, Deputy Chairman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, responsible for establishing interparliamentary relations and relations with compatriots abroad. He administers the activities of the Russian "fifth column" abroad as part of Russia's large-scale policy of active measures and hybrid influence in the international arena<sup>1</sup>.
- The second source is the email archive of **Semyon Bagdasarov**, a former deputy of the Russian State Duma, director of the Russian Center for the Study of the Middle East and Central Asia, and propagandist<sup>2</sup>.

In particular, thanks to documents from Bagdasarov's mailbox, investigators could establish that this top official was, and most likely still is, an intermediary between Russian and Iranian legal entities. In particular, to circumvent Russian sanctions.

For example, correspondence revealed that as of 2023, five Russian thermal power plants (Novogorkovsk, Vladimir, Perm, Akademicheskaya, and Izhevsk) needed urgent maintenance of gas turbines (nine units) and compressors. The sanctions prevented the Russians from purchasing a number of consumable spare parts, leaving them in short supply. Accordingly, Bagdasarov acted as an intermediary in establishing cooperation with the Iranian company PESG Group.

Among the many issues of Iranian-Russian relations available in Bagdasarov's mailbox, the most important for the Russians were the following, in particular:

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1 <https://informnapalm.org/en/babakovleaks/>

2 <https://informnapalm.org/en/bagdasarovleaks-hacking-semyon-bagdasarov/>

- **settlement of debts to Rosatom State Corporation for the construction of the second and third units of the Bushehr NPP.**
- **exchange of technologies between Russian energy and industrial companies and Iranian partners, organization of joint production (including in Russia), and repair of gas turbine installations.**
- **development and implementation of projects for the construction of small- and medium-tonnage LNG plants in Iran.**
- **development and implementation of a project to create a gas hub in Iran for the purpose of supplying energy resources to countries in Central and South Asia and the Persian Gulf.**

This data allows us to identify the key economic issues in Russian-Iranian relations: circumvention of sanctions and energy resources. In fact, this is what unites these two authoritarian regimes.

In terms of military cooperation, users of the DALLAS resource can independently explore the email archive of the leaders of the Russian UAV manufacturer Albatros LLC. In particular, the archive contains data on how the director of this company, Alexei Florov, and his team of engineers were involved in managing the project to localize Iranian Shahed-136 strike drones in the Alabuga special economic zone in Tatarstan, Russia<sup>3</sup>.

Thanks to the analysis of this archive, it was possible to find out the following:

- **information about the design capacity of the plant in Alabuga;**
- **data on the cost of its construction;**
- **which foreign components are used in the production of Russian drones;**
- **the names of those involved in Russia's drone production.**

But these are not all the valuable documents contained in the archive of the Russian UAV manufacturer's mailbox. The lists of Alabuga employees who went on business trips to Iran became valuable for journalistic investigations and law enforcement agencies. Notably, these business trips selected individuals with knowledge of languages, mechanical engineering, unmanned aerial vehicles, and military specialists. Some of the employees spent a total of almost 80 days in Iran in 2023.

The outcome of cooperation in the field of UAV production is known. Russia has successfully adapted Iranian technology, significantly increased production, and improved the resistance of the Geran UAV to the influence of Ukrainian

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<sup>3</sup> <https://informnapalm.org/en/hacking-russian-uav-manufacturer-part-1/>

electronic warfare systems<sup>4</sup>. According to Ukrainian military intelligence, as of the end of May 2025, Russia's production rate of Shahed-136/Geran-2 drones is about 2,700 per month. This estimate of Shahed production rates represents a fivefold increase compared to the summer of 2024<sup>5</sup>.

Thus, in addition to information from open sources about the cooperation between the two authoritarian states, the unique documents and data contained in the DALLAS archives offer an even deeper understanding of the relationship between Russia and Iran.

Russia calls itself an ally of Iran. And this is indeed the case. Russia needed Iran's experience of operating under sanctions to adapt its economy to the realities of sanctions. First, after the illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014, and later after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Even the very fact that Russia paid in gold for the technology to produce Shahed attack drones indicates its adaptation to long-term existence under Western sanctions. In fact, the agreement to purchase UAVs gave rise to a hidden payment network that included gold transfers and intermediary countries to circumvent Western sanctions, which significantly complicated the international community's efforts to ensure export control<sup>6</sup>.

However, the partnership between Iran and Russia appears to be somewhat one-sided. Russia has received more dividends. Russia has developed a nuclear program in Iran and is building a nuclear power plant. Russia is developing a program in Iran to build a liquefied natural gas transportation network. All this is not just a matter of infrastructure—it is about penetrating Iran and strengthening its control through Russian state corporations.

This approach also applies to the defense industry, as Moscow did not provide Tehran with military equipment, space technology, and, ultimately, nuclear technology, which Tehran had counted on, in exchange for Shahed drones. The Iranian media often express dissatisfaction with the fact that Russia does not supply its weapons even under already signed contracts<sup>7</sup>.

**In fact, the two countries are united only by the similarity of their political regimes — authoritarianism — as well as anti-Western rhetoric and an attempt to build a bloc of countries of the so-called Global South as a counterweight to the West. This is enough to consolidate efforts on the international stage.**

**However, the partnership is one-sided, with Iran playing a secondary**

<sup>4</sup> <https://dallas-park.com/strike-on-russian-antenna-production-facility-why-it-matters/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://forbes.ua/news/rosiya-viroblyae-2700-shakhediv-na-misyats-mayzhe-stilki-zh-imitatoriv-gur-09062025-30369>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2025/05/29/russia-iran-drone-cooperation-industry/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/articles/cwygv99nlo>

**role. However, Iran has successfully fulfilled this role and is doing everything possible to help Russia build up its capabilities to continue its aggressive war in Ukraine.**

# CONSEQUENCES OF RUSSIA'S REFUSAL TO SUPPORT IRAN IN THE IRANIAN-ISRAELI CONFLICT

## **The Kremlin's position on Iran**

On June 13, 2025, the Israel Defense Forces launched a military operation against Iran, targeting facilities related to the nuclear program, key infrastructure, military and political leadership, and scientists. The situation escalated daily, culminating in a US airstrike on Iranian nuclear facilities in Isfahan, Fordow, and Natanz.

Russia was one of the first to condemn Israel for the strikes and called for de-escalation and an immediate ceasefire. Turkey and China, which also maintain relations with Iran, did the same. However, the Russian Federation, which positions itself as an ally of Iran, limited itself to loud statements.

Earlier this year, Russian dictator Putin met with the Iranian leader in the Kremlin and signed a new strategic partnership agreement aimed at strengthening the alliance between the two countries<sup>8</sup>. However, after more than a week of airstrikes by Israel and the US, this cooperation proved ineffective for Tehran.

The agreement on comprehensive strategic cooperation between Russia and Iran mostly contains declarative and vague wording. In particular, it cannot in any way be considered a military alliance agreement. After signing, Moscow immediately emphasized this, noting that there was no question of military assistance in the event of war<sup>9</sup>.

**At the same time, an analysis of statements and political events shows that Iran tried in every way to enlist Russian support.** In particular, at the height of the bilateral exchange of missile strikes, on June 16, the Iranian parliament ratified the agreement with Russia<sup>10</sup>.

Russia, on the other hand, failed to take any concrete action and made contradictory statements. Specifically, following US President Donald Trump's declaration of Iran's «unconditional surrender»<sup>11</sup> Russian Deputy

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.kremlin.ru/supplement/6258>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/17/01/2025/678a16759a7947fd8bd01120>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.rbc.ru/rbcfreenews/684f3e0b9a79476cc3eb6c0a>

<sup>11</sup> <https://time.com/7295400/trump-us-iran-israel-war-khamenei-strike-fordow-unconditional-surrender/>

Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov issued a warning to Washington, cautioning against direct military assistance to Israel, including speculative statements on the matter<sup>12</sup>.

However, on the same day, during a meeting between the Russian president and representatives of foreign agencies, Putin stated that Iran had not asked Russia for help recently. The dictator also mentioned that Russia had offered its “Iranian friends” to work in the field of air defense, but the partners did not show much interest<sup>13</sup>. It is worth mentioning that in 2024, when Israel attacked Iran for the first time and destroyed a number of Russian S-300 anti-aircraft missile systems, Russia did not transfer more advanced air defense systems to Iran, as Iran had expected.

At the end of 2023, Tehran agreed with Moscow to purchase S-400 air defense systems, as well as Su-35 fighter jets, Mi-28 combat helicopters, and Yak-130 training aircraft, but only received the latter. Production problems in Russia and diplomatic pressure from other Persian Gulf countries forced it to abandon the supply of more modern and powerful weapons<sup>14</sup>.

**Instead of military aid, Russia tried to use the Iranian-Israeli conflict to its maximum advantage.** In particular, the Russian dictator offered his mediation services to President Trump, promising to influence the parties to the conflict to end it, but the American leader advised Russia to solve its own problem, not Iran's<sup>15</sup>.

It should be noted that Iran did not stop trying to get at least some help from Russia, especially after the US strikes on nuclear facilities. Thus, Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei asked the Kremlin dictator for help in a letter that was to be delivered by Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi at a meeting in the Kremlin on June 23.<sup>16</sup>

At this meeting, officials familiar with the negotiations reported that Araqchi asked Putin for new air defense systems and assistance in restoring the nuclear power grid. However, the Kremlin dictator once again **confirmed that Russia does not supply weapons to counter Israeli attacks**, offering only assurances of support, sincere friendship, and condemnation of the strikes on Iran. Putin said that Iran's interest in Russian technology had declined and that Tehran had not made any specific new requests.<sup>17</sup>

12 <https://www.interfax.ru/world/1031818>

13 <https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/articles/cwygv9z99nlo>

14 <https://www.wsj.com/world/israels-strike-on-iran-also-hit-russian-arms-industrys-once-strong-image-2b986ba7>

15 <https://www.newsweek.com/trump-putin-iran-deal-ukraine-war-russia-2089972>

16 <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/irans-supreme-leader-asks-putin-do-more-after-us-strikes-2025-06-23/>

17 <https://www.wsj.com/world/russia-putin-israel-trump-4c89855e?st=CcfPVL>

**It is difficult for Iran to hide its disappointment**, but with its airspace unprotected and without the help of its allies, it was forced to accept the US proposal for a ceasefire. As analysts, including Tino Sanandaji, a Swedish-Iranian researcher at the Stockholm School of Economics, point out:

**“Iran complains that China and Russia, instead of being true friends, are using Iran’s isolation to obtain cheap natural resources, selling Iran second-rate military equipment at inflated prices, sometimes without even delivering the promised equipment.”**<sup>18</sup> This statement is consistent with the conclusions presented in the previous section..

## **Russia’s interests in the context of confrontation with the West**

Russia has only once directly intervened in a conflict in the Middle East—in Syria. In all other cases, it has preferred diplomacy and neutrality. The Kremlin has traditionally positioned itself as a mediator, emphasizing that Russia is the only country with which all parties to the conflicts in the region are willing to engage in dialogue. This is Russia’s traditional strategy for waging hybrid warfare—instead of directly participating in the conflict, the Russian Federation presents itself as a third party, a peacemaker, or a mediator.

As has been established earlier, Iran is perceived by Russia as a support for its own policy rather than as an independent player. Russia is ready to use Iran’s resource base at minimal cost to itself. Accordingly, the course of the current conflict has once again shown that the Kremlin is in no hurry to spoil relations with the Persian Gulf monarchies and sever ties with Israel.

Putin’s attempt to offer his services to Trump as a mediator, described above, sufficiently illustrates this strategy. **It was in the Kremlin’s interest to present itself to the Americans as an assistant, an interlocutor on all issues in global affairs, thus forming an additional modality for itself to emerge from international isolation.** To talk about anything except Ukraine. However, this strategy failed.

Apart from the issue of mediation, there are several factors that indicate the importance of Iran as an ally for Russia as a provocateur in the region.

## **Shifting the focus of global attention away from Ukraine**

After footage of missile strikes on Tehran and Tel Aviv flooded the world news, the war in Ukraine was temporarily pushed out of the headlines. For Russia, this was a critically important respite. Western governments,

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<sup>18</sup> ibid

the media, and public opinion shifted their focus, influencing the pace of political and diplomatic processes related to sanctions against Russia and military aid to Ukraine.

The Kremlin thus used the Hamas attacks in Israel in October 2023 to promote several information operations aimed at reducing US and Western support and attention to Ukraine. In particular, the Russian Federation spread narratives accusing the West of neglecting conflicts in the Middle East in favor of supporting Ukraine and claiming that the international community would stop paying attention to Ukraine.

In particular, these Kremlin narratives were aimed at Western audiences in order to drive a wedge into military support for Ukraine and demoralize Ukrainian society by claiming that Ukraine would lose international support. These narratives were also intended to reassure the Russian domestic audience that the international community would ignore Ukraine's military needs<sup>19</sup>.

## **Redirection of US weapon supplies**

Iran's conflict with Israel directly affected the distribution of American weapons. Advanced air defense systems previously intended for Ukraine were redirected to reinforce Israeli and US forces in the Persian Gulf<sup>20</sup>. Reports indicate the redirection of 20,000 anti-drone munitions from European theaters of war to the Middle East<sup>21</sup>. Such a weakening of Ukraine's defense capabilities directly benefits Russia on the battlefield.

## **Rising oil prices boost Russian economy**

Despite being subject to severe Western sanctions, Russia still exports huge volumes of oil, primarily to China, India, and some countries in the Global South. The conflict has raised fears of supply disruptions through the Strait of Hormuz, leading to a sharp rise in oil prices. Even moderate, steady growth increases the Kremlin's revenues, helping to finance its military efforts and offset the economic losses from sanctions.

The Kremlin's logic is quite straightforward: it understands that any conflict in the Middle East will inevitably affect global energy prices, which will have a negative impact on bills and gasoline prices. Such an event will destabilize the situation in Western countries on the one hand and increase Russia's revenues on the other.

19 <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-october-7-2023>

20 <https://www.foxnews.com/video/6374281836112>

21 <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/zelenskyy-us-moved-20000-missiles-fight-drones-ukraine/story?id=122662585>

Thus, after Trump introduced tariffs in early April 2025, the price of Brent crude oil fell to \$60. But the conflict in the Middle East removed all the impact of tariffs on energy markets, returning prices to the level of late March. In particular, after the US bombed Iran's nuclear facilities, the price of Brent reached a five-month high of \$81.40. However, news of a ceasefire helped the price fall to \$69 per barrel<sup>22</sup>.

**Thus, considering the above factors, it can be concluded that Russia's main strategic interest in the Middle East is to maintain constant tension.**

At the same time, the rapid fall of the Assad regime in Syria, which has been weakened by the war with Ukraine, indicates that Russia is rapidly losing its international influence. It is unable to respond to all challenges. However, it is too early to talk about Russia losing Iran, as it has a lot to lose: **the loss of Iran would be a major defeat for Russia in the region, and its position in the Middle East would weaken even further.** Russia will try to prevent such an incident from happening—this will be Moscow's main strategy in the region.

## **Russia's distancing from Iran**

**Now that the hot phase of the conflict in the Middle East has ended, our analysts are seeing signs that Russia is conducting an information operation to distance itself from Iran.**

On June 25, 2025, **The Insider** published<sup>23</sup> unique documents from the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) counterintelligence, which, according to the publication, prove that «relations between Russia and Iran, despite Moscow's apparent rapprochement with Tehran, are fraught with mutual distrust, and both countries continue to actively spy on each other.» Based on sources in the special services, investigators conclude that Russia still considers Iran more of an enemy than an ally and does not want to allow it to acquire nuclear weapons.

Among the documents made public, Russian counterintelligence officers write about the need to infiltrate Iranian special services to obtain valuable information about “Iran's insidious actions in Russia” (such as information campaigns in religious circles that could lead to interfaith conflicts), as well as the internal situation in Iran (in particular, for example, about the possible successor to Ayatollah Khamenei). The document also lists specific measures to be taken to prevent Iran's subversive activities, including “conducting counterintelligence searches among immigrants from Iran” and recruiting

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22 <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cg5vr2rvzg40>

23 <https://theins.ru/inv/282448>

“graduates of Iranian religious centers.”<sup>24</sup>

At the same time, the published documents raise several questions that investigators do not answer. Specifically, the investigators fail to assess the general practice of FSB counterintelligence. There is a high probability that the published documents are standard procedure for the Russian security agency, which is required by its mandate to conduct such analysis on all countries. The counterintelligence agency is therefore obliged to assess risks and threats, regardless of whether a country is an ally or an enemy of the Russian Federation.

Another question concerns the timing of the publication of these documents. The fact that investigators obtained and published documents discrediting Iranian-Russian relations against the backdrop of the Russian Federation’s openly weak position as an ally during the conflict in the Middle East and Iran’s repeated pleas for help indicates signs of an information operation. However, to draw additional conclusions, it is necessary to analyze the related information context.

In particular, it has already been established in previous sections that Russian dictator Putin made two public statements, on June 18 and 23, that Russia would not help Iran and that Iran had not asked for help. Moreover, the second statement was made during a direct meeting with Iranian representatives, which once again casts doubt on the claim that no requests for assistance had been made.

However, it is worth mentioning another event in the information environment, namely the statement by the head of the Russian National Security Council, former President Medvedev, and the subsequent reaction of US President Trump.

On June 22, 2025, the head of the Russian Security Council published a post on his Telegram page in response to the US bombing of Iranian targets. Medvedev stated that as a result of the strike, Iran would continue its military nuclear program and create nuclear weapons.

“Several countries are ready to directly supply Iran with their nuclear arsenal,”<sup>25</sup> said the former Russian president, without specifying who he meant. Medvedev typically uses «nuclear rhetoric» to gauge the response of Western countries to Russia’s potential aggression<sup>26</sup>. European officials, unlike in the US, have usually responded sharply to previous nuclear threats from the head of the Russian Security Council. However, this time, President Trump personally responded quite sharply to Medvedev’s post.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*

<sup>25</sup> [https://t.me/medvedev\\_telegram/592](https://t.me/medvedev_telegram/592)

<sup>26</sup> <https://informnapalm.org/en/medvedevleaks/>

"Did I really hear that Medvedev promised to supply nuclear warheads to Iran? Did he really say that, or is it just my imagination? If he did say that, and if it is confirmed, please let me know IMMEDIATELY," Trump wrote on the social network Truth Social<sup>27</sup>. The US president made it clear that the word "nuclear" is off limits and should not be used "so carelessly."

The former Russian president later said he condemns the US strike on Iran, but Russia has no plans to supply nuclear weapons to Iran. He recalled that Russia allegedly has no intention of supplying nuclear weapons to Iran because, "unlike Israel, it is a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty." Medvedev explained that his post, to which Trump responded, was about other countries possibly transferring weapons to Iran<sup>28</sup>.

Considering that Medvedev's first post was in Russian on the Russian Telegram network and the second in English on Twitter, it can be concluded that the second post was aimed at a Western audience. **Accordingly, there are certain reasons to consider this a kind of justification.**

Thus, there are quite plausible signs of a coordinated information operation to distance the Russian Federation from Iran, involving senior Russian officials and special services. **This operation includes Putin's statements regarding the lack of requests for assistance, Russian actions that favor Iran, former President Medvedev's justifications, and the «unexpectedly timely» leak and publication of compromising documents from Russian counterintelligence.**

**Given that in the previous section we expressed the position that Russia is interested in maintaining its influence in the Middle East, we believe that the information operation of ostensibly distancing itself from Iran creates a false picture of reality and is a cover-up operation.**

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27 <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/114733380709403439>

28 <https://x.com/medvedvrussiae/status/1937207817397486056>

# CONCLUSIONS

The documentation available in the DALLAS database concerning Russian-Iranian relations complements the discourse on cooperation between the two authoritarian regimes and does not refute the overall picture of reality. **The partnership between Iran and Russia is asymmetrical:** Iran plays a secondary role in it. Despite this, **Iran has successfully accepted this position and is actively helping Russia strengthen its military capabilities to continue the war against Ukraine.**

**Russia, on the other hand, has proven to be an unreliable partner.** We have determined that Putin was not afraid to refuse Iran's requests for assistance, as he no longer needs it as a supplier of weapons: the production of Shahed drones has been successfully established, scaled up, and modernized in Russia itself. In addition, Moscow has not used the Fath-360 missiles it received from Iran in the war against Ukraine, unlike the missiles and ammunition from North Korea.

**At the same time, there are not enough arguments to believe that Russia plans to abandon Iran for good.**

An analysis of Russia's interests in the region in the context of its ongoing aggression against Ukraine gives reason to believe that the Middle East map is extremely beneficial to Putin's regime. Therefore, taking into account the above circumstances, it can be concluded that **Russia's key strategic interest in the Middle East is to maintain constant instability in the region.** Therefore, losing Iranian support would significantly weaken Russia's position in the region, a situation it will actively strive to avoid. Such an outcome is likely to determine Russia's future strategy in the Middle East.

An analysis of the information field allows us to assume, with a certain degree of caution, that after the announcement of the truce between Iran and Israel, Russia is conducting an information cover-up operation, which consists of a rather demonstrative distancing from Iran, creating a false picture of reality, and pursuing two goals:

- **to preserve the possibility of dialogue with the US, which, in essence, has become a party to the conflict;**
- **and, as a result, to return to the strategy of mediator in the conflict to break out of international isolation.**

However, to model Russia's future strategy toward Iran, it is necessary to

proceed with a comprehensive combination of all the interests of the Russian Federation. So, the question arises: how can Russia, despite its rapid loss of influence in the region, maintain its presence and at the same time continue to position itself as a mediator to please the US administration?

The standard Russian strategy for waging hybrid wars requires the use of the parties to the conflict as proxies. Iran should continue to act as such a proxy—without a nuclear program, possibly even with a new leader, but dependent on limited Russian assistance. Russia can continue to promise air defense systems, and if Iran has problems with UAV production, Russia can generously supply Iranian drones back. After all, this technology has been successfully scaled up by the Russian Federation for its use, and it is certainly not a loss to transfer it to Iran.

In one sense or another, Russia requires a source of instability to maintain oil prices at a higher level. Accordingly, Russia is distancing itself from Iran in the media, but in reality it will do everything possible to support the limited viability of its regime. In order to continue to benefit from it in the future.

Thus, the international community should develop its own strategy based on the fact that one of the keys to solving the problems in the Middle East is precisely the Russian question.

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