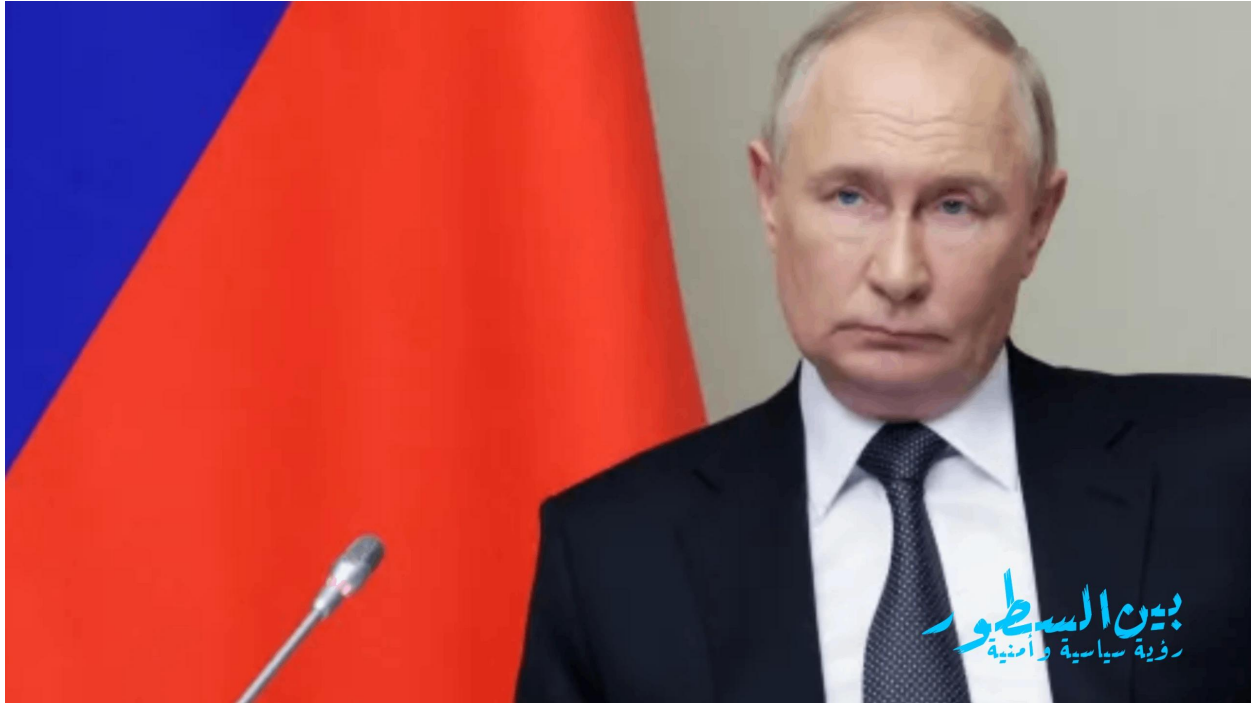


Why Russia Won't Easily Abandon Syria: An Analysis of Moscow's Strategic Calculations

Hamza Hassan | December 7, 2024



This is an AI-generated English translation. The original text is in Arabic.

No politically aware reader can imagine that Russia's recent apparent abandonment of Bashar al-Assad means an easy surrender of its most significant sphere of influence in modern history on the Mediterranean, near one of the most volatile regions in the world: the Arab world and the Gulf specifically.

The Russian presence in Syria has never been tied to Bashar al-Assad as much as it has been linked to a larger and deeper objective: for Russia to have a stable land and military foothold on the Mediterranean, allowing it to exert direct influence over the hot events in the region and providing it with permanent leverage over the West, the United States, and even China.

For this reason, the Syrian rebels are currently moving wisely, deliberately avoiding actions in areas like Tartus and Latakia, as they fully understand that

approaching those bases means entering into direct confrontation with Russia, which considers them a strategic red line, regardless of its stance on Assad or the rest of the regime.

Russia may appear in the coming days as if it is retreating from supporting Assad, but in reality, it will not abandon its major interests unless it secures solid agreements from Turkey or even from the Syrian opposition itself that ensure the continuation of its influence and prevent the complete transfer of the Syrian decision-making to its adversaries.

Therefore, we cannot rely on the current apparent Russian positions, as the final word in Syria - for Russia - has not yet been spoken, and the real danger to its interests has not yet approached closely enough to reveal its true cards.

Hamza Hassan