Russia's invasion of Ukraine impacts the Middle East too

By Bat Chen Druyan Feldman and Joze Pelayo / March 4, 2022

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Russia and its ties to the Middle East

The Russian invasion of Ukraine, launched on a large scale on February 24, marked the most significant escalation by Russia against its neighbor since 2014 and the largest invasion in Europe since World War II. In the past few years, the Kremlin has also returned to the Middle East and reestablished relationships from its USSR days.

After Syria, Russia emerged as a critical powerbroker for autocrats in the region. Not only has Russia been able to bring the Russia-Saudi relationship to new highs with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, but it has also kept its most important relationship in the region with Iran. Russia's return to the Middle East a decade ago—right after the Arab Spring—was met with fears that it would reemerge as a hostile actor against US interests, and the recent invasion of Ukraine may give those fears a greater sense of urgency.

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Bat Chen Druyan Feldman is a research assistant in the Iran and Regional Affairs Program at the Institute for National Security Studies in Tel Aviv, Israel.

Joze Pelayo is an assistant director at the Scowcroft Middle East Security Initiative and Middle East Programs. Follow him on Twitter: @jozemrpelayo.

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