

*A Change in US Security Policy Concerning Russia: Planning for Indirect
Conflict*

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I. Introduction

“The construction of the Bushehr nuclear power station is nearing completion, and we are ready to continue collaboration with Iran in the sphere of nuclear power engineering, taking into consideration our international nonproliferation obligations, and to look for mutually acceptable political solutions in this area.”

Vladimir Putin to Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad¹

Since the 18th century, the Middle East has been the center of power struggles as the European powers and the United States struggled to impose dominion and control over various parts of the region. In recent years, Russia has increasingly become a large player in the Middle East, vying for control in the area. Particularly, in Iran, Russia has been supporting Iran’s nuclear program, giving them highly enriched Uranium, helping them build reactors, and lending scientists to ensure continued support and upkeep of these reactors. However, as many Western states are backing off from Iran due to their insistence on weapons, Russia is continuing to support and aid the Iranian nuclear power program. This is creating a situation that is ripe for creating possible conflicts within the region, that could possibly draw the United States into an indirect conflict with Russia. The issue for the United States security policymakers to begin to focus on is why would Russia continually support Iran and its nuclear endeavors, against the security concerns of the Western community? To answer this question, one has to examine Russia’s own new security strategy. Russia’s new strategy is to gain as much influence within the Middle-East, so as to protect their future oil reserves and to prevent terrorism on their soil by providing the Middle-Eastern states with technology. This strategy puts Russia on a path of defending Middle-Eastern countries, particularly, Iran, that have stated opposition to the United States and/or Israel. In other words, Russia’s new security strategy could

¹ Interfax. “Russian Presidential Service Says Russia is Ready for Nuclear Cooperation with Iran,” October 25, 2005, [Foreign Broadcast Information Service \(FBIS\)-Russia](#), October 26, 2005.

become a catalyst for an indirect conflict with the United States, and as such must be addressed by the US policymakers and the Western world.

Traditionally, conflict with Russia was addressed within the parameters of a direct conflict between the USSR and the US. Under a direct conflict framework, US security policies targets the reduction of the stockpiles of nuclear weapons, thereby reducing the direct confrontation and threat, by reducing MAD, mutually assured destruction.

However, until Russia's recent participation in the building of Iran's nuclear reactor program, the threat of indirect conflict with Russia has not been addressed. Therefore, unless proactive policy measures are enacted to prevent an indirect conflict and a comprehensive strategy developed, the US could become embroiled in an indirect conflict with Russia, similar to the proxy wars of Korea, Vietnam and Afghanistan.

Such a conflict is possible within the next few years, based on the rate of the development of Iran's nuclear program and the Western worlds determination to thwart that development. Understanding the issue is the first step in developing a comprehensive security policy to avoid an indirect conflict. The steps to addressing this issue are 1) to understand the basis of US-Russia security policy, 2) to understand the security and political history between Russian and Iran, 3) to understand the current Russian-Iranian partnership, and 4) to understand Russia's new security framework. Only by looking at these four things can a comprehensive policy recommendation for the U.S. can be put forth.

Using Kenneth Waltz's theory of Neo-Realism, Russia's new security strategy can start to take shape. Russia is working for its own state goals, not bending to other Western state pressure. Russia wants to take up what has been, up till now, a mainly

Western power struggle, and become the new powerbroker in the Middle East. This can be seen in many different ways, but mainly, using Waltz's theory, through their continued support of Iran, their politics, and their security policies. By taking on this role, Russia has changed its security policy to one of not if a state will get nuclear weapons, but when. This new strategy will be addressed below, but first the base must be built.

Chapter 1: Theory

Russia has always been a state that's main focus is for its own self-interest. There are a lot of articles written on this topic, using a variety of differing theories. In order to analyze the reason why Russia would continue to support Iran's nuclear endeavors and why they believe it will give them a foothold in the Middle East, a theory must be established. This paper will take Kenneth Waltz's theory of neorealism to explain Russia's actions in the Middle East, specifically regarding Iran. However, it is necessary to give a basic overview of Walt's theory and how it applies to Russian foreign policy.

Kenneth Waltz put the neorealist theory forth in 1979. Neorealism derives from classical realism, which states that "the roots of international conflict lies in the imperfections of human nature".² Neorealism, on the other hand, focuses predominantly on the imperfections in the international system.

Neorealism holds that the international structure is "defined by its ordering principle, which is anarchy, and by the distribution of capabilities measured by the

² Pashakhanlou, Arash. "Comparing and Contrasting Classical Realism and Neorealism: A re-examination of Hans Morgenthau's and Kenneth Waltz's Theories of International Relations." *International Relations Journal*. 23 July, 2009. <http://www.e-ir.info/2009/07/23/comparing-and-contrasting-classical-realism-and-neo-realism/>

number of great powers within the international system”.³ This is referred to as the anarchic ordering principle of international structure. This anarchic principal says that the “ international field is decentralized, having no formal central authority, and is composed of equal sovereign states”⁴. The theory states that “these states act according to the logic of self-help—states seek their own interest and will not subordinate their interest to another's.”⁵ This is the main plank in the neorealist theory, that states will and do act in their own interests, without regard to international systems. This is the aspect of the theory that will be used throughout this paper.

Waltz also has other parts of his theory, one of which is important to this thesis. Waltz states that the international system is always in one of three scenarios. These are the multipolar system, bipolar system, and the unipolar system⁶. In order to determine which system the world is currently in, Waltz looks at how many great powers are in the international world. A multipolar world has many great powers, all of equal strength. This is seen in the pre WWI world, where Britain, the US, France, Germany ect.. all had an equal amount of power. A bipolar world is where the international system has two states of equal power. This is what took place during the Cold War, where the USSR and the U.S. each had equal power. A unipolar system is where the international system only has one main, leading state. This type of scenario can be seen throughout history, the Roman empire, the Greek empire ect. It also is the situation in which the world finds itself today. The U.S. is the main power in the international world today.

³ Waltz, Kenneth. *Theory of International Politics*. (Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Pub Co, 1979). 132

⁴ Waltz, Kenneth. *Theory of International Politics*. (Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Pub Co, 1979). 130

⁵ Waltz, Kenneth. *Theory of International Politics*. (Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Pub Co, 1979). 120

⁶ Waltz, Kenneth. *Theory of International Politics*. (Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Pub Co, 1979). 110

Waltz puts forward his own ideas, that a bipolar system is more stable than a multipolar system because balancing can only occur through internal balancing, as there are no extra great powers with which to form alliances.⁷

Going off of the neorealism theory, that all states act towards their own interests, we can partly see why Russia has changed its security policy. The Russian state sees a benefit to their state by supporting Iran and other Middle Eastern countries, it also has seen the international world has changed from a bipolar system to a unipolar system. By accepting that fact, a new security policy for the U.S. must be addressed, as currently its security policy is focused on a bipolar world. However, first a historical context must be addressed.

Chapter 2: US-Russian Survey

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia has been trying to find its place in international politics. However, many Western scholars and academics, still cling to the old way of defining Russia. They write about new nuclear treaties with Russia, assuming we are still in a bipolar world. As such, the topic of modern Russia and its growing security interests in the Middle East have not academically studied in detail. Therefore, a base must be put forth in order to fully understand it. It must be firmly established why it is important to study modern Russian security policies in the Middle East. In order to do this, Russia's policy objectives, specifically towards the Middle East, must be established. This base must show how Russia's new policy will relate to and affect the world, specifically the U.S. In order to build this base and show the importance of Russian actions in the Middle East, the U.S. foreign policy towards Russia must be

⁷ Waltz., 135

surveyed, then their security partnership must be looked at, and finally the US security issues must be addressed. By looking at these, the missing piece of the puzzle can be determined: Russia's intentions, whether harmful or innocent, in the Middle East.

The U.S. policy towards Russia in the years after the collapse of the Soviet Union till now, have always been strained in one regard or another. The U.S. policy, while it has changed since the collapse, seems to still view Russia in a suspicious light.

According to Keith Porter, "Russia seems to have taken on the mantle of the Soviet Union to the U.S. and the Western states in general. As such, the U.S. policy towards Russia is only slightly better than it was under the Soviet Union".⁸

This rhetoric has tempered most academic research in this area of study and has made it based in that mind set. Academic and Journal articles tend to shed a bleak light on Russia's economic situation, political intentions and international ideas. Most journals put forth the idea that Russia's politics and economics are flawed and not up to Western standards. While it may be true, that they are not up to Western standards; the policies in place seem to work for modern Russia. It is old ideas such as these that help ensure a non-cooperative relationship. What is needed is a new base line for U.S. policy and academic research. One based on the current and modern international arena. This new base must be established on Medvedev's and Putin's policy and how it relates to the world. This new baseline will help the U.S. in determining what to do in regards to Russia's new security strategy.

The second thing that must be addressed in order to create this base is the security policy between the U.S. and Russia. The security policy, like the U.S. policy, is based on

⁸ Porter, Keith. "The Relationship of the United States with Russia". Foreign Policy Online. <http://usforeignpolicy.about.com/od/countryprofile1/p/usrussia.htm>

old ideas. The security policy is based on a direct conflict between the USSR and the U.S., as it focuses on nuclear arms control towards each other.

Many of the non-proliferation and disarmament treaties are focused mainly on U.S. and Russia and their nuclear weapons. This focus towards each other's weapons and security only creates an arena of mistrust, while also focusing on the idea of a direct conflict with Russia. This can be seen with the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, START, which was signed in 2010 and entered into force last year, 2011. This treaty focused solely on Russia and the U.S. and their nuclear weapons reduction. "Under terms of the treaty, the number of strategic nuclear missile launchers will be reduced by half. A new inspection and verification regime will be established, replacing the SORT mechanism".⁹ As this part of the treaty states, it is focused and signed by Russia and the U.S.

While this is not a bad thing, it fails to focus on bigger issues such as the Middle East and on the new security framework of indirect conflict. It also keeps these two states in the mindset of 'enemy friends', where they are consistently suspicious of each other and of each others intentions. This creates a tenuous relationship at best. In order to avoid this, a new baseline must be used. One, as mentioned, that focuses on Russia's new security framework and not on old security ideas. This baseline can be used to create more viable treaties and create a more stable and cooperative security relationship between Russia and the U.S. Only then can the issue of a possible indirect conflict with Russia be addressed.

⁹ Department of State – New START Treaty. TREATY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ON MEASURES FOR THE FURTHER REDUCTION AND LIMITATION OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS, Thur 8 Apr 2010.
<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/140035.pdf>

The last thing that must be addressed in order to create this base and answer the question, is the U.S. security issues, specifically that in the Middle East. The U.S. has many security issues that it is addressing. Some of these are at home security issues such, needing to be dealt with internally. However, some of the U.S. security issues are focused abroad, towards their ally states as well as their enemy ones. These include its nuclear issues, its war in Iraq and Afghanistan, and European issues. However, among its main security concerns are focused in the Middle East and the most recent actions by states and the change in governments there in that arena.

One of the main concerns facing the U.S. in the Middle East is Iran and its nuclear weapons agenda. With the recent threats from Iran towards Israel and the West in general, the U.S. has had to feel a burden of being the protector. Also, with Israel threatening to attack Iran within the next few months, the U.S. is put into a precarious situation. Whether to support Israel in its ambition or let them stand alone. With all this going on, Russia has not only agreed to support Iran in its nuclear endeavors, but also has signed an Mutual Defense Treaties with Iran and other Middle Eastern states. As such, the U.S. must look at its security framework and have options when the time comes to make a decision regarding Israel and Iran. Only then will they, as a state, be able to create a viable goal and policy towards both Russia and the mounting problem in the Middle East.

Therefore, with these concerns mounting, knowing and understanding Russia's new security intentions in the Middle East, specifically Iran, is a must, in order to asses future U.S. security issues. This is why a baseline has been necessary. Establishing a line of thought and study, has not only shown the a new security framework is in order

for the U.S., but has also started to address what Russia's intentions in the Middle East are. With all this, it can be seen why it is so important to study this field in more detail.

In order to create a well-informed thesis and show why studying Russia's actions are important, a baseline was necessary to be established. To establish the base, the U.S. foreign policy towards Russia has been surveyed and determined that it is of an old philosophy. Then the security partnership between Russia and the U.S. was looked at and seen that it as well was based on direct conflict ideas and must be revamped. Finally the US security issues were addressed, and it was shown that understanding Russia's intentions in the Middle East, specifically in Iran, is one of great importance to the U.S. and its allies. This will help determine future relations and policies between these two states.

The baseline established in this chapter, why studying Russia in the Middle East is important, it is one that will take precedence throughout the rest of this paper. By using this base, the missing piece of the puzzle and the main part of this thesis can be determined and start to unfold. It will answer the question, what are Russia's intentions, whether harmful or innocent, in the Middle East, while also addressing its new security strategy. This is going to be the main theme throughout the rest of this paper. However, a base was necessary to be established, in order to uphold the thesis and following assertions throughout the paper.

Chapter 3: Security and Political history: Russian and Iran

Jules Michelet, a 19th century French historian, once said, "Those who confine themselves to present times, will not understand present reality".¹⁰ To understand why

¹⁰ Legvold, Robert. *Russian Foreign Policy in the 21st Century and the Shadow of the Past*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007). 11

Russia believes they will gain a political foothold in the Middle East through their continued support of Iran, a historical context must be established. In order to do that, the history of the both Iran and Russia's foreign policy and their political relationship will be looked at in some detail.

The Russian-Iranian relationship has a long history, dating back to the 1660's with the Russian Tsar's dealings with the Persian Shah. While this paper will not dwell on Imperial Russia and its dealings with Persia, it is important to have a basic overview. In mid-18th century, with the fall of the Safavid Empire, a power struggle for a foothold in the region was waged by colonial states, including the Russian empire¹¹. Eventually, the Russian empire took the northern territories of Persia. This all was ended in the 1900's, when along with the October Revolution, the Iranians rose up against Russia. As can be seen, up till this point, the Russian empire subjugated the Persians.

After the collapse of the Russian empire, the Soviet Union took the stage. The Soviet Union, attempted to secure a communist foothold in the Middle East. They did this by invading Afghanistan in 1979. This war lasted 9 years and ended with the Soviet withdrawal.¹²

The relationship between Iran and the USSR was no better. Iran's leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, deemed Islam is incompatible with communist ideals.¹³ This left Soviet-Iranian relations at a standstill. As such, the Soviet Union started working with Iraq. During the Iran-Iraq war, the USSR sold Iraq large quantities of weapons.

¹¹ Ellis, Edward. *Russian-Persian Relations*. "The Story of the Greatest Nations and the World's Famous Events." (New York: 1913)

¹² Legvold. 40.

¹³ Legvold, 30.

In 1990, Iran began to look outwards for new partners for its nuclear program; however, due to a radically different political climate and punitive U.S. economic sanctions, few candidates existed to help them in their struggle. Because of this and with the fall of the Soviet Union, Tehran-Moscow diplomatic and commercial relations increased. The states became commercial partners. Iran began buying weapons from Russia. On the nuclear side, Russia and Iran created a joint research program known as Persepolis. This program provided Iran with “Russian nuclear experts and technical information”.¹⁴ By the mid 1990’s Russia had signed a contract with Iran that agreed to work on developing Iran’s Nuclear Program, with plans to help finish the Bushehr nuclear reactor plant. The agreement stated that Russia would “help complete the plant by installing into the existing Bushehr I building a 915 MWe VVER-1000 pressurized water reactor, which was expected to be complete in 2009”.¹⁵ There are many more agreements between Russia and Iran, however a majority of them take place in the early 2000’s. As such, these will be covered in another section of the paper, that focuses on modern ties Russia and Iran share.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia has been trying to get back on its feet and back into a position of power in world affairs. That however, has not been easy, nor welcome by most. The Soviet Union had created a sphere of influence, which stretched out towards the Middle East, in order to gain an advantage over the U.S. However, Russia is slowly expanding its influence, trying to encompass parts of the Middle East, Iran included.

¹⁴ Parker, John. “Persian Dreams: Moscow and Teheran since the fall of the Shah”. *Terrorism and Political Violence*. Vol. 23. Issue 1. 17 Dec, 2010.
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09546553.2011.533076>

¹⁵ Sahimi, Mohammad. “Iran’s Nuclear Program. Part I: Its History.” *Payvand Iran News*. 02 October, 2003. <http://www.payvand.com/news/03/oct/1015.html>

Paraphrasing what Michelet said, without at least a basic understanding of the history of a given situation, it becomes impossible to understand the current problems facing the given area today. With the Russian-Iranian nuclear relationship, it was necessary to delve into some historical background. This background has now laid the foundations as to why Russia continues to support Iran in its nuclear ambitions. Looking at the history along with Waltz's theory, it is understood that since the collapse of the USSR, Russia has been looking for ways to expand its influence and gain more power in the world sphere. By working with Iran, and other Middle Eastern states, Russia is beginning its ascent to become the new powerbroker in the Middle East.

Chapter 4: Russia's New Security Strategy, the Russian-Iranian Partnership

Security policies have been in effect since states and empires began. In ancient Rome, Greece, policies were put into place to ensure the safety of the state, whether it be based on conscription or other such policies. Today's security policies are based on nuclear weapons. It states that nuclear weapons are the enemy and states should be stopped at all costs from achieving them. However, today's security policy is in need of an expansion. As mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis, this nuclear weapons security policy is focused on direct conflict between opposing states. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world has changed and grown dramatically and as such, so to have the security issues. A new policy has been enacted by certain states, including Russia, but not the West. This new security policy must be ascertained, as the world's security is at risk. The U.S. must look and see that the new security issue is not how a state will achieve nuclear weapons, but when and what to do when that occurs.

This chapter will look at this ‘direct conflict’ policy, which is still in place in the West, its flaws and then will lie out and explain the new policy that has already been enacted by Russia, and lastly, this chapter will put forth a possible policy recommendation for the US.

The ‘Direct Conflict’ Strategy

When looking at security issues around the world, people tend to think of nuclear weapons first. This security focus of today’s world has been around for many years. It uses ideas from an age gone by, when Russia was the Soviet Union and the world shuttered in fear of an attack from nuclear weapons. With this fear, also came the idea to limit the spread of these weapons by attempting to stop any states that were pursuing them, only allowing them to have nuclear power. This left five nuclear countries with stockpiles, the two biggest being the Soviet Union, now Russia, and the United States.

As such, treaties were established to primarily stop the expansion of nuclear weapons, along with eliminating the stockpiles of the nuclear states. A major treaty put forth in this area was the Non-Proliferation Treaty, NPT. This treaty was put into effect in 1968 and states that any state that signs on to this treaty, especially the states that have nuclear weapons, will not proliferate and sell their materials to other states who do not have nuclear weapons.¹⁶ In article I, it states “Each nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; and not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce any non-nuclear-weapon

¹⁶ [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty INFCIRC/140](http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Infcircs/Others/infcirc140.pdf). 22 April, 1968.
<http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Infcircs/Others/infcirc140.pdf>

State to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons.”¹⁷ It also states that any non-nuclear power state party to the treaty “undertakes not to receive the transfer from any transferor whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly”¹⁸ This, put in to layman’s terms means that any non-nuclear state agrees not to pursue nuclear weapons.

Another treaty that was put into effect was and is the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, START for short. This treaty was drafted in 1982, but put into effect in July of 1991. The reason for this treaty was to reduce the nuclear weapons stockpiles in the USSR and the US. In the treaty it is stated that both the U.S and the Soviet Union will reduce their nuclear stockpiles in seven years to 6000 nuclear warheads, 1600 ICBM’s, etc.¹⁹

Even in today’s world, with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, we still have this mindset. In his speech on April 25 to the world leaders, the U.S. President Obama “Called for the United States to lead international efforts toward a world free of nuclear weapons.”²⁰ While this is a noble goal, it does not address the rising security issue, or the question of when.

All these treaties were put in place, as arms control was deemed necessary at the time. It was deemed to be a major security breach if even one more state achieved nuclear weapons. However, the world has changed since then, nuclear weapons, while still a threat, are no longer the major threat that they once were. But the West is stuck on the

¹⁷ Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty INFCIRC/140. Article I. 22 April, 1968.

¹⁸ Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty INFCIRC/140. Article II. 22 April, 1968.

¹⁹ Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. Article II. 1 June, 1990.

²⁰ Perry, William. “U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy.” *Council of Foreign Relations*. April 2009.

<http://www.cfr.org/proliferation/us-nuclear-weapons-policy/p19226>

idea that less nuclear weapons is equal to more and greater security. While this idea is valid, it needs to be expanded to envelop the rising new security issue. The new issue that states will get nuclear weapons; it is only a matter of time. A new security policy must be made that addresses this. One that does not only attempt to defend against nuclear weapons, but also is proactive and answers the question of what to do when it happens.

Chapter 5: Russia's New Security Strategy, the Indirect Conflict

Security, especially nuclear security, tends to be defined differently by different states around the world. The West's definition of security is being able to ensure other states cannot have nuclear weapons and cannot attack their allies. Russia's on the other hand, has changed since its years as the Soviet Union. Other states, such as Iran and other 3rd world states, as they are called, believe it is their right to have nuclear weapons. Along this vane, they also believe the West's ideals about securing nuclear weapons and not allowing others states to have them, is hypocritical.

Russia has been out from under the influence of the Soviet Union for over 20 years, and in that time it has grown and changed many of its security policies, the main one being how it handles nuclear issues. Russia security policy is one that is proactive, admitting that states will achieve nuclear weapons; it is only a matter of time. As such the policy is one that looks at what to do when those states do get nuclear weapons. Going along with this, Russia has started a new tactic of becoming these states friend, becoming their ally. While this policy is not directly stated, it can be inferred by looking

at Russia's actions, specifically in the Middle East. That is what this section will be looking at, Russia's actions in securing itself in the new world.

In Iran and other states in the Middle East, Russia has begun a relationship that is based on ensuring their security through friendship, trade and political understanding. In the Middle East, Russia has created many different interdependent states, all with a tie to Russia. These states cannot be called puppet states, as they were under the Soviet Union, as they are not just figureheads. They are functioning interdependent states. The question becomes what Russia wants with this new type of relationship. Russia seems to want these states to have a functioning economic dependence on Russia, whether for nuclear power or economic aid. Russia offers these states a gain through capitalism. Russia has these states join them by offering conventional weapons, nuclear power materials, experts in the nuclear field, and also offer help in building infrastructure. By doing this Russia is creating a bond with the states in the Middle East, ensuring their security if these state do achieve nuclear weapons.

There are several examples of this, too many to put into this chapter; however, one primary example is Russia's defense pact with both Iran and Syria. Russia has stated on more than one occasion that "Iran is our close neighbor, just south of the Caucasus. Should anything happen to Iran, should Iran get drawn into any political or military hardships, this will be a direct threat to our national security."²¹ This type of partnership fairly new, and is interesting coming now, when Israel has threatened to attack. This relationship also means that Russia will defend Iran, if it is attacked, and has said so many times.

²¹ Rogozin, Dmitry. "Any Conflict with Iran is a direct threat to Russian Security". RT. 14 January, 2012. <http://rt.com/politics/syria-iran-nato-rogozin-749/>

Another example of Russia creating ties in the Middle East, Iran specifically, is its building of the Bushier Nuclear reactor. In 1995, Russia agreed to send scientists and nuclear material to Iran to help aid them in their nuclear program. Russia continues to aid them even now. Beyond this, is the fact that Russia argues for Iran's right to nuclear power to the US and other Western states, who have put sanctions on Iran do to their unwillingness to comply to IAEA regulations. This type of relationship is one of good faith. As such, Iran has made it clear to terrorists in Eastern Europe, that they are not to attack any Russian city or any Russian people.²²

There are many more examples of Russia employing its new security methods in the Middle East, however it is more important to talk about the results. In 2011, during the Libyan crisis, NATO was asked to step in. However, leaders of Libya did not want the West to arrange a ceasefire, in fact they asked for Russia to arrange it. "Libya's foreign minister Baghdadi Mahmoudi asked Moscow to arrange an immediate ceasefire in his country and the start of settlement talks with the Western coalition without any preconditions."²³ Russia agreed. With this type of agreement, Russia has insured their security. These relationships helps ensure that when a Middle Eastern state gets nuclear weapons, and they will, Russia will be a partner and will not be in danger.

This type of relationship is different than the one now being used by the U.S. and the West. It is one of economic partnerships and political aid. This relationship, as mentioned above, ensures Russia's security for when these states get nuclear weapons. It is one of proactive action, not defensive such as in the West. The West's security policy, while it was good for a time, is now struggling just to keep up with the changing times.

²² Kessler, Christopher. Personal Interview. 30 November, 2011.

²³ "Libyan FM asks Russia to Arrange a Ceasefire". *Moscow Times*. 27 May, 2011.
<http://english.ruvr.ru/2011/05/27/50881884.html>

The IAEA, the non-proliferation treaties and the like all serve to protect, so long as states do not get nuclear weapons. This is why, in the next chapter, a security recommendation will be made to the US regarding Russia's new security policy and how they to can plan for the inevitable.

Chapter 6: U.S. Policy Recommendation

The U.S. current security policy, regarding Russia, as mentioned earlier, is focused on direct conflict. However, this issue has already been addressed through many treaties, many of which I mentioned above. As such, the U.S. must address a new strategy in order to avoid an indirect conflict.

In the Middle East, the U.S. has a relationship specifically with Israel. This relationship is both economic and political for both states. There is an assumption between Israel and the U.S. that if Israel is in a conflict, the U.S. will be there to aid and support them. Adding on top of this, Russia has a Mutual Defense Treaty with Iran.

With Israel's recent statements about them attacking Iran within the next few months and the U.S. has a partnership with Israel and Russia's MDT with Iran, an indirect conflict between Russia and the U.S. is likely to occur. In order to avert this coming conflict, the U.S. must look at and enact certain security policies changes.

This thesis attempts to make a few plausible policy actions for the U.S. The first is that the U.S. could look for a loop hole in the Russian-Iranian mutual defense treaty. This loop hole would possibly stop Russia from aiding Iran, if they were attacked from Israel, while still keeping with their the mutual defense treaty. A second option could be to develop a new treaty with Russia, one that precludes Israel from being attacked by

Russia. A third option for the U.S. would be to develop a U.S. treaty that states that we will not defend Israel, no matter the circumstances. While these are not all of the options out there, they are some of the few. If the U.S. continues to ignore the growing problem in the Middle East, with regards to Russia, then we will be drawn into an indirect conflict with Russia in the near future.

Conclusion

This thesis was put forth to try and show the possibility of an indirect conflict with Russia and the U.S. and to try and put forth some options as to what can be done to possibly avert it. By first presenting the Kenneth Waltz's theory of Neorealism and then looking at Russia and Iran's security and political history, and lastly Russia's new security framework, of not if, but when, it can be proven that an indirect conflict is not only possible, but all too likely to happen.

With an indirect conflict slowly becoming a reality, with Israel's threats to Iran and the MDT, something must be done in order to avert the coming indirect conflict with Russia. Unless the U.S. looks at and enacts one of the policy recommendations, it is likely that both sides, Russia and the U.S. will be pulled into an indirect conflict with one another.

Footnotes

¹ Interfax. “Russian Presidential Service Says Russia is Ready for Nuclear Cooperation with Iran,” October 25, 2005, Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)-Russia, October 26, 2005.

² Porter, Keith. “The Relationship of the United States with Russia”. Foreign Policy Online. <http://usforeignpolicy.about.com/od/countryprofile1/p/usrussia.htm>

³ Department of State – New START Treaty. TREATY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ON MEASURES FOR THE FURTHER REDUCTION AND LIMITATION OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS, Thur 8 Apr 2010. <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/140035.pdf>

⁴ Pashakhanlou, Arash. “Comparing and Contrasting Classical Realism and Neorealism: A re-examination of Hans Morgenthau’s and Kenneth Waltz’s Theories of International Relations.” *International Relations Journal*. 23 July, 2009. <http://www.e-ir.info/2009/07/23/comparing-and-contrasting-classical-realism-and-neo-realism/>

⁵ Waltz, Kenneth. *Theory of International Politics*. (Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Pub Co, 1979). 132

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