# Putin s Syrian Gambit: Sharper Elbows, Bigger Footprint, Stickier Wicket (Paperback)



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# PUTIN S SYRIAN GAMBIT: SHARPER ELBOWS, BIGGER FOOTPRINT, STICKIER WICKET (PAPERBACK)



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Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English. Brand New Book \*\*\*\*\* Print on Demand \*\*\*\*\*\*. Thanks in large part to Russia s military intervention, Syrian president Bashar al-Asad s fortunes have made a remarkable recovery since May/June 2015. Russia, together with the Lebanese Hizballah, Iran, and Iranian-organized Shia militias from Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and elsewhere, has succeeded in averting Asad s military defeat. What Russian president Vladimir Putin has accomplished in Syria is important for American national security interests and policy in the region because it frames some of the hard choices Washington must now make. Russia has profited from a hard core of Alawite and Christian support for Asad inside Syria. At the same time, U.S. reluctance to become militarily involved in Syria facilitated the move of Russian forces into the country. Russia also benefited from the disunity among the diverse opposition to Asad and their external patrons. While Saudi Arabia and Turkey were both early proponents of ousting Asad, Saudi Arabia is now more focused on defeating Houthi rebels in Yemen, and Turkey on fighting Kurdish separatist forces in northern Syria. In return for help from Putin in resolving its Kurdish problem, Turkey in 2016 helped Putin resolve Russia s Aleppo problem. As President Donald Trump considers and implements a way forward on working with Russia in the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) and toward peace in Syria, events of the past several years underscore several fundamental constraints under which Putin will be operating and some challenges that have been overstated. First, Russia will find it hard to deliver Asad s agreement to any political arrangement that requires him to step aside to bring the conflict to an end. Asad plays Russia off against Iran and the Lebanese Hizballah, placing...

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