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Russia is taking the Middle East from the USA

8/6/2015



A number of recent major international developments suggests that Washington has recognized Moscow as an equal partner. US officials sat down at the negotiating table with their Russian counterparts. This is evidenced by the statement from the chief of the Russian Airborne Troops about possible assistance to Syria. What are they negotiating? Western sources say that the topic of discussion is Assad's surrender in exchange for concessions on Ukraine.

"Russian paratroopers are ready to help Syria in the fight against terrorists, if the Russian leadership sets such a task," the Commander of Russia's Airborne Troops, Colonel-General Vladimir Shamanov said August 2nd.

One shall assume that the above statement was either an expression of the position of Russia's Defense Minister Shoigu (his stance on Ukraine differs from Russia's official position on the problem), or a signal from the Kremlin to the White House not to bomb the positions of Bashar al-Assad's army. US President Barack Obama had given such an order a few days earlier.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has had meetings this week with US Secretary of State John Kerry and Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia Adel Al-Jubeir in Doha, Qatar.

The official result of the meeting was a failure on the talks on Syria. Russia has not surrendered Bashar al-Assad. On the contrary, Russia has proposed to get Assad involved in the fight against the Islamic State. Interestingly, it is Saudi Arabia, but not the United States that acts as a Russian partner. In the face of Al Baghdadi, the Saudis have a more popular competitor with the same Wahhabi ideology. His goal is to make the kingdom become a part of the caliphate and deprive Muslims of their holy sites - Mecca and Medina which is totally unacceptable for the royal dynasty.

Soon after the meeting in Doha, Lavrov and Kerry met at the ASEAN summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which includes the United States and Russia as observers). The foreign ministers of the association discussed the settlement of the situation in Syria and Ukraine" - notably, the discussion took place on an Asian platform.

According to the US State Department, the sides considered the situation in Ukraine and the steps that need to be made to fully implement the Minsk Accord. It looks like Kerry is willing to reconcile with Russia on Syria in return for concessions on Ukraine, but does Russia need that?

The key player here is Saudi Arabia that was left very much dissatisfied with the US deal on the Iranian nuclear program. Now the Saudis are looking for partners in Russia. Putin will have a meeting with King Salman in September.

Noteworthy, Saudi Arabia was the first country, with which the Soviet Union established diplomatic relations. The relations between the Soviet Union and Saudi Arabia were remarkable, until Saudi sheikhs started helping Afghan mujahideens.

The relations were then finally ruined against the backdrop of the Syrian crisis.

In the Islamic world, Russia has excellent relations with all countries. Russia can be a mediator between any conflicting parties. Thus, the delegation of the Palestinian movement Hamas (that has connections in Iran and Qatar) paid a visit to Saudi Arabia during the holy month of Ramadan. "The visit has achieved its planned objectives, so one can call it successful," the head of the delegation, Musa Abu Marzouk said.

He noted that Hamas was hoping to establish good relations with both the East and the West. "Based on this principle, we have had a meeting with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Russia, and we are preparing an official visit to Moscow," middleeastmonitor.com quoted the official as saying.

Russia is taking the Middle East from the United States, the US-based publication The Hill believes. Russia has managed to win such an ally as Saudi Arabia - this fact has dramatically changed the balance of forces on the Arabian Peninsula. According to the publication, Russia is a longtime ally of Syria and Iran. Saudi Arabia has made friends with Moscow and promised to invest up to 10 billion dollars in the Russian economy. In return, Russia promised to resolve the conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Conclusion

The Kremlin has been very active in the Middle East, taking the initiative from the United States. Moscow is not going to make concessions for Bashar al-Assad, but can take a tougher stance on Ukraine for one simple reason: Russia has interests interest in Ukraine, and the Americans know them very well. Russia's interests in Ukraine are about economy and the security of the Ukrainian areas that border on Russia.

Washington will stop destabilizing Ukraine very soon - not only because of first priority affairs in the Middle East, but because of Russia's breakthrough in Asia - the region which Zbigniew Brzezinski once called the most important region in the world. It is no accident that Sergei Lavrov was sitting at a table with a nameplate "Seroja." He was in a good mood, smiling.