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Analysis: Russian-Iranian alliance in Syria and the shared goals

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As the west failed to achieve its promises to the Syrian civilians, the backers of Assad regime didn't miss the chance and helped him to tilt the tide of war in his favor, breaking down the rebels' resistance that lasted for years and nearly ending the Syrians' dreams in freedom and better future without Assad.

By the summer of 2015, President Assad seemed on the verge of being overthrown. Then Russia launched its military intervention – all the while paying lip service to a diplomatic process the US administration pursued to no avail.

The Russian intervention tilted the war in favor of Assad regime and cost the rebels many of their strongholds, making Aleppo one of the last ones and the most important pressure point on

Assad regime to accept a political solution to end the war. However, Aleppo became under heavy fire and crippling siege since the start of this year

The Assad regime forces, backed by Russian air power, Iranian ground forces and Shi'ite militia fighters from Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon, has been tightening its grip on rebel-held districts of Aleppo since the start of this year.

Many ceasefire agreements accompanied by peace talks meetings were organized to help find a solution to the crisis, but Assad regime breached every ceasefire and hindered every peace talks meeting without any pressure moves or real steps from the western powers, while Russia and Iran kept giving Assad every support possible.

Assad regime forces have gradually closed in on eastern Aleppo this year, first cutting the most direct lifeline to Turkey before fully encircling the east, and launching a major assault in September.

Assad regime forces started a major offensive to push opposition fighters out of the besieged eastern half of the city on 15 November.

The regime's forces' persistent and the intensive airstrikes forced the rebels to leave the areas they hold.

In just over a week, the rebels have lost most of the northern neighborhoods in besieged east Aleppo.

Russian-Iranian alliance and the mutual benefit

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani says Tehran and Moscow will continue to cooperate in the Syrian war "until the ultimate goal of eradicating terrorism and restoring peace and full security to the region is achieved."

The comment was delivered in a Saturday meeting in Tehran between Rouhani and Russia's special envoy to Syria, Alexander Lavrentiev, Iranian state news agency IRNA reported.

In the meeting, Rouhani stressed that "the Syrian situation can only be resolved through political dialogue and with full respect for the will of the Syrian people, who he said are the main and ultimate decision makers on the future of the country," according to IRNA, clearly contradicting the obvious crimes of Iranian forces on ground.

Russia and Iran found a natural ally in Bashar al-Assad and his regime, and together they made an alliance to save its rule and accomplish their own agenda in the area.

Iran is seeking to widen its influence in the area and Syria was the perfect next step. Iran was able to force control on Iraq after Saddam's defeat by empowering the Shiite armed militias and planting Iraqi politic figures that rule the country according to Iran's plans.

Iran also kept its regional rival, Saudi Arabia, under pressure by supporting Shiite Houthi militants in Yemen which overthrown the Saudi-backed Yemeni government and drove the country back to chaos.

Iran in the same time supported Assad regime by money and fighters to defend his role, in return to freeing Iran's hand in Syria to achieve its long-awaited dream. Iran started a demographic change in the Sunni-populated areas in Syria and sought to change the face of the Syrian cities by forcing the Shiite festivals in the heart of Damascus, adding Syria to the list of its controlled areas and making it gradually the 32nd Iranian province.

Russia lost most of its global power after the Soviet era, and became politically weak after the UN security council ignored its veto more than once to achieve opposing plans as in the conquer of Iraq. Russia found in Syria the chance to retrieve its place especially with Obama in the white house.

Russia sent the might of its forces to Syria and saved Assad regime from being overwhelmed by the rebels and became the real governor on the ground.

Russia's influence in Syria made it able again to contradict the west's strategies and forced itself again as an essential player in the global issues.

The awaited victory

Capturing eastern Aleppo would be the biggest victory for Assad regime since the start of the revolution against him in 2011, restoring his control over the whole city apart from a Kurdish-held area that has not fought against him.

It would also be seen as a victory for his allies, Russia and Iran, which have outmaneuvered the West and Assad's regional enemies through direct military intervention.

For Assad regime, taking back Aleppo would make its forces focus on ending the remaining rebels-held areas. These areas include the rebels' stronghold in Idlib in addition to isolated areas in rural Damascus, Homs, and Hama.

As a conclusion, defeating the rebels and retrieving Aleppo means destroying the last major resistance stronghold of the Syrian rebels and will lead eventually to the victory of Assad regime and ending the Syrian revolution.

The fate of rebel-held Aleppo spells the abject failure of the west's contradictory and piecemeal policies. It is a humiliation for the UN. Its fall will be an unequivocal victory for Russian strategy. Aleppo will join an infamous list of cities whose names are synonymous with mass crimes committed while the world looked impotently on: Srebrenica, Grozny, even Guernica. Once again, it's never again. The consequences, both for radicalisation and for the balance of power in the region, are hard to fathom exactly. But they will not be good.