



Iran Strategy Brief No. 12: Russia and Iran's Complicated Partnership in Syria

March 8, 2019 **Yaakov Lappin**

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In 2015, Russia formally entered the Syrian conflict, becoming the Assad regime's second sponsor, alongside Iran. The grounds for that intervention, we now know, were laid at a 2015 meeting between Russia's Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, and Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei.¹ Russia's entry, in turn, marked the start of a complex Iranian approach in Syria – one aimed at utilizing the benefits of Russia's presence while circumventing potential constraints that this presence could place upon its expansionist agenda...