

(1)

US Involvement in the Israel-Iran Conflict

Introduction

Any war in the Middle East today is no longer just regional; it is global in consequence.

International Institute for Strategic Studies

On June 2025, the Middle East witnessed a seismic escalation when Israel launched preemptive airstrikes on Iran's nuclear enrichment facilities, targeting Natanz and Fordow. Within hours, the United States threw its full military and diplomatic weight behind Israel. This event though regional in appearance but rapidly turned into a multidimensional global crisis. As the United States reinforced its military presence in the Persian Gulf, both Russia and China intensified their strategic engagements with Tehran, reigniting the cold-war style power alignments. The Israel-Iran conflict has thus become a prism through which the emerging contours of global power politics is sharply visible.

1) Strategic Motivations Behind US involvement

(a) Protecting Regional Allies

The US considers Israel a "non-NATO Ally" and a linchpin in its Middle East strategy. Iran's growing nuclear capability is seen as a direct threat not only to Israel but also to US

influence in the Gulf.

- **Biden Doctrine on Deterrence**

Biden Doctrine on Deterrence emphasizes that non-response to Iranian aggression would invite further regional instability.

- **Abraham Accord Coalition**

The US also seeks to preserve the Abraham Accord Coalition between Israel and Arab states.

- **Case in Point**

Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS, 2025):
"The US views the Iran-Israel conflict as a test of its credibility across Asia and the Gulf."

b) Restoration of Global Hegemon:

Post-Afghanistan Withdrawal

After the 2021 pull-out from Afghanistan, American influence in Asia and the Middle East had waned. The Biden administration viewed this crisis as a chance to reassert leadership in an increasingly multipolar world.

: Escalation and Regional Spillover

a) Retaliatory Strikes and Proxy Warfare

Iran retaliated with drone and missile ^{attacks} on US bases in Iraq, Syria and Qatar. It also activated proxies such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen.

(iv) Closure Threat of the Strait of Hormuz

- Iran's threats to block the strait of Hormuz have pushed global oil prices above the 120/barrel \$, exacerbating inflation and supply chain disruptions.
- International Energy Agency (IEA, 2025): "A 30-day Hormuz blockade could reduce global oil output by 20%."

3: China's Strategic Calculation and Silent Gains

(a) Energy Dependence and Strategic Patience

China imports over 40% of its oil from the Gulf region, especially Iran and Saudi Arabia. Its strategy is focused on protecting its Belt and Road Initiative investments while staying diplomatically neutral.

- China is quietly securing **discounted oil deals** with Iran amid Western sanctions.
- It offers **peace proposals** while ramping up cyber-intelligence support to Tehran.

Case in Point

Shanghai Institute of International Studies (2025): "Beijing's silence is a strategy of long-term alignment without escalation."

(b) Challenge to US-led Security Order

China is using the crisis to critique the US-led global order, presenting itself as a peaceful alternative.

- Pushing for de-Dollarization through Yuan-denominated oil trade.
- Strengthening the BRICS+ coalition with Russia, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.

9: Russia's Opportunism and Geopolitical Exploitation

(a) Diversion from Ukraine and NATO

As Western attention diverts to the Middle East, Russia has intensified its operations in Ukraine, capturing strategic positions in Donetsk and Kharkiv.

European Council on Foreign Relations (2025):

"The Middle East distraction has created an opening for Russian advances in Eastern Europe."

(b) Strategic Alliances with Iran

Russia has expedited defence technology sharing with Iran, particularly in air defense systems like the S-400.

- Moscow portrays itself as the protector of sovereign nations against Western interference.
- It is lobbying to formally include Iran in the Eurasian Economic Union.

5: Collapse of International Norms and Global Governance Crisis:

(a) Failure of United Nations

The UNSC remains paralyzed due to vetoes from Russia and China, making multilateral conflict resolution nearly impossible.

(b) Death of the JCPOA and Nuclear Non-Proliferation Crisis

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) has officially collapsed. Iran has ceased cooperation with the IAEA and is enriching uranium beyond 90%.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA, June 2025): "Iran is now closer than ever to nuclear weapon capability".

6: Conclusion

The Israel-Iran conflict, amplified by the US involvement, is no longer confined to missiles; it is a confrontation that is reshaping the global order. As Washington reasserts its role through hard power, but Beijing and Moscow quietly maneuver through economic and strategic channels. This triangular great power contest marks the return of Cold War like tensions but with modern-day complexity.

8: Russia - China Growing Relations

Introduction:

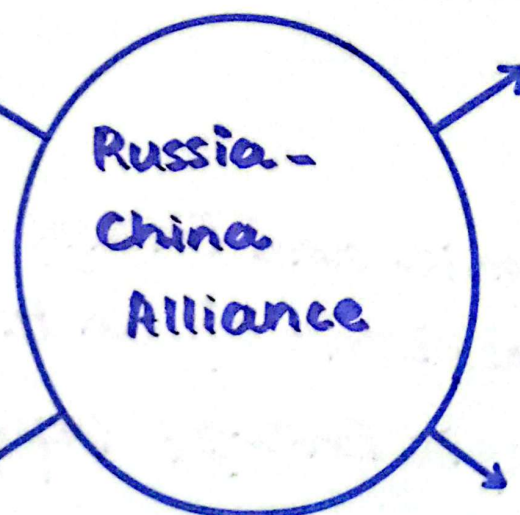
| "Power is shifting from West to East." |

— Fareed Zakaria,
The Post-American World

In the post-Cold War world, the alliance between Russia and China has transitioned from cautious cooperation to a strategic partnership with global consequences. Their growing bilateral engagement, particularly since the 2014 Crimea crisis and the 2022 Ukraine war, has challenged the unipolar dominance of the United States and fostered a new axis in global power dynamics. While the West continues to push for containment, Russia and China are crafting an alternative global order grounded in multipolarity, state sovereignty, and regional influence.

Historical Evolution

- 2001 Treaty
- Post-2014
- Crimean Crisis



Economic And Energy Ties

- Gas pipelines
- CIPS, Yuan - RUB
- BRI - EAEU Link
- Russian Oil

Global Political Impacts

- Multipolarity
- BRICS, SCO
- De-Dollarization
- Global South Rise

Military And Technology Nexus

- S-400, Su-35
- Cyber, AI, Drills
- Space Assets

1: Historical Evolution of Russia-China Relations

(a) Cold War Rivalry to Strategic Partnership

Historically, Sino-Russian relations have been marked by ideological rivalry, border conflicts (e.g., 1969 Ussuri River clash), and mutual distrust. However, post-Cold War pragmatism led to the 2001 Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly cooperation, initiating a strategic reorientation.

(b) 2014 Crimea Turning Point

The Western sanctions on Russia following Crimea's annexation forced Moscow to deepen ties with Beijing. This pivot culminated in several economic and military pacts, signaling the formation of an anti-Western bloc.

Carnegie Moscow Center (2023): "Ukraine war has turned Russia's China pivot from an option into a necessity."

2: Economic and Energy Cooperation: The Backbone of an Alliance

(a) Strategic Energy Dependency

China is Russia's largest energy market after European cut-offs. Deals like Power of Siberia I and II pipelines and

and long-term LNG agreements are central to bilateral interdependence. By 2024, over 20% of China's gas imports came from Russia.

(b) Sanctioned Economy Meets Industrial Giant

Russia's sanctioned economy increasingly depends on Chinese banking systems (like CIPS) and payment alternatives (like UnionPay). China in turn exploits Russia's isolation to expand its economic leverage over Central Asia and Eurasia.

- **IMF Working Paper (2025):** "The Russia - China axis ^{re} presents a shift in global energy geopolitics, consolidating eastern supply chains."

(3): Military to Technological Cooperation

(a) Joint Exercises and Arms Trade

Joint military drills like "Vostok," "Peace Mission," and Naval exercises in the South China Sea and Arctic demonstrate interoperability and symbolic deterrence to NATO and AUKUS.

(b) Technology And Defence Industry

China has purchased Russian S-400 air defense systems, and Su-35 jets, and naval engines. In return, China supplies microchips and dual-use technology.

4: Diplomatic and Institutional Collaboration

(a) Rewriting the Global Governance

Russia and China seek to challenge the liberal international order. They advocate for "sovereign democracy," non-interference, and multipolarity in forum like:

- SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization)
- BRICS+
- EAEU and BRI interlinkages

(b) De-Dollarization and Financial Autonomy

China and Russia have agreed to conduct most bilateral trade in yuan or rubbles supporting the BRICS de-dollarization initiative.

"Sino-Russian collaboration is an effort to delegitimize Western institutions and create a parallel global infrastructure."

5: Implications on Global Power Politics:

• (a) Rise of Competitive Multipolarity

The US, China-Russia triangle now defines a competitive multipolar order. Western containment strategies push Moscow and Beijing closer, reinforcing bloc dynamics.

(b) Regional Impacts: Eurasia and Indo-Pacific

In Eurasia, Russia's military and China's economic clout combine to neutralize U.S. influence. In the Indo-Pacific, joint maneuvers counterbalance AUKUS, QUAD, and Western maritime hegemony.

(c) Constraints & Divergences

Despite cooperation, asymmetries persist:

- China's GDP is 10x larger than Russia's (IMF, 2025).
- Russia fears becoming a junior partner.
- Their regional goals in Central Asia occasionally clash.

6: Conclusion

Russia-China relations have evolved into a formidable strategic partnership with direct implication for global power politics. While not a formal alliance, it functions as a geopolitical force to balance U.S. dominance and reshape global governance, cementing the reality of a competitive, unstable, multipolar world order.