

## **Russian Presence in Eastern Mediterranean (2009-2019)**

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### **Abstract**

This study focuses on Russian presence in Eastern Mediterranean by referring to recent developments and facts in the region. Certainly, the theoretical basis of the study provides geopolitical perspectives through international relations theories. Russia has concentrated especially on its near abroad (Post-Soviet sphere) since 1993 by interfering to regional conflicts and deploying its troops to conflicting regions as the part of its Eurasianist Russian foreign policy. The aim of this policy is to strengthen Russian presence in Post-Soviet Eurasia, which could be regarded as an implication of the Mackinder's heartland theory. However, Russia was not restricted itself within heartland; rather it has enhanced its presence in Eastern Mediterranean in the last decade, as the significant part of the Rimland. For its strategic goals, Russia deployed its military forces and sent its naval troops to Eastern Mediterranean. It was also motivated to use its nuclear power as an influential instrument in the region by collaborating with Turkey and Egypt. Additionally, in order to consider about the economic and energy issues in the region, it had established close relations with Israel and Cyprus. Eventually, Russia follows a proactive foreign policy in the region in the last decade and tries to maximize its presence and interests in the region strategically for securing its national interests in the heartland as well.

**Keywords:** Cyprus; Egypt; Israel; Syria; Turkey