

**T.C.  
SAKARYA UNIVERSITY  
MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE**

**CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE SOVIET AND RUSSIAN  
FOREIGN POLICIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST: THE CASES OF  
EGYPT AND LIBYA (1943-2017)**

**MASTER'S THESIS  
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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis fits the scientific standards of academic research and that the entire preparation of this thesis is my original work and free from the utilization of others' works unless there are similarities of direct quotes and scientific standards of references, which can never be changed. I also declare that this is the first time this thesis is presented as a master's thesis, and it has never been published as another thesis at this university or any other universities.

Kulpunai BARAKANOVA

11.10.2018

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kulpunai', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS EGYPT AND LIBYA (1943-1990).....</b>	<b>11</b>
1.1. The Soviet Union’s Foreign Policy Doctrines and the Middle East (1943- 1991).....	11
1.2. The Soviet Union’s Foreign Policy towards Egypt.....	14
1.3. The Soviet Union’s Foreign Policy towards Libya.....	26
<b>CHAPTER 2: THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION’S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS EGYPT AND LIBYA (1991-2010).....</b>	<b>37</b>
2.1. The Russian Federation’s Foreign Policy Doctrines and the Middle East (1993, 2000 and 2008).....	37
2.2. The Russian Federation’s Foreign Policy towards Egypt: Political, Economic and Military Relations (1991-2010).....	42
2.3. Russian Federation’s Foreign Policy towards Libya: Political, Military and Economic Relations (1991-2010).....	48
2.4. The Russian Federation’s Foreign Policy towards Egypt and Libya under Dmitri Medvedev’s Governance (2008-2012).....	55

<b>CHAPTER 3: THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION’S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS EGYPT AND LIBYA DURING AND AFTERWARDS THE ARAB UPRISINGS (2010-2017)</b> .....	<b>59</b>
3.1. The Russian Federation’s Foreign Policy Doctrines and the Middle East (2013 and 2016).....	60
3.2. The Russian Federation’s Approach to the Arab Uprisings: General Review.....	61
3.2.1. The Russian Federation’s Approach to the Egyptian Uprising.....	63
3.2.2. The Russian Federation’s Approach to the Libyan Uprising.....	64
3.3. The Russian Federation’s Policy towards Egypt after the Uprisings: Political, Military, and Economic Relations.....	66
3.4. The Russian Federation’s Policy towards Libya after the Uprising: Political, Military, and Economic Relations.....	71
3.5. Findings and Analysis.....	76
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....	<b>83</b>
<b>CURRICULUM VITAE</b> .....	<b>93</b>

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AES</b>	: Atom Electro-Station
<b>BMA</b>	: British Military Administration
<b>CENTO</b>	: Central Treaty Organization
<b>CIA</b>	: Central Intelligence Agency
<b>CIS</b>	: Commonwealth of Independent States
<b>CoR</b>	: Council of Representatives
<b>FMA</b>	: French Military Administration
<b>FPA</b>	: Foreign Policy Analysis
<b>GDP</b>	: Gross Domestic Products
<b>GNC</b>	: General National Congress
<b>GNA</b>	: Government of National Accord
<b>IS</b>	: Islamic State
<b>LNA</b>	: Libyan National Army
<b>NATO</b>	: North-Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>NTC</b>	: National Transition Council
<b>MENA</b>	: Middle East and North Africa
<b>MIG</b>	: Mikoyan Grevich (aircraft)
<b>SAM</b>	: Surface-to-Air Missile
<b>SC</b>	: Security Council
<b>TV</b>	: Television
<b>UAE</b>	: United Arab Emirates
<b>UN</b>	: United Nations
<b>US(A)</b>	: United States (of America)
<b>USSR</b>	: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 1:</b> Trade Turnover between Egypt and the Soviet Union (one million rubles).....	24
<b>Table 2:</b> Trade Turnover between Libya and the Soviet Union (one million rubles).....	33
<b>Table 3:</b> Trade Volume between Russia and Egypt between 1992 and 2009 (one million dollars).....	47
<b>Table 4:</b> Trade Turnout between Russia and Libya within 5 years (thousands of dollars).....	75





**Thesis Title:** Continuity And Change In The Soviet And Russian Foreign Policies In The Middle East: The Cases Of Egypt And Libya (1943-2017)

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This study aims to explore and unveil the dynamics of Russian foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya throughout modern history. It seeks to figure out the factors which play a crucial role in Russian foreign policy towards the given Arab states in the different period of time. To do so, a primary research question and five sub-research questions have been put forward. The paramount question following: What was the Russian foreign policy trajectory followed throughout their history with Egypt and Libya? In order to clarify the main research question, there are five sub-questions which are as follows 1. What are the main foreign policy principles Russia pursues in regards with the Middle East, particularly towards Egypt and Libya? 2. How does the Russian foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya differ from that during the Soviet Union and after its collapse? 3. How has Russia perceived the uprisings in Egypt and Libya? 4. How have the Arab uprisings affected Russian-Egyptian and Russian-Libyan relations? 5. What are the main lines of the "new" Russian policy towards the post-Arab uprising Egypt and Libya?

To investigate the contemporary Russian foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya the interpretive approach and descriptive historical method have been applied throughout the research. As for the sources of information, both first and second-hand accounts have been utilized. The primary first-hand accounts are transcripts of concepts and agreement texts. As second-hand accounts books, academic and analytical articles, published and unpublished Master and Ph.D. degree dissertations, documentary films and news have been used. The aforementioned accounts are in English, Russian and Turkish.

In order to examine Russian foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya series of foreign policy concepts and domestic political, economic and social factors according to which Russia has interacted with actors in the Middle East, particularly with Egypt and Libya, have been investigated scrupulously in following three chapters. The first chapter examined the USSR-Egyptian and the USSR-Libyan relations. The second part focused on the analysis of Russian Federation's foreign policies towards the given states. The third part was dedicated to the investigation of the recent unfolding in Egypt and Libya and Russia's response and policy towards the sudden transformation in the Middle East.

**Key Words:** Soviet Union, Russia, Foreign Policy, Egypt, Libya

**Tezin Başlığı:** Orta Doğu'ya yönelik Sovyet ve Rus Dış Politikalarındaki Değişim ve Süreklilik: Mısır ve Libya Örneği (1943-2017)

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Bu çalışma, modern tarih boyunca Rusya'nın Mısır ve Libya'ya yönelik dış politikasındaki süreklilik ve değişim bileşenleri incelemeyi ve açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu tez Sovyet ve Rus dış politikalarındaki sürekli unsurun ulusal çıkar olduğunu ve değişen unsurun uluslararası bağlam olduğunu tartışmaktadır.

Bu çalışma farklı dönemlerde bu Arap devletlerine yönelik Rus dış politikasını belirlemede önemli rol oynayan faktörleri bulmaya çalışıyor. Bunu yapmak için birincil araştırma sorusu ve beş alt araştırma sorusu öne sürülmüştür. Başlıca araştırma sorusu şu şekildedir: Rusya'nın tarih boyunca Mısır'a ve Libya'ya yönelik izlediği dış politika çizgisi nedir? Ana araştırma sorusunu açıklığa kavuşturmak için aşağıdaki beş alt soru yardım etmektedir: 1. Rusya'nın Orta Doğu'ya ve özellikle Mısır'a ve Libya'ya yönelik başlıca dış politika ilkeleri nelerdir? 2. Mısır'a ve Libya'ya yönelik Rus dış politikası Sovyetler Birliği döneminde ve çöküşünden sonra ne kadar farklı oldu? 3. Rusya, Mısır ve Libyadaki devrimleri nasıl algıladı? 4. Arap devrimleri Rus-Mısır ve Rus-Libya ilişkilerini nasıl etkiledi? 5. Arap devrimleri sonrası Mısır'a ve Libya'ya yönelik "yeni" Rus politikasının ana hatları nelerdir?

Mısır'a ve Libya'ya yönelik çağdaş Rus dış politikasını araştırmak için araştırmada yorumlayıcı yaklaşım ve tanımlayıcı tarihsel yöntem uygulandı. Bilgi kaynakları olarak hem ilk hem de ikinci el kaynaklar kullanıldı. İlk el kaynaklar olarak dış politika doktrinlerin ve sözleşmelerin metinleri kullanılmıştır. İkinci el kaynaklar olarak kitaplar, akademik ve analitik makaleler, yayınlanmış doktora tezleri ve haberler kullanıldı. Söz konusu kaynaklar İngilizce, Rusça ve Türkçe dillerindedir.

Mısır'a ve Libya'ya yönelik Rus dış politikasını incelemek üzere Rusya'yı etkileyen iç ve dış ekonomik, siyasal ve sosyal faktörler titizlikle incelendi. Birinci bölümde SSCB-Mısır ve SSCB-Libya ilişkileri ele alındı. İkinci kısım, Rusya Federasyonunun bu devletlere yönelik dış politikasını ele aldı. Üçüncü kısım, Mısır'da ve Libya'da yakın zamanda yaşanan olaylar ve Rusya'nın bu ülkelerde yaşanan ani dönüşüme karşı tepkisi ve izlediği politikası incelendi.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sovyetler Birliği, Rusya, Dış Politika, Mısır, Libya

## INTRODUCTION

Russian diplomatic ties with modern Egypt and Libya traced back to the 1940s. Since those time both national interests and international system had changed several times what undoubtedly had affected the stream and feature of the Soviet and Russian foreign policies towards Egypt and Libya. This part of the thesis is going to outline the main directions of the Soviet and Russian foreign policy principles and actions applied throughout the modern history. While analyzing these changing national interests and international systems which encompasses the regional dynamics as well, have been taken into consideration.

The Soviet foreign policy towards the Middle Eastern states at the time of Joseph Stalin had been limited to the conflictual affairs with geographically close countries such as Iran and Turkey. Such isolationist policy of the Soviet Union was stipulated by communist foreign policy insight of the Soviet leadership and on nat. The Soviet Union was convinced that relations with other states are viable only under the condition that these states support and are willing to obey to the Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup> Also, newly emerged Arab states were quite nationalistic to adopt communist ideology. As local Arab leaders were apprehend of the communist coup they even put efforts to prevent communists' activities within their states.<sup>2</sup> However, a power change in the Soviet public administration in 1953 brought an ambitious Nikita Khrushchev to the leadership, who rapidly and radically transformed the Soviet foreign policy in principal terms.<sup>3</sup> Since that time the Soviet Union began to play a crucial role in the Middle Eastern political affairs. Such attitude was introduced for the sake of the expansion of the communist ideology around the world in a benign way. It is remarkable that during this period the Soviet Union gravely benefited Egypt both economically and politically. Also, it is important to emphasize efforts of Gamal Abdel Nasser who had facilitated relations with the Soviet Union.<sup>4</sup> However, as soon as Leonid Brezhnev's administration appeared at the center of power, a turbulent partnership with Egypt and Libya had been

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<sup>1</sup> Walter Laqueur, **The Struggle for the Middle East: The Soviet Union and the Middle East 1958-68**, Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1972, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Freedman, **Moscow and the Middle East: Soviet Policy Since the Invasion of Afghanistan**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p.16.

<sup>3</sup> See: Sergei Khrushchev, **Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev: Reformer (1945-1964)**, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania University Press, 1992, p. 521

<sup>4</sup> Nizameddin Talal, **Putin's New Order in the Middle East**, London: Hurst & Company, 2013, pp. 22, 23.

moderated. Such slowdown was happening due to the domestic instabilities and stagnation in the Soviet Union and aggressive policies by Qadhafi.<sup>5</sup> Conclusively, the Soviet Middle Eastern policy was significantly weakened during the reign of Mikhail Gorbachev who had evidently distanced the Soviet Union from the revolutionary and radical regimes of the Middle East. Such dynamics were stipulated primarily by the adoption of Reconstruction and Openness doctrines in regards both the domestic and foreign policies which aimed at a peaceful and unified world. However, these doctrines eventually terminated the existence of the USSR.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the collapsing of the Soviet Union in 1991, the new Russian political leadership had continued to hold restrained and chilled attitude towards the Middle East, particularly to Egypt and Libya in order to please Western “allies”. Moreover, a new Russian government under Boris Yeltsin and Andrei Kozyrev prioritized Western interests for the sake of possible economic and political gains they might receive from the US.<sup>7</sup> Partially due to this factor, Russia stayed passive and indifferent as far as the Middle Eastern conflicts and their regulations were concerned. However, such poorly designed foreign policy insight had not lasted for a long time: by the mid-1990s Russians had concluded that Pro-Western stance had brought nothing but humiliation and increasing dependence on the external powers. At the time a Russian scholar and bureaucrat, Evgeny Primakov who came to the post of a Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1996, outlined the geographic advantages of Russia and pointed out some great perspectives of the regional alliances with China and India.<sup>8</sup> Primakov was a person who also returned the Middle East on Russian agenda. Apparently, beginning with the second half of the 1990s, the relations with Egypt and Libya entered into the stage of revitalization.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See: Galia Golan, **Soviet Policies in the Middle East: From World War II to Gorbachev**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 11-28

<sup>6</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev, **The Road We travelled, the Challenges We Face**, Moscow: Ves Mir, 2006. pp. 46-47.

<sup>7</sup> Mark Smith, “Russia’s New Priorities and the Middle East”, Rosemary Hollis (ed.), in **The Soviets, Their Successors and the Middle East: Turning Point**, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993, pp. 119, 120.

<sup>8</sup> Andrei Tsygankov, **Russia’s Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity**, New York, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010, p.19.

<sup>9</sup> Robert Freedman, “Russia and the Middle East: The Primakov Era”, **Middle East Review of International Affairs**, Vol. 2, No. 2 (May 1998), p. 8

Further on, Vladimir Putin's leadership revealed a new dimension in the bilateral relations with Egypt and Libya. At that time Russia primarily focused on the economic rather than ideological priorities. While Russia had been accumulating more power and strength, it also began to demand more of international attention. For the first time since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia called upon the world community to respect and recon with its national interests at the Munches Security Conference of 2007.<sup>10</sup> Distinct feature of the Putin leadership was a pragmatic approach to the world affairs. In the 2000s in effort to sell its armament abroad, Russia enthusiastically advertised and proposed its weapons to the Arab states. In the light of this attitude, Libya turned out to be one of the key arm importers of Russia. Additionally, a cultivation of the oil business in Russia paved the way for the cooperation with Libya in the field of extracting and producing oil. In the new century, Russia started offering services for building nuclear power stations abroad. Undoubtedly such rapid internal progress in Russia had resulted in a fruitful partnership with Libya and Egypt, particularly in economic and military spheres.<sup>11</sup>

Speaking of the socio-political reconfiguration that was happening at that time and after the Arab uprisings, Russia similarly to other leading states, was initially caught in surprise. However, in the aftermath of those uprisings Russia took advantage of the power vacuum, particularly in Egypt and Libya. Moscow tried to re-establish relations with the Egyptian administrations from 2011 onwards. Coming to power of the ultra-secular Abdel Fattah al-Sisi in Egypt enhanced Russian-Egyptian bilateral ties in the key spheres. In the case with Libya, the situation there became entangled due to the civil war that broke out after the removal of Qadhafi from the leadership. Despite that factor, Russia had found a loyal partner, General Khalifa Haftar who was leading the Libyan Army and represented major fighting side in the Libyan civil war. It was of the utmost importance for Russia to have a word in the new Libyan state in order to implement the previously signed contracts.

Andrei Tsygankov in his prominent work *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity* (2010), concludes that a national interest is guided by the

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<sup>10</sup>Thom Shankler and Mark Landler, "Putin Says U.S. Is Undermining Global Stability", The New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/11/world/europe/11munich.html>, February 11, 2007, (October 17, 2018).

<sup>11</sup> Andrej Kreutz, **Russia in the Middle East: Friend or Foe?**, Westport: Praeger Security International, 2007, p. 67.

four essential elements: security, welfare, autonomy, and identity. Thus, one can conclude that a foreign policy is comprised of two: domestic concerns and international context. Different Russian regimes have prioritized different national interest constituents that is why their foreign policy orientations were divergent from each others'. Overall, two schools of thought had appeared being dominant in the Russian foreign policy. The first is westernizer and the second is statist. Both of them have existed hand in hand all over the time. In some particular periods statisticians and in other cases westernizers have prevailed the domestic politics in Russia.

Thus, the Soviet foreign policy under Stalin administration was of statism and civilizationism nature as Stalin viewed Russia as a great power and foresaw Russia's expansion to the south-west. Khrushchev leadership which viewed the world from the peaceful coexistence angle with the West and with the whole world possessed a westernist nature. A fact that Khrushchev attempted to coordinate the Soviet policies in the Middle East with the West, points at this. Regarding with Brezhnev's policy towards the Middle East towards Egypt and Libya, in particular, a "correlation of world forces" is the case. According to this approach, the Soviet Union attempted to lead an independent foreign policy in the Middle East and to lead a reciprocal relations with all states. Such policy was of hardline statist nature. This policy was continued by Primakov under the notion of a "great power balancing". Which meant a provision of equal relations with all world states and exposing Russia as a great power in the world as well. In accordance with the newly acquired a great power status, Russia since 1996 revitalized its position in the Middle East, in Egypt and Libya as well to lead a multipolar foreign policy.

The Soviet foreign policy under Gorbachev prioritized a rapprochement with the West under the doctrine of new thinking. At that time a promotion of the liberal-democratic values inside and outside the Soviet Union was an agenda. The Soviet Union had distanced from itself from the sponsoring radical regimes in the Middle East including Libya.

Finally, speaking of the Putin period of governance, a general line of "great power pragmatism" could be traced. In the first term of Putin governance, the notion of a "great power defensiveness" and then a notion of a "great power assertiveness" had prevailed in the foreign policy. Initially, the foreign policy of Putin had defensive

priorities and afterward, it acquired assertive goals in the foreign policy. In the early 2000s Russia was in close cooperation with the West especially in terms of combat terrorism but since the second term of Putin's governing Russia have adopted the assertive policy in the world. Russia embarked on a intensive corporation with Egypt and Libya. The same line of assertiveness with elements of restricted interventionism regarding the Middle East is traced in the third term of Putin governance.

Having this background in mind, this study aims to examine a historical trajectory of the Russian policy towards Egypt and Libya and discover the main rationales and factors that have had an influence on Russian foreign policy in different periods of time. Knowing the continuous as well as altering elements in Russian foreign policy for the Middle Eastern states, one can envisage the Russian future possible steps and responses in order to diverse political events. For this particular aim, the paper tends to compare the Russian foreign policy in Egypt and Libya during the Soviet Union and then in the Russian Federation time. It would help to define the evolving as well as the time consistent factors that have had an impact on Russian foreign policy at two different periods.

A historical study method is considered to be appropriate for conducting this research. This way, primarily such aspects as What, Why and How, followed by the question related to the significance of decision-making in the Russian foreign policy from a historical perspective are going to be analyzed.<sup>12</sup> A historic-empirical research method explicates some events/behavior by employing such variables as individual and context. One may conclude that the major explanatory factors include the player, the state and the system levels respectively.<sup>13</sup>

Following the historical methodology, the study attempts to analyze Russian foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya from all possible different angles to depict historically important events in the most neutral objective way if possible. As stated above, the subject is going to be studied at player, state and system levels to obtain trustworthy results and maximize the quality of the study.

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<sup>12</sup> Abdul Gafoor, P. and Padmanabhan, N., "Methodology of History", 2017, *University of Calicut, School of Distance Education*, <http://www.universityofcalicut.info/syl/METHODOLOGYOFHISTORY.pdf>, (October 20, 2017).

<sup>13</sup> Gafoor and Padmanabhan, p. 160

The research is expected to fill a gap in existing studies in Russian foreign policy in Egypt and Libya. It is important to note, that despite a great demand for a detailed historical study on the Russian policy in Egypt and Libya, there are few compelling types of research on this subject, especially in Turkey. Such an urgent need for this kind of research could be explained by the recent colossal transformation in the Middle East, notably in Egypt and Libya and also by the Russian actively developing policy towards both countries. Consequently, this thesis could serve as a sound historical and analytical account, in the light of the recent socio-political developments and Russian approaches to this situation. Finally, the study could be informative and useful for all those who are interested in Russian foreign policy in regards to the Middle Eastern politics and from the common historical perspective.

In order to conduct an accurate inquiry on the subject, the study has been divided into three chapters. The 1-st Chapter includes two parts: the first being a general review of the doctrine of foreign policy and the 2-nd one being the Soviet Union's foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya. The 2-nd Chapter reviews the Russian Federation's foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya; and finally, the 3-d Chapter is focusing on Russian policy in Egypt and Libya in the post-Arab uprisings period. Each period is distinct and specific: for example, during the existence of the Soviet Union, the bilateral relations between the Soviet Union and Egypt and the Soviet Union and Libya had been influenced by the Cold War and by the bipolar system of the world. As for the diplomatic bilateral relations after the collapse of the Soviet Union, a transformation of the US into a hegemonic state in the world needs to be taken into consideration. Foreign relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century can be characterized as a world multipolar system.

### Research Methodology

A research methodology implicates a wide range of diverse instruments for conducting a scientific research.<sup>14</sup> However, before embarking an examination of a research methodology, it would be constructive to firstly determine an ontology and epistemology of the work, because these two aspects give a direction for the

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<sup>14</sup>Donatella della Porta and Michael Keating, "How Many Approaches in the Social Science? An Epistemological Introduction", Donatella della Porta and Michael Keating (ed.), **Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Science: A Pluralist Perspective**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 25



methodology.<sup>15</sup> In the wake of the literature review on social science research methodology, it has been realized that the relevant ontology for the study would be nominalist (constructivist), and consequently the most suitable epistemology is interpretive. Nominalist ontology claims that world affairs hinge on human interpretations and, accordingly, interpretive epistemology suggests that the world is value-based and the meanings are formed by common daily actions.

Speaking of the methodological approach an interpretive paradigm, the inductive methodology suits the research because the research is deemed to be a historical study. An interpretation of evidence and facts lies at the core of the historical study. In this case, a qualitative research method helps to reveal the ideational elements and the causes of the events. However, while doing a research on factors which have an impact on foreign policy, some quantitative data would be utilized as well. For example, descriptive statistics of economic relations between Russia and Egypt/Libya are going to be analyzed to be aware of the level of economic cooperation between the given states.

As a matter of fact, the data collection includes both qualitative and quantitative methods. In order to obtain qualitative data, a descriptive analysis, a document analysis, and library inquiry techniques are going to be utilized. In order to collect and analyze the quantitative data, descriptive statistics are going to be applied.<sup>16</sup> The sources of information are primarily in English, Russian and Turkish. Both first and second-hand resources are utilized.

## **Literature Review**

Various sources of information on foreign policy doctrines during the Soviet period towards Egypt and Libya, Russian policy in the 1990s towards the given states and finally, the literature on the recent and current events in the Middle East and Russian attitude to these events have been a focus of this research.

Essential literature on the doctrine of foreign policy had been broadly discussed at the beginning of the 1-st Chapter. Therefore, this part focuses on books, research papers and

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<sup>15</sup> Ontology is a philosophical school that studies the issues of the question "what?" and engages in a nature of human being, whereas an epistemology being also a philosophical school on knowledge studies issues of the question "how?" how we learn "a world around us". See: Newman Lawrence, **Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches**, 7th ed., Boston: Pearson, 2011, p.91.

<sup>16</sup> Descriptive statistics are the mere type of numerical data that are utilized by the researcher to depict "the basic patterns in data". See: Lawrence, p. 396.

scholarly articles dedicated to the Russian policy in the Middle East, and particularly in Egypt and Libya from the World War II to 2017.

This study included review of broad-scoped literature, so this thesis theme contains extracts of the analyzed information. Despite the fact that those books and articles may encompass some irrelevant information, some pieces contributed immensely to this study.

Given that the first chapter started a discussion on the Soviet foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya, several well-written academic articles of Russian origin scholars had been utilized. For example, Ruslan Muhamedov's Soviet Union foreign policy doctrines: since the proletarian internationalism till the New Thinking (2017) was quite beneficial in terms of description and analysis of the USSR foreign policy breakthrough in the Middle East at the time of Nikita Khrushchev. Similar works, merely with different time frames, are from Lilya Kaplina, the Foreign policy of the USSR/Russia: Geopolitical perspective (2017) and Dmitri Morozov's book *This controversial XX Century: Russia since N. Khrushchev until V. Putin* (2013).

As for the academic studies, a work of Samuel Sharp, *National Interest: Key to Soviet Politics* (1962) in English had been of utmost importance to comprehend the deformation of the Soviet foreign policy since the Stalin era. In his article, Sharp wrote that the Soviet foreign policy had been transformed under Stalin; it had become part of the Russian national interest instead of a unified interest of all other Soviet republics. Some significant information is contained in the *Siyasi Tarih* of Turkish historian Rifat Uçarol who had widely discussed and analyzed the Soviet-Arab relations in the context of Khrushchev peaceful coexistence doctrine. Uçarol calls a relation between the Soviet Union and the Arab states at the time of Khrushchev as being at a peak that has never been seen before. He assumed that recession of Western power in the aftermath of WWII and the flash of the Arab-Israeli war, and the emergence of Western-sponsored military alliances such as CENTO, all in some way contributed to the rapprochement between the Soviet Union and the Arab World in the 1960s.

Speaking of the foreign policy as an action, the diplomatic relations between the USSR and Egypt have been scrupulously illustrated in the scholarly article *Russian-Egyptian relations: history and modernity* (2006) by Pervin Niyazi Ogly Mamedzade. In his article Mamedzade unveils the origin of the Russian-Egyptian bilateral relations. Talal

Nizameddin (2013) continues this sort of study and describes broadly the bilateral relations at the time of Khrushchev and Nasser. Nizameddin highlights Khrushchev's role in broadening the Soviet foreign policy. The author points out the reformative role of Khrushchev, claiming that Soviet Union had embarked on the expansionist policy encompassing the Middle East at the very time of Khrushchev reign.

Looking further, the details of the military agreements, and economic aspects of cooperation between the Soviet Union and Egypt had been broadly uncovered by Andrej Kreutz in the monograph *Russia in the Middle East: Friend or Foe?* Kreutz work encompasses cooperation between the states both at the time of the USSR and at the time of Russian Federation. Besides a broad scope of the work, it is full of valuable information.

The work of Hashim Behbehani titled *the Soviet Union and Arab Nationalism: 1917-1966* (1986) explains in detail the Soviet-Egyptian rapprochement during the Suez crisis. The author emphasizes the rationales that Nasser pursued prior to and also at the time of the crisis. The next milestone work is by Derek Hopwood, titled *Egypt: Politics and Society 1945-90* (1991). The book has impacted the thesis via the provision of detailed information about the recession of the Soviet-Egyptian relations since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. The author puts forward the USSR unauthentic information and poor arms provision to Egypt played a crucial role in the determination of the future relations between these states. Following the above-mentioned studies, Fahir Armaoğlu in his *20nci Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi* (2010) explains an expelling of the Soviet soldiers and technical personnel from Egypt in 1972 by the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

Doctoral dissertation by Mihail Bogdanov (2014) is deemed to be the most overpowering in the scope on Russian policy towards Egypt. Bogdanov's work was quite helpful in analyzing relations between Russia and Egypt both at the time of the Soviet Union and after its collapse. It encompasses the period of time up to the Arab uprisings of 2011.

Regarding the literature describing the Soviet-Libyan bilateral relations, *Modern Libya* (1996) by Russian historian Egorov has been useful for uncovering diplomatic relations between the USSR and Libya in the early 1950s. More detailed and broader information about the concluded economic and political agreements has been given by Fatuma Mamluk in her article *The foreign policy of Muammar Qadhafi and Relations between*

Libya and the USSR and Russia (2017). The earliest relations in the military sphere have been described and analyzed in Intelligence Memorandum: Soviet-Libyan Relations (1975) which was prepared by the Central Intelligence Agency.

The work by Yehudit Ronen titled Vestiges of the Cold War in Libya's Arab Spring: Revisiting Libya's Relations with the Soviet Union (2014) being one of the recent studies is unique as far as the scope and quality of the document is concerned. Our thesis has some similarities with Ronen's work, but ours contains an addition of the recent unfolding in Libya. Ronen's work does not include developments in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) in the post-Arab uprisings period. Therefore, a given thesis has its significance by means of illustrating and analyzing the bilateral relations before, during and after the Arab uprisings.

## **CHAPTER 1: A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS EGYPT AND LIBYA (1943-1990)**

This chapter is devoted to an in-depth exploration of the Russian foreign policy principles; factors and players that have affected Russia's regional and global policies in general and its' policy towards the Middle East in particular. This chapter includes the Soviet Union and independent Russian foreign policy doctrines, other doctrines, domestic players' characteristics and diverse factors that have had an influence on the formation of foreign policy. The investigation of this subject is vital because it facilitates the further process of the research that is going to explicate Russian foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya from the practical perspective.

### **1.1. The Soviet Union's Foreign Policy Doctrines and the Middle East (1943-1991)**

A grasp of the Soviet policy pertaining to the entire Middle Eastern region might facilitate comprehension of its policy towards Egypt and Libya given the fact that the Soviet policy in these two countries was interconnected with its general policy towards the MENA. In this part of the thesis a general review of the Soviet Union foreign policy orientations is going to be examined. For this purpose, a variety of academic literature has been looked at, analyzed and outlined. The main foreign policy doctrines of the Soviet Union have been investigated according to the historical chronology. Because doctrines are interconnected with each other, it is reasonable to start an exploration of foreign policy doctrines since the early stages of the Soviet Union.

In the concise and saturated study made by Ruslan Mukhametov, the Soviet Union's foreign policy doctrines and principles have been well explained and summarized. This study encompasses paramount doctrines starting with the Proletarian Internationalism and ending with the New Thinking. Speaking of the early foreign policy doctrines, Vladimir Lenin's proletarian internationalism and peaceful coexistence doctrines should be highlighted. A proletarian internationalism doctrine aimed at maintaining the third world countries, communist parties, and anti-imperialist movements all over the world. In order to realize these purposes, such organizations as the Communist International were established in 1919. In fact, its aim was to achieve a unity between revolutionary parties in order to facilitate a world revolution. Through another doctrine called a

peaceful coexistence, Soviet statesmen sought to determine an approach towards the capitalist states. This principle was based on three pivotal points that claim a possibility of balanced relations with capitalist states, peaceful diplomacy and a necessity of an economic relationship with capitalist states. Thus, the Soviet decision-makers led an ideology-orientated foreign policy towards the third world states and a trade-oriented policy towards the capitalist states. In order to hold a socialist order in the Soviet Union Lenin and the Soviet Union people commissioner on foreign affairs, Georgy Chicherin, recognized the necessity of having peaceful relations with capitalist states. Such necessity, according to Chicherin, had been imposed by internal plight within the Union.<sup>17</sup>

However, with the advent of Josef Stalin to power, the Comintern, which once had been created to facilitate the world revolution, was transformed into a tool for Russian foreign policy. By no means were member states of Comintern obliged to be on the side of the Soviet Union in case of an external attack. Hence, the notion of the world revolution started to be seen in the frame of Russian national interests. In other words, ideological impetus had been replaced by a pragmatic one.<sup>18</sup> Such radical change in Soviet foreign policy is examined by Samuel Sharp in his article titled *National Interest: Key to Soviet Politics*. Sharp made an assumption that not only ideological doctrines but also national interest and national power play a crucial role in the determination of the Soviet foreign policy. The author illustrates this idea via Winston Churchill words regarding to Soviet foreign policy: a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma. Later on, he stated: But perhaps there is a key. That key is Russian national interest.<sup>19</sup>

The Soviet Union foreign policy during Nikita Khrushchev rule entirely encompassed the third world, putting a great hope on the Middle Eastern countries regarding their reorientations in terms of the ideology. The way Khrushchev policy succeeded has been well described in the book by the Turkish historian Rifat Uçaroğlu. In his *Siyasi Tarih*, Uçaroğlu explains the convergence between the Middle Eastern states and the Soviet Union; Nikita Khrushchev's doctrine of peaceful coexistence had been especially

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<sup>17</sup> Руслан Мухамедов, “Внешнеполитические Концепции СССР: от Пролетарского Интернационализма до Нового Мышления”, [Electronic Version], Востокведение, 2001, № 33, Вып. 13, р. 7-11, (Ноябрь 11, 2017).

<sup>18</sup> Мухтаров, р. 9.

<sup>19</sup> Samuel Sharp, “National Interest: Key to Soviet Politics”, Devere Pentony (Ed.), in **Soviet Behavior in World Affairs: Communist Foreign Policies** (115-126), San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1962, p. 116.

pointed out. According to him, the Soviet Union embarked on an active policy in the Middle East after the WWII. It was the most interactive period that the Soviet Union and the Middle Eastern states had experienced throughout their history of bilateral relations. Such rapprochement could be explained by a number of reasons. First of all, WWII weakened the strength of the major Western states in a way that the Soviet Union seized the moment and attempted to replace the Western powers in the newly emerged states in the Middle East. Secondly, the Arab-Israeli war is the event that had framed a nature of cooperation between the Soviet Union and the Middle East. Thirdly, the Soviet Union State Secretary, Nikita Khrushchev started to assist Arab states economically through the peaceful coexistence doctrine that had affected the Arab states ideologically as well.<sup>20</sup>

The Soviet Union behavior towards the Arab states and towards the entire third world also had been formed according to the Eisenhower doctrine of 1957 that aimed to assist Middle Eastern states. A military alliance for the Middle Eastern states, the Baghdad Pact had been established in 1955 but after the Iraqi regime had collapsed it was soon after that replaced by the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). All these kinds of the US-led initiatives motivated the Soviet Union to activate its facilities in the Middle East as well.<sup>21</sup>

During the Arab-Israeli conflicts, the Soviet Union played a crucial role in mediation. Essentially, the Soviet Union actively supported Egypt against Israel and the Western states. A clear example of this is the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956. During the crisis, the Soviet Union took the side of Egypt also via cooperation with the US; the Soviets severely condemned Britain, France, and Israel expelling them from Egypt. In this way, Gamal Abdel Nasser accomplished the nationalization of the Suez Canal.<sup>22</sup>

After Khrushchev resignation Leonid Brezhnev came to power as the Soviet Union State Secretary. In the field of foreign affairs, a New Doctrine was adopted in 1968. The doctrine implied the notion that every socialist state should define its way of development according to the national characteristics. It should also be mentioned that Brezhnev's Doctrine had emerged as a response to the collective military alliance of

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<sup>20</sup> Rifat Uçarol, **Siyasi Tarih (1789-2010)**, İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 8th ed., 2010, p. 1223.

<sup>21</sup> Лиля Каплина, “Внешняя Политика СССР/Российской Федерации: Геополитический Взгляд”, [Electronic Version], *Реферативный Журнал 5, История 3*, 1997, p. 62-85, (Ноябрь 1, 2017).

<sup>22</sup> Дмитрий Морозов, **Этот Противоречивый XX Век: Россия от Н. Хрущева до В. Путина**, Пенза: ПГУАС, 2013, p. 59.

CENTO in the Middle East. The Soviet Union put an emphasis not on the collective treaty, but on the independent struggle of the third world countries against their enemies in a way that would help them choose the most appropriate ways of national struggle against their colonizing forces.<sup>23</sup>

However, the doctrine underscored that in case of the internal and/or external forces topple of the socialist regime in one of the Soviet countries it would be a problem for all socialist states. The communist party was considered to be responsible for all communist states. Hence, this doctrine indirectly empowered the Soviet Union to interfere in the internal affairs of other socialist states. A leader of Yugoslavia called this doctrine a constrained sovereignty.<sup>24</sup>

Mikhail Gorbachev is the last ruler in the Soviet Union, who designed some new strategies for political development, such as Perestroika, which meant reconstruction, and Glasnost, or openness. From the very beginning, these ideas were thought to reform the severe socialism to humane socialism. Gorbachev initially wanted to reconstruct the Soviet Union from the within, believing in the possibility of collaborative relations between socialism and capitalism. As for the domestic affairs, Gorbachev intended to utilize every policy, which could be beneficial for the democratic development of the Union and which might be accompanied by harmonized relations with the West. Thus, Gorbachev worldview was about a united world. One of the indicators of Gorbachev peace-oriented policies was the 1987 Treaty with the US on the disposal of nuclear weapons. It is obvious that Gorbachev's both internal and external policies were focused on social development rather than on economic and military affairs.<sup>25</sup>

## **1.2. The Soviet Union's Foreign Policy towards Egypt**

This part of the thesis is dedicated to the Soviets policy towards Egypt and to the bilateral relations between the two countries. In order to embark of the investigation on this subject, it is necessary to provide some brief information about Egypt's political history.

Egypt was captured by the Arab forces in the 7th century A. D. around 1517; Egyptian territories were taken over by the Mamluks who were prisoners of war or slaves

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<sup>23</sup>Каплина, р. 9-10.

<sup>24</sup> Мухамедов, стр. 10.

<sup>25</sup> Andrei Tsygankov, **Russian Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity**, the 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010, pp. 34, 48.



converted to Islam within the Ottoman Empire. In other words, the Ottoman Empire ruled Egypt via the Mamluks who were responsible for collecting and submitting taxes on behalf of the Turkish authorities. In the second half of the 18th century, Egypt was invaded by French forces led by Napoleon Bonaparte with the aim of controlling the trade routes passing through the Mediterranean. However, the French rule did not last long as by the early 19th century France left Egypt under the pressure from Britain who had collaborated with the Turks. Soon after the Albanian Muhammad Ali was appointed a governor in Egypt by the Ottoman Empire in 1805, Muhammad Ali played a crucial role in the fate of Egypt at the time. For example, Muhammad Ali laid out a novel system in the Egyptian army through inviting European tutors to educate local soldiers. Ali's successor Khedive Ismail continued his predecessor's tradition of improving the Egyptian army's quality by hiring western servicemen. At the same time, Ismail used a policy of suppressing Mamluks. The Khedive's governance had taken a pro-European route in both internal and foreign policy. It was under his rule that, Egyptian cotton gained prestige all over the world. Another event that radically changed Egypt's strategic position was the completion of the Suez Canal in 1869. The canal precipitated Egypt's bankruptcy to such an extent that Egypt was forced to sell canal shares to Britain. In this way, the British protected their presence in Egypt, notably in the sphere of finance.<sup>26</sup>

Ultimately, in 1882 when the revolution attempt took place in Egypt, Britain endorsed the Khedive rule and de facto imposed its protectorate until 1956. At the time of the World War I, Britain cooperated with Arabs against Turkish authority in the Middle East. However, nationalist groups in Egypt desired independence from the British influence. Thus, under the pressure of the newly formed Wafd Party, in 1922 Britain granted independence to Egypt; however, its control over the foreign policy and defense principles remained the same. At the same time Egypt enjoyed its first experience of independence between 1924 and 1936 under the youngest son of Ismail Khedive, King Fuad.<sup>27</sup>

With the death of King Fuad in 1936, power had been transferred to his son Farouk Pasha, who ruled Egypt until 1952. As a reaction to the Wafd Party in the 1920s, new organizations such as the Muslim Brotherhood appeared on the Egyptian political scene.

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<sup>26</sup> Azzedine Layachi, **The Middle East**, New York: McGraw Hill, 2011, p. 44.

<sup>27</sup> *Fu'ad I: King of Egypt*, 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Fuad-I>, ( March 21, 2018).

The leader of this religious movement, Hassan al-Banna, called for Islamic order in the state taking into account the needs of the society as well.<sup>28</sup> As soon as the WWII began, Britain entered Egypt and restored its protectorate there again. The fall of a monarchy to a governed state and its defeat in the Arab-Israeli War in 1948 pushed young officers to form the Free Officers clandestine organization to topple the ruling regime. Finally, Egypt became a republic in 1952 following a coup d'état and freeing itself from British influence in 1956.<sup>29</sup> In the aftermath, due to the Egypt sovereignty, new diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union started to develop.

Egypt represented one of those MENA states that were of an utmost importance for the regional development. Firstly, Egypt had been important to the Soviet Union from the geopolitical perspective due to its location on the African and Eurasian continents connecting the Mediterranean with the Red Sea and vice versa. Secondly, after the WWII Egypt became a neighbor for two important regional states, namely Palestine and Israel. With the establishment of Israel, Egypt initially fought against Israel and then became a mediator between Israel and other Middle Eastern states. Egypt's mediation activities had led to recognition of Israel by Egypt in 1979. Thirdly, Egypt internal strength and its influence in the MENA region had also made Cairo a worthy state to fight for during the Cold War.<sup>30</sup>

As far as the political interests of Egypt are concerned, at the time of the monarchy, relations between the Soviet Union and Egypt were insignificant partially due to King Farouk's pro-western sentiments. However, after the coup in 1952, and especially following Nasser advent to power in 1954, Egypt, while facing difficulties in relations with the US, turned to the Soviet Union. Such a rapprochement in relations precipitated a long partnership until 1970. Following the death of Nasser, the pro-western leader Anwar Sadat came to power. Sadat was able to alter the power balance not only in Egypt, but in the whole region. Eventually, his rule ended up with a tragic assassination by one of the suppressed extremist group member in 1981. The next head of Egypt was Hosni Mubarak. Mubarak was deemed as a moderate leader who was aware of people's concerns at the time and exerted certain efforts to balance the US influence in Egypt via

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<sup>28</sup> Cleveland and Bunton, p. 193.

<sup>29</sup> Layachi, p.47.

<sup>30</sup> Abdelhak Bassou, "The geopolitics of Egypt: Strengths, Opportunities, Constraints and Vulnerabilities", June 28, 2016, <http://www.ocppc.ma/publications/geopolitics-egypt-strengths-opportunities-constraints-and-vulnerabilities>, (November 17, 2017).

cooperation with the Soviet Union. Egypt under Mubarak slowly but steadily undertook the direction of a renewal of relations with the Soviet Union. However, it should be pointed out that Egypt had never experienced again such close relations with the Soviet Union as it had during the Nasser time.<sup>31</sup>

Initially, the diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Egypt were established in 1943.<sup>32</sup> The Soviet Union Ambassador in London, Ivan Maiskii and the Egyptian Prime Minister, Nahhas Pasha had some unofficial agreement on bilateral diplomatic relations in Alexandria.<sup>33</sup> It is reported that due to King Farouk's decree, relations with the Soviet Union were held restricted. But as soon as the monarchy was toppled via the coup in 1952 by Gamal Abdel Nasser, Soviet–Egyptian relations had been intensively developed.

With regard to Gamal Abdel Nasser, he was a leading person in the military coup of 1952. Having witnessed a humiliating position of Egypt under British, Nasser desired to fight colonial rule in Egypt and not only in Egypt. Being involved in the major regional war of 1948 Nasser had been deeply disappointed with the Arab states' defeat in this war.<sup>34</sup> Such plight of affairs in the region aroused him to invoke the regional states to fight against Israeli expansionism as well. In this way Nasser having addressed the Middle Eastern nations' concerns acquired a wide recognition and support of the masses.<sup>35</sup>

In the foreign policy Nasser didn't stick to either the Soviet Union or the US position in the world. Instead, Nasser had chosen a stance of neutrality in his foreign policy. Even though the Soviet Union and Egypt had different foreign policy interests and different objectives, later on the events in the regional and global arena pushed Nasser towards military, economic and political cooperation with the Soviet Union. In their turn, the Soviet Union under Khrushchev envisaged in Egypt an opportunity to broaden influence in the Middle East. In the early 1950s, the Soviet Union seemed to have less confidence

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<sup>31</sup> Bassau , p. 5

<sup>32</sup>Роберт Ланда, “Вместо Заключения. Советский Союз. Вторая Мировая Война и Восток”, Олег Ковтунович (ред.), **СССР и Страны Востока накануне и в Годы Второй Мировой Войны**, Москва: Российская Академия Наук, Институт Ближнего Востока, 2010, p. 459.

<sup>33</sup>Первин Ниязи Оглы Мамедзаде, “Российско-Египетские Отношения: История и Современность”, [Electronic version], *Вестник Российского университета дружбы народов. Серия: Международные отношения*, 2006, No 1(6), p. 62 (Январь 17, 2018).

<sup>34</sup> Joel Gordon, **Nasser Hero of Arab Nation**, Oxford: Oneworld, 2006, p.3

<sup>35</sup> Elie Poddeh and Onn Winckler, **Rethinking Nasserism: Revolution and Historical Memory in Modern Egypt**, Florida: University Press of Florida, 2004, p. x.

and weaker influence over Egypt. Considering the ambiguous position of the Soviet Union, Gamal Abdel Nasser preferred to manage relations with the Soviet Union on the ministerial level. At any rate in 1954 such tendency had been observed in the wake of Nasser's attempt to get information regarding possible weapon purchase from the Soviet Union through the Soviet Ambassador in Cairo, Danil Solod. It's important to be aware that the year of 1954 became a turning point for the Soviet Union due to the Stalin death. The new successor, Nikita Khrushchev, had been gaining power since then and became one of those people who had changed the Soviet Union's position in the world by broadening its influence far beyond its borders. It should be outlined that such events had taken place as the new administration endorsed anti-Western trends all over the world.<sup>36</sup>

With regards to the Soviet Union perception of Arab nationalism, Khrushchev in his speech in the 21st Congress of the Communist Party criticized Nasser and his endeavors towards the Arab Unity that was established in 1958 via the merger of Egypt with Syria. Simultaneously, Khrushchev had emphasized the priority and importance of having friendly ties rather than ideology. Concurrently, as soon as the Arab Unity disbanded in 1961, the Soviet Union relations with Egypt and other Arab states had been enhanced also partly because Egypt ceased oppressing of communists in Syria. Another example is that in May of 1964 Khrushchev visited Egypt; he stated then that Arab nationalism was a temporary stage on the way to communism. Such approach to Arab nationalism was a subject of criticism from the Nasser's side. However, Nasser had reasserted to the world that Arab nationalism was not dependent on communism, and that it was apart from it.<sup>37</sup>

Regarding the military relations, Egypt's growing demand for arms was an initial impetus for strengthening relations with the Soviet Union. Hence, one of the first agreements between two states was a treaty for weapon purchases in 1955. The Soviet Union had also started to help Egypt to restore and renew the Egyptian military force. It's extremely important to stress that initially Nasser had tried to ask for a military aid from the US; however, because of the US terms requiring joining the military pact and restraining from using weapons against Israel, Nasser turned his gaze to the East,

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<sup>36</sup> Nizameddin Talal, **Putin's New Order in the Middle East**, London: Hurst & Company, 2013, pp. 19-21.

<sup>37</sup> Peter Mansfield, (trans.) Ergün Tuncalı, **Mısır İhtilali ve Nasır**, İstanbul: Kitapçılık Ticaret Ltd. Şrk., 1967, p. 68-69.

basically toward the Soviet Union. According to Andrej Kreutz, the invasion of the Gaza Strip by Israel in the winter of 1955 had accelerated Egypt's purchase of weapons from the Soviet Union. Thus, in 1955-1956, the Soviet Union sold arms amounting to 250 million dollars. In 1958 the Soviet Union embarked on assisting the building of the Aswan Dam in Egypt. The Soviet Union allocated 100 million dollars and provided some additional loan for that project. Overall, the total aid in the 1956-1967 was estimated at 1.5 billion dollars.<sup>38</sup>

In the context of global and regional affairs, the US support for Israel precipitated a rapprochement between the Arab states and the Soviet Union. Moreover, Soviet anti-Israeli and anti-Western speeches, particularly at the time of Khrushchev's governance, provided a pro-Soviet tendency in Arab states. That was also true for Egypt. The best example of the Soviet Union-Egyptian rapprochement was an indirect encroachment of the Soviet Union during the Suez Canal Crisis in 1956. The Soviet Union had replied to the crisis in a rigid way by being against Israel and its allies. The Suez Canal crisis seemed to be a turning point in the regional affairs. Speaking of the reasons for such a significant and unexpected action by Egypt as the nationalization of the Suez Canal that had before been utilized internationally, it was primarily the US and British refusal to provide credit to Egypt in July 1956 for the construction of the High Aswan Dam, that pushed Nasser to nationalize the Canal at the end of July 1956.<sup>39</sup>

Subsequently, in August of 1956 the US, Britain, and France sponsored a conference in London to settle the issue related to the status and navigation in the Suez Canal. Western states insisted on installation of international control over a system of navigation whereas the Soviet Union desired to solve the issue in accordance with both the national interest of Egypt and international players that were utilizing the canal. Finally, Khrushchev proposed that nationalization of the canal was a legitimate action. At the same time, since the Western and Eastern sides could not come to a compromise, Britain and France decided to give a lesson for Nasser and recaptured the canal in October of 1956. For that purpose, Israel was used as a trigger of the war with Egypt so that Britain and France might interfere in Egypt under the guise of launching a ceasefire. Hence, on the 29th October 1956, Israel started an invasion of the Sinai

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<sup>38</sup> Andrej Kreutz, pp. 111-112.

<sup>39</sup> Hashim Behbehani, **The Soviet Union, and Arab Nationalism**, 1917-1966, New York: Routledge, 1986, p. 140.

Peninsula. On the 5th of November 1956, Britain and France started their bombardment from the air. Right after that, the US and the Soviet Union as the permanent members of the UN Security Council (SC), forced Britain and France to withdraw their forces completely from Egypt, although Israel still kept its forces there. As a result, the world was witnessing the loss of Britain's and France's status of superpowers and conversely the rise of Egypt as a new power in the Middle East. At the same time, the US and the Soviet Union gained some prestige in the eyes of the entire world.<sup>40</sup>

It should be noted however, that during Brezhnev's governance, the political influence of the Soviet Union had been weakening. Brezhnev actions in Egypt were based more on pragmatism than on ideology. Notably, after Egypt's bitter defeat in the Arab-Israeli war in 1967, the Soviet Union had lost its political reputation in the eyes of the whole Arab world, and that of Egypt in particular. The six-day war had an immense impact on the further relations between Egypt and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union had been involved in the conflict in capacity of an Advisor and a weapon supplier for Egypt. The signs of the upcoming war had emerged as soon as Nasser began to challenge Israel and call for the eventual fight in expense of the defeat of the Arab states in 1948 war. In 1962 an apparent arms race between Egypt and Israel was on. In 1966 the Soviet Union refused to provide Egypt with nuclear weapons, although they promised to protect Egypt with such weapons in case Israel threatens them with the similar arms. In November of 1966 a joint defense command was formed between Egypt and Syria. Such movement made Israel felt under threat and eventually led to the frequent small scale clashes on the Syrian-Israeli border. At that time the Soviet Union had informed Egypt about possible attack on Syria and then on Egypt from Israel's side. Egyptian Field Marshals Abdel Hakim Amer and Shams Badran proposed to be the first to strike while the Soviet Union was categorically against this.<sup>41</sup>

On the 30th May 1967 the Jordanian King Husain signed a Defense Treaty with Egypt. The situation around Israel was becoming more strained, and finally Israel attacked Egyptian Air forces in June of 1967. As a result of this attack, almost 80% of Egyptian aircrafts were annihilated in a single occasion. At that time Israeli forces also captured the Suez, so since then until 1975 the Suez Canal could not be fully utilized by Egypt.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Oral Sander, **Siyasi Tarih: 1918-1994**, Ankara: Imge Kitabevi, 9th ed., 2001, pp. 301-304.

<sup>41</sup> Derek Hopwood, **Egypt: Politics and Society 1945-90**, New York: Routledge, 1991, p. 106.

<sup>42</sup> Cleveland and Bunton, p. 339.

Finally, the war ended with a dramatic defeat of the Arab forces; Egypt lost the Sinai Peninsula, Syria lost part of the Golan Heights, and Jordan lost the West Bank and East Jerusalem. As a result of that war, the Soviet Union was accused of supplying false information and outdated weapons. Despite such unexpected war outcomes, the Soviet Union continued supplying arms to Egypt and maintaining friendly relations.<sup>43</sup>

After the war Nasser insisted on arming the Egyptian army with the new Russian weaponry: Egypt's need for the new weaponry was provided by devastating consequences and attrition as a result of that war that was initiated by Egypt and other Arab states against Israel between 1969 and 1970. The main aim was to expel Israeli forces from the occupied Egyptian territories; however, four-fifths of Egyptian air forces were annihilated by Israel by January 1970.<sup>44</sup> In response to Egypt's request, the Soviet Union delivered 1200 aircrafts to Egypt, some servicemen, and SAM-3 batteries; and by 1971 Egypt possessed 450 MIG fighters, 1350 tanks, and 100 vessels. At the foreign affairs level a friendship agreement was signed between the Soviet Union and Egypt in May of 1970. This agreement provided basis for a new collaboration in the military sphere, particularly in the area of weapons trade and also training the Egyptian forces.

For all that, the death of Nasser at the end of September 1970 paved the way for the rapid change of the situation in the region. In October 1970 General Anwar Sadat became the new Egyptian President. In terms of prioritizing his goals, Sadat had put the liberation of the Suez Canal and Sinai from Israeli forces at the top of his list. Furthermore, to fulfill the mentioned goals Sadat did not aim to become a regional power, at the time when conversely Egypt started to seek for rapprochement with the US. Once Egypt had achieved friendly relations with the US, in February 1971 Sadat decided to come to the agreement with Israel regarding latter's withdrawal from Sinai. Sadat thought that the recognition of Israel might be for the negotiated for Suez Canal and for the partial military withdrawal from Sinai. However, such proposal was rejected by Israel, and therefore Sadat had to invoke the last means, which was a war. Following that plan, Sadat paid a visit to Moscow in May of 1972; however, the Soviet Union refused to provide Egypt with weapon according to Armaoğlu, the newly agreed

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<sup>43</sup> Hopwood, p. 111.

<sup>44</sup> Fahir Armaoğlu, **20ci Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi**, İstanbul: Alkım, 2010, p. 859.

Strategic Arms Limitation Talks-I with the US in May of 1972.<sup>45</sup> Such response triggered the decision on the expulsion of about 15000 Russian personnel from Egypt in July of 1972.<sup>46</sup> Later on, in August of 1972 both the Soviet Union and Egypt withdrew their embassies from the respective states. Such unexpected turn of events implied a failure of the Soviet Union efforts in Egypt worth of 20 years.

As far as the Western reaction to the deterioration of relations between the Soviets and Egypt is concerned, they approved of Egypt's estrangement from the Soviet Union; however, they did not take any steps to restore relations with Egypt. Sadat then returned to Moscow, and in February of 1973 the Soviet Union agreed to support Egypt by providing armament to Egypt in accordance with their needs under the condition that Egypt would not extend its invasion over the right side of the Suez Canal. Apparently, on October 4th, 1973 the Yom Kippur war broke out, and both Egypt and Syria became determined to retake zones that had been occupied since 1967 by Israel. While the US sedulously made efforts to protect Israeli interests, the Soviet Union kept on supplying weapons to Egypt.<sup>47</sup>

By the end of October 1973 the war was over. Both Egypt and Israel had accepted the UN resolution 338 which called for the belligerent sides to cease fire and proposed to promptly enact the UN resolution 242. That Resolution had been issued after a six day war in 1967 and denounced territories captured by force. Basically, the resolution called Israel to remove from the occupied territories. Simultaneously, Resolution 338 invited both sides for the negotiations. Such events took place because the US had taken over the ceasefire negotiations between Egypt and Israel since the end of the Yom Kippur War. As a matter of fact, the US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger was a person who contributed to the mediation between Egypt and Israel. Ultimately, in January 1974 an agreement titled 101 Kilometers was reached between the respective sides. The agreement stipulated a complete withdrawal of Israel from the western bank of the Suez Canal and a withdrawal of 20 miles from the eastern bank of the canal. Moreover, both sides accepted the presence of UN Peace Forces amongst Egyptian and Israeli military units. Last, but not least, an important decision asserted that the armed forces of both

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<sup>45</sup> Armaoğlu, p. 860-861.

<sup>46</sup> Hopwood, p. 72.

<sup>47</sup> Bunton & Cleveland, p. 341.



sides would not exceed 7000 soldiers and that both Egypt and Israel would be expected to possess only light weaponry.<sup>48</sup>

To sum things up, the war brought a rapprochement between Egypt and the US, and alienation from the Soviet Union. In April 1974 Sadat expressed his intention to distance himself from having the Soviet weapons. Furthermore, after two years Egypt unilaterally ceased the Soviet-Egyptian Treaty of Friendship. As for the debts, Egypt indebted to the Soviet Union for 11 billion dollars, more than half of the amount related to military purchases.

Looking at further regional developments in the Soviet-Egyptian relations, the Camp David Peace talks deserve special attention. The peace talks were held between Egypt, Israel, and the US without participation of the Soviet Union. Finally, as soon as the Peace Agreement between Egypt and Israel had been signed in 1979, the Soviet Union-Egypt relations started deteriorating. Two years later in September 1981, the Soviet Embassy in Cairo had been dissolved by Sadat decree. Not long after that in October 1981, Sadat was assassinated by one of the local extremist groups because of Sadat's policy pertaining to groups with religious roots.<sup>49</sup>

In the meantime, Sadat was succeeded by the former Vice President, Hosni Mubarak, who had also experienced a military career. Mubarak, having seen the harsh times in Egypt, was eager to bring about new positive developments among which the importance was given to the restoration of Egypt's reputation in the region and the enhancement of relations with the Soviet Union to balance the US influence in Egypt. Mubarak reinforced relations with Moscow by re-inviting Soviet personnel to Egypt. Furthermore, some words of dissatisfaction with the US policy towards Israel had been articulated by Mubarak in the non-alignment meeting in 1983.<sup>50</sup>

In 1983 Egypt and the Soviet Union signed agreements on social interaction. Ultimately, the first economic agreement was adopted in 1984. In the same year the embassies of Egypt and the Soviet Union were reinstated in Moscow and Cairo. Such positive developments in relations between the Soviet Union and Egypt had come out of the Soviet Union desire to strengthen its position in the Middle East via collaboration with Egypt as well. As far as Egypt's goal in cooperation was concerned, this country was eager to gain some neutrality in the foreign policy to curb a power of internal and

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<sup>48</sup> Armaoğlu, pp. 863-864.

<sup>49</sup> Kreutz, p. 114.

<sup>50</sup> Мамед-Заде, p. 3.

external opponents.<sup>51</sup> In May 1990 Mubarak visited Moscow to conclude a contract with the Soviet Union on cooperation in the spheres of economy, science and technology until 2000.<sup>52</sup> To conclude, the relations between the Soviet Union and Egypt had reached a balance with the modification of the Soviet foreign policy towards the West at the end of the 1980s. Also, with the outset of Russian mediation efforts in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and ultimately with the establishment of diplomatic ties with Israel in 1991 relations with Egypt had also been renewed.<sup>53</sup>

It would only be useful to support the analysis of the Soviet-Egypt bilateral relations with tangible economic data. It's important to look at the analysis of the foreign trade between the Soviet Union and Egypt during the period of 1955 and 1990, in total of 35 years. In order to mark significant changes in trade volumes, the trade statistics have been investigated on a 5-year basis of annual data. Since the period is quite extensive, it is preferable to display the dynamics happening every five years. Concurrently, appropriate information about trade volumes and trade dynamics has been analyzed.

**Table 1.** Trade Turnover between Egypt and the Soviet Union (one million rubles)

Year	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Total Trade Turnover	4.9	12.9	18.8	150.9	961.2	146.9
Export	4.5	12.9	18.8	163.4	83.4	35.0
Import	0.4	0	0	287.5	877.8	111.9

**Source:** “Статистика Российской Империи, СССР и Российской Федерации”, from site of Historical Materials, <http://istmat.info/statistics>, (March 5, 2018).

Statistics on the Soviet Union's foreign trade displays a tendency of gradual trade relations with the main changes in dynamics of trade balances in the commercial relations with Egypt. It is remarkable that at the very beginning of the 1950s and 1960s the trade turnover was for the benefit of Egypt. In other words, Cairo had a surplus in the bilateral trade. During those years Egyptian export to the Soviets had exceeded the Soviet export to Egypt. For example, in 1956 the total trade volume made up 105.6

<sup>51</sup> Kreutz, pp. 114-116.

<sup>52</sup> Мамед-Заде, p. 2.

<sup>53</sup> Nizameddin, pp. 34-35.

million rubles, among which 44.1 million rubles were from export to Egypt and 61.1 million rubles from Egypt. Speaking of the major products and goods that were being traded between states, initially cotton fibers were traded to Egypt by the Soviets and primarily fuel products were traded by the Soviets to Egypt.<sup>54</sup> However, in 1960s trade dynamics had somewhat changed. Priority in import from Egypt to the Soviet Union had been given to machinery and equipment. So for instance, in 1960 with a total turnover of 171.8 million rubles, export to Egypt made up 62.6 million rubles whereas the import from Egypt made up 109.2 million rubles. Cotton fiber from Egypt remained the most sellable item. Machines and equipment replaced fuel products and became the Soviet Union export number 1 product. Also, predominantly since the 1960s wheat had entered into the category of trading products from the Soviets to Egypt. Furthermore, wheat became a significant product in the bilateral trade.<sup>55</sup>

Looking at statistics on trade made in 1965, one might note that during that time export to Egypt from the Soviet Union started to prevail over import up to 187.6 million rubles. Import to the Soviet Union from Egypt had reached 147.1 million rubles only. The major goods of export were machines, equipment, complementary materials, color metals, coal, wood, and others. As far as import goods are concerned, cotton, cloth, vegetables and rice provided a bulk of the import.<sup>56</sup> As for the 1970 bilateral trade turnover, it made 606.4 million rubles: 326.9 million rubles of which pertained to export and 279.5 million rubles to import. Almost half of the export goods were machines and equipment. The laboratory tools and cars and other heavy transportation means built a significant part of the export as well. Speaking of the main import products from Egypt to the Soviet Union, it was constituted of cotton fiber, rice, perfumes, oranges and petroleum products.<sup>57</sup>

The total amount of trade in 1975 was equal to 383.7 million rubles. 261.5 million rubles constituted export and 448.3 million rubles constituted the import of the Soviet Union from Egypt. The essential components of export were machines, equipment,

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<sup>54</sup>Министерство Внешней Торговли СССР, **Внешняя Торговля СССР за 1956 Год: Статистический Обзор**, Москва: Внешторгиздат, 1958, р. 149.

<sup>55</sup>Министерство Внешней Торговли СССР, **Внешняя Торговля СССР за 1960 Год: Статистический Обзор**, Москва: Внешторгиздат, р. 10, 198.

<sup>56</sup>Министерство Внешней Торговли СССР, **Внешняя Торговля СССР за 1965 Год: Статистический Обзор**, Москва: Международные Отношения, 1966, р. 299-304.

<sup>57</sup>Министерство Внешней Торговли СССР, **Внешняя Торговля СССР за 1970 Год: Статистический Обзор**, Москва: Международные Отношения, 1971, р. 271.

complementary techniques and some amount of coal, petroleum products, metals and lumber and many other minor goods. On the other hand, import was in the sum of 448.3 million rubles. In import, the primary goods were cotton fiber, vegetables, and perfumes. Additionally, some new goods such as machines and equipment and leather shoes were traded from Egypt to the Soviet Union.<sup>58</sup> Coming to 1980, trade had amounted to almost 383.7 million rubles between Egypt and the Soviet Union. A trade had been rapidly decreased due to the growing economic problems in both states. All amounts of export goods for to Egypt had been decreased to 172.7 million rubles: fewer machines, cars, lumber, and equipment were traded. The same was true for the import amounts: it was reduced to 211 million rubles. The components of the imports remained the same including addition of the petroleum products.<sup>59</sup>

Despite the negative tendency in trade by 1985, the trade turnover had reached 585.1 million ruble, partially due to the rise in the number of both exporting and importing goods. The purchasing items stayed the same. The amount of export constituted 282.3 million rubles whereas the amount of import made up 302.8 million rubles.<sup>60</sup> Coming to 1990, bilateral trade had achieved its peak, amounting to 753.8 million rubles. In a section of export, heavy industry products prevailed. At the same time, during that period Egypt had suspended purchasing of petroleum products from the Soviet Union. In the import section the light industry products were prevailing.<sup>61</sup>

### **1.3. The Soviet Union's Foreign Policy towards Libya**

In order to look at the Soviet-Libyan relations comprehensively, some background information about Libyan statehood would be all-important. Speaking of the modern history of Libya, the historical turning point was being the decline of the Ottoman Empire. During that period Italian forces entered Libya, establishing sound institutions like Banko di Roma that used to dominate in Libya. Italians finally captured the most important parts of the state by 1913. In October 1913 with the withdrawal of Turkey from the Tripolitania and Cyrenaica regions of Libya, a Lausanne peace agreement

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<sup>58</sup>Министерство Внешней Торговли СССР, **Внешняя Торговля СССР за 1975 Год: Статистический Обзор**, Москва: Статистика, 1976, р. 273.

<sup>59</sup>Министерство Внешней Торговли СССР, **Внешняя Торговля СССР за 1980 Год: Статистический Обзор**, Москва: Финансы и Статистика, 1981, р. 245.

<sup>60</sup>Министерство Внешней Торговли СССР, **Внешняя Торговля СССР за 1985 Год: Статистический Обзор**, Москва: Финансы и Статистика, 1986, pp. 245-249.

<sup>61</sup>Министерство Внешней Торговли СССР, **Внешняя Торговля СССР за 1985 Год: Статистический Обзор**, Москва: ГосКомСтат, 1991, pp. 249, 251.

between the Ottoman Empire and Italy was made according to which the Turks were to leave Libyan territory. This, however, turned Libya into a state where violent wars were taking place during many years. Since 1912 Libya had turned into a place of both civil and international wars. Just after the departure of Turkish troops, local Libyans started to fight against the Italian conquerors and amongst themselves. Afterwards, in August of 1914 following the beginning of the World War I, some countries including Italy, Britain, Turkey, and Germany began fighting over Libya, and finally, the Italians took over Libya. In October of 1920, Italy started to administer Libyan regions via the prominent local Sanusi dynasty representative Sayyid Idris.<sup>62</sup>

Gradually, by 1924 Italian forces were prevailing in the Tripolitania and Fezzan regions. Also, Italy wasn't including local people in the affairs of governance in Libya. In the wake of the WWII, Germany and Italy being states of the Axis Forces, had lost the war in Libya and were expelled by British and French forces in 1943 after the al-Alamein battle. Consequently, the British Military Administration (BMA) had been established in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica and the French Military Administration (FMA) - in Fezzan. Hence, Italian forces had promptly been replaced by other colonial forces. As for the Arab Forces under local leader Sayyid Idris they appeared to be supportive of the British forces. Britain desired to have a pro-British administration in Cyrenaica; France wished to have a buffer zone in Fezzan territories; Italy wanted to restore its rule in Libya, whereas the Soviet Union and the US stood for independent Libya.<sup>63</sup> As for the local people in Libya, most residents of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania protested against the self-interested plans of Allied Forces and struggled for independence.<sup>64</sup> Soon, after the futile confrontation between the British, French, Italian, the Soviet Union and the US plans, in December of 1951 Libya was announced independent by the UN General Assembly. It is worth to state that the Soviet Union had played a crucial role in the emergence of Libya as a unitary state in the middle of the 20th century.<sup>65</sup>

It happened that way that Britain supporting Sayyid Idris would prevail in the political life of new Libya until 1969. Due to the pro-British policies, Libya hinged not only on Britain but on the US as well. The old partners of Libya, Britain and the US gained

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<sup>62</sup> Анатолий Егорин, **История Ливии: XX Век**, Москва: Институт Востоковедения РАН, 1999, pp. 26-30.

<sup>63</sup> Layachi, p.122.

<sup>64</sup> Егорин, **История Ливии: XX Век**, p. 38-40.

<sup>65</sup> Егорин, **История Ливии: XX Век**, p. 460.

benefit from renting the Wheelus and al-Adem air bases in Libya. In the Cold War, possession of the air bases was of utmost importance in the arms race and rivalry between the West and the East. Furthermore, with the discovery of oil deposits, Libya became strongly inclined to the West. Simultaneously, the sudden economic rise precipitated divergence in the struggle between ruling elites. As a result, the military appeared to be the most solid group at that time. Finally, the tribal Sanusi ruling monarchy was overthrown in 1969 by officers led by Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.<sup>66</sup>

The diplomatic relations between Libya and the Soviet Union started in September 1955. In January of 1956 the Soviet Union Embassy was established in Tripoli and the Libyan Embassy in Moscow was opened in September of 1962. Then in May of 1963 the first agreement on economic collaboration was signed between the Libyan monarchy and the Soviet Union.<sup>67</sup> Yet, conservative monarchy in Libya remained to keep a pro-Western orientation, and there was no great interest in affinity with the Soviet Union during that period of time.

When the anti-monarchy coup took place in Libya, the Soviets had endorsed the military revolt. However, later on, the new Libyan leader became well known for anti-communism and pan-Arabism. Despite different ideologies, Libya and the Soviet Union focused on cooperation in political, trade and military spheres. Speaking of the common regional interests of the respective states, they were against pro-American Sadat's governance in Egypt and were against Israeli policy in the region.<sup>68</sup> Also, both states wished to see a different world order than which was existing at that time.

Muammar Qadhafi followed an example of Nasser of Egypt and embarked on cleansing Libya of Western imperialist elements. As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, due to the urgent need for arms Libya stood for developing relations with the Soviet Union, notably in the military sphere. An agreement in the trade and science-technical spheres of cooperation between Libya and the Soviet Union was signed in 1972. Following that stage, a significant rise of trade between the two countries had been observed. The outcome of that agreement was a provision of T-54 tanks to Libya within the same year.

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<sup>66</sup> Dirk Vandewalle, **A History of Modern Libya**, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp.24-30.

<sup>67</sup> Егорин, **Современная Ливия**, р. 166.

<sup>68</sup> Фатума Мамлук, "Внешняя Политика Муаммара Каддафи и Отношение Ливии, с Советским Союзом и Россией", (1969-2003 гг.), **Вестник РУДН**, Серия: История России, 2017, выпуск 16, номер 1, pp. 110-120.

Additionally, Moscow made a commitment to assist Libya in implementing economic plans that were an essential part of every socialist state.<sup>69</sup>

Another important deal between Libya and the Soviet Union appeared in 1974: that was a multifaceted Comprehensive Cooperation which encompassed political, economic and military agreements. Both sides made efforts to develop bilateral relations based on a notion of sincere friendship. Moreover, in the wake of these meetings, the Soviet-Libyan Commission on Economic and Scientific Matters was established. This Commission conducted annual meetings to regulate bilateral relations.<sup>70</sup>

Following those agreements, the Soviet Union made a commitment to supply Libya with tanks, aircraft, and Scud missiles. Further on, the military agreement had been enlarged and included new purchases of helicopters, SAM missiles, anti-tank missiles and other heavy military technologies. Thus, the Soviet Union gained the status of the largest arms importer to Libya. To reinforce the deals, Tripoli had strengthened its Embassy in Moscow and in return, Moscow opened a friendship society to develop bilateral ties with Libya. After the Soviet Union's prime minister, Kosygin's visit to Libya in 1975, the earlier signed military agreement was extended. However, Moscow had informed its arm customer that the Soviet Union commitment to deliver arms is open-ended. That meant that the Soviet Union might not provide all the necessary weapons. The other pivotal side of bilateral cooperation between Libya and the Soviet Union was a deal to launch a nuclear research center in Libya in 1975. Libya had adopted the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to be able to receive a 10-megawatt research reactor from the Soviet Union. In return, the Soviet Union gained the right to enter certain Libyan ports. In this regards, it should be stated that Libya's beneficial geopolitical location was lucrative for the Soviet Union.<sup>71</sup>

According to the CIA report on Soviet-Libyan relations, the Libyan foreign policy priorities under Muammar Qadhafi rule included the pan-Arabism and anti-Israeli line. Qadhafi also desired for merging with Egypt. However, in 1973 Egypt's President Anwar Sadat objected to this suggestion of unity. Furthermore, Egypt was frustrated by a Holy March to Cairo which was led by Libyan Arab nationalists in July 1973. That march precipitated unrest in the streets of Cairo and was assessed as subversive by the

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<sup>69</sup> Мамлук, pp. 110-115.

<sup>70</sup> Егорин, *Современная Ливия*, p. 168.

<sup>71</sup> Егорин, *Современная Ливия*, p. 170

Egyptian authority. Therefore, the bilateral relations with Egypt, which was a source of pan-Arabism at that time, started declining. Pan-Arab Libyan President severely opposed Nasser's close rapprochement with the Soviet Union, especially at the height of the war of attrition in 1969-1970.<sup>72</sup> Consequently, it might be concluded that the Soviet-Libyan relations were based on temporary opportunism rather than on long-run common interest.<sup>73</sup> Cooperation with the Soviet Union in the 1970-s turned out to be a lucrative option due to the fall of Libya's prestige in the Arab world and mounting involvement of the US in the Middle East.

Another factor that improved relations between Libya and the Soviet Union was a coup attempt made by the Libyan Revolutionary Command Council in the middle of 1975. Libya had suspected that both the US and Egypt were linked to that incident. Following those negative events which were worsening relations with the US, Qadhafi for the first time in his presidency traveled to Moscow in December 1976 with the purpose of negotiating on the military agreement. Due to Libyan subversive foreign policy in the 1970s, more intensive and profound affinity between Libya and the Soviet Union in the sphere of arms purchase was taking place. At the end of 1978, Moscow provided 60 tanks and Scud surface-to-surface missiles. While Libya was enjoying oil purchasing and the growing affinity with the Soviet Union, it felt confident enough at regional level to eventually interfere in internal affairs of Uganda with the intention to capture the geologically rich Aozhou Strip of Chad in 1979.<sup>74</sup>

However, that strong affinity between the two states had not lasted long - the Soviets didn't like Libyan incursion in Uganda, and the USSR ceased the weapon provision to Libya. As soon as aggression against Chad took place, the Soviet Union expressed its dissatisfaction with such steps. Not only were the external players against Qadhafi's subversive foreign policy, but similarly, the internal players barely tolerated such short-sighted policy. A result of those events, the Soviet Union embarked on revising its entire Middle Eastern policy. According to Yehudit Ronen, soon after the Iranian revolution and a change of regime there to Islamic, the Soviet Union's foreign policy interests moved to the adjacent geography, such as the Persian Gulf and Southern Asia

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<sup>72</sup> Yehudit Ronen, "Vestiges of the Cold War in Libya's "Arab Spring": Revisiting Libya's Relations with the Soviet Union", *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia)*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 2014, p. 71.

<sup>73</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, pp. 9-11.

<sup>74</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, p.13.



to curb the possible threat from the Iranian Islamic revolution, while leaving the Arab states as a lesser priority. Observing the growing influence of the Iranian revolution in Afghanistan, the Soviet Union took the decision to invade Afghanistan under the pretext of protecting the local authority.

During that period Libya endorsed Soviet actions in Afghanistan, presumably because of the need for approval of Libya's Chad operation that also happened in 1979. By 1980, Libya had engaged in a full-scale war with Chad. Experiencing shortage of arms, Libya applied to its communist partner in 1981 requesting the rearmament of its army. Initially, then leader of the Soviet Union, Brezhnev had positively reacted to Libyan military aggression towards Chad, even though their mutual relations were not in good shape then. Despite the numerous visits of Libyan officials to Moscow, the Soviet Union had never agreed then to supply new weapons to Libya. Consequently, Libya turned then to its regional partners, such as Ethiopia and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. In 1981 Libya founded a Triple Alliance with the above-mentioned states while still expecting to get a Soviet military aid.<sup>75</sup>

Simultaneously, Libya had encountered the US strong opposition toward its regional policies, notably at the time of the war against Chad. Western states had supplied a military aid for Chad to combat Libya. Moreover, the US, while having military maneuvers near the coast of Libya had shot down two Libyan aircrafts.<sup>76</sup> As stated before, Libya was not supported by the Soviet Union even though Libya had an extreme need for arms. The Soviet Union refused to help its regional partner not only because of Libya's loss of good reputation, but also due to the unpaid debt to the Soviet Union that had been estimated around 1 billion dollars by 1982. Finally, Libya and the Soviet Union signed a military agreement in 1983 which was never realized. Despite this, in the same year Libya and the Soviet Union discussed the world politics and came to conclusion that they stuck to similar stances regarding different international issues. However, despite the fact that Libya had interest in continuing and developing bilateral relations with the Soviet Union ever since 1985, with Gorbachev's reconstruction reforms, the military cooperation between these two states were steadily declining.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Егорин, *Современная Ливия*, p. 440.

<sup>76</sup> Мамлук, "Отношения между Ливией и Российской Федерацией на Современном Этапе", *Dag*, 2017, Vol. 9, No 3, (215-221), p. 113.

<sup>77</sup> Егорин, *Современная Ливия*, p. 173.

Yet in other spheres relations were proceeding, so for instance, in 1987 Qadhafi paid a visit to Moscow and achieved an accord on having political consultations between respective states.

On top of all, Libya encountered severe unrest among its military due to the unsuccessful military operation in Chad in 1985. Under those circumstances, Libya became more vulnerable and was forced to appeal to the Soviet Union for help again. However, with the change of presidency in the Soviet Union, the new leader Mikhail Gorbachev objected to fulfilling military agreement commitments and refused to continue cooperation on the nuclear power station projects in Libya. Despite such a crisis in the relations, the Soviet Union undertook some actions, and started to provide SAM 5; also several thousands of military specialists were sent to strengthen Libyan defense against the US in 1986. This was happening due to the fact that the US air forces attacked Libya in April 1986; and the Soviet Union did not want to lose its partner in the Arab world, and therefore it endorsed Libya both at political and military level as well. It turned out that once so flourishing relations did not come back, and furthermore, Gorbachev reminded that Libya pays off its debt that had reached around 5 billion dollars in 1986. So, following Jalud multiple visits to Moscow, this did not change the plight of Libya. Having no capacity to maintain a war in Chad, Libya withdrew in 1987 while a growing support for Chad from Western states was taking place. Also, the Soviet Union's role in the world politics had diminished by the late 1980s due to arising internal issues, such as announcement of independence by the Eastern European states in 1989 succeeding the fall of the Berlin Wall. As soon as the Soviet Union had collapsed, the bilateral relations respectively came to null.<sup>78</sup>

Apart from military cooperation, the Soviet Union actively promoted its nuclear station projects in the Arab world. Libya also was interested in such projects; as a result in February 1978 Libyan prime minister, Jalud paid a visit to Moscow to discuss matters related to nuclear station projects. In the wake of the negotiations, the Soviet Union agreed to deliver 440 00 kilowatt nuclear power plants. Libya enjoyed better times of its statehood until 1990. With the rise of a unipolar world order in the aftermath of the Kuwait crisis, Libya was affected by heavy international sanctions due to its involvement in terrorist acts in the early 1990s. In 1991, the issue of the explosion of the

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<sup>78</sup> Ronen, p. 89.

US and French civilian airplanes over Scotland in 1988 floated up. The complicity of two Libyan citizens in these terror acts put Libya in a difficult situation. Also, the US started to accuse Libya of chemical weapon production and its use during the war against Chad. On top of these troubling external affairs, Libya was also suffering from mounting internal opposition groups, particularly from the army. Assistance of the Soviet Union to Libya was expected less due to the internal liberal reforms and its dependence on the US aid to implement politico-economic reforms in the newly emerged Russian Federation. That implied that in the foreign policy, Russia acted according to the US whim. Thus, Libya remained alone against the US and UN sanctions in the 1990s.<sup>79</sup>

**Table 2.** Trade Turnover between Libya and the Soviet Union (1 million rubles)

Year	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Total Trade Turnover	4.9	12.9	18.8	150.9	961.2	146.9
Export	4.5	12.9	18.8	163.4	83.4	35.0
Import	0.4	0	0	287.5	877.8	111.9

**Source:** “Статистика Российской Империи, СССР и Российской Федерации”, from site of Historical Materials, <http://istmat.info/statistics>, (March 5, 2018).

Having analyzed trade relations between Libya and the Soviet Union between 1965 and 1990, one might note that a trade volume in the inception had grown gradually and slow. From the outset, Soviet export to Libya had dominated in trade at the same time such dominance had increased within the first five years' totaling trade turnover to 2.6 fold: in 1965 it was 4.5 million rubles; in 1970 it became 12.9 million rubles. Further on, from 1970 to 1975 the total trade turnover increased 1.5 fold. The main products the Soviet Union exported to Libya included machinery, equipment, transportation means, cement as building material, rolled ferrous metals, lumber, high graded steel and a great amount of sugar and cotton fiber as well.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Мамлук, р. 114.

<sup>80</sup> Министерство Внешней Торговли СССР, Внешняя Торговля СССР за 1975 Год: Статистический Обзор, Москва: Статистика, 1976.

However, since 1980 a balance of trade had changed dramatically; Libyan import of goods to the Soviet Union appeared to be prevailing in a bilateral trade. A major product Libya exported to the Soviet Union was fuel, raw minerals and metals, and such a tendency took place due to the fall of oil prices at the beginning of the 1980s. The US and some western states boycotted Libyan oil. In 1980 total trade made up 450.9 million rubles among which 164.4 million dollars were the Soviet export to Libya and 278.5 million rubles Libyan import to the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union exported primarily machines, equipment and cement, although this was in a lesser amount.<sup>81</sup>

In the following year, in 1985, the trade turnover between the states was estimated at 961.2 million rubles; 83.4 million rubles of which was related to Soviet export and the larger amount of 877.8 million rubles was from Libyan import products cost. The Soviet Union export was made up of machines, equipment, aviation technology and energy equipment, whereas Libya exported a growing amount of cheap oil to the Soviet Union.<sup>82</sup>

Finally, statistics from 1990 displays a rapid plummet in trade amount, which reached 146.9 million rubles. Soviet export to Libya is estimated at 35 million rubles and Libyan import to the Soviets was assessed at 111.9 million dollars. The trading materials stayed the same as in 1985. Such happenings took place due to the fall of interest from both sides. The Soviet Union was at the edge of collapse and desired a liberalization of economy and politics and peaceful coexistence with the US, whereas Libya had been caught up amid both internal and external pressure and various problems. The US sanctions and gradual decrease of the quality of the oil producing equipment had led to an output of oil with low quality; also under boycott of major international powers the Libyan oil enterprises had lost their former power in the world oil market.<sup>83</sup>

To summarize, the Soviet Union relations with Egypt and Libya were turbulent. At different periods the relations had divergent dynamics despite these one can conclude that as a whole Soviet Union had prioritized relations with the Middle Eastern states and

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<sup>81</sup>Министерство Внешней Торговли СССР, **Внешняя Торговля СССР за 1965 Год: Статистический Обзор**, р. 295, see **Внешняя Торговля СССР за 1970 Год: Статистический Обзор**.

<sup>82</sup>Министерство Внешней Торговли СССР, **Внешняя Торговля СССР за 1985 Год: Статистический Обзор**, pp. 245-249.

<sup>83</sup>Министерство Внешней Торговли СССР, **Внешняя Торговля СССР за 1965 Год: Статистический Обзор**, р. 252.

with Egypt and Libya in particular. However, there were two exceptions Stalin and Gorbachev leadership periods. At the time of Stalin, the authority was in pursuit of transforming the USSR into a super power and at the time of Gorbachev a peace with the external world was a priority. Thus, one might say that both of views were extreme. Speaking of Khrushchev and Brezhnev leaderships, they provided more stable relations with Egypt and Libya. Particularly, bilateral relations between the USSR and Egypt and Libya under Khrushchev had been on the zenith.





## **CHAPTER 2: THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS EGYPT AND LIBYA (1991-2010)**

### **2.1. The Russian Federation's Foreign Policy Doctrines and the Middle East (1993, 2000 and 2008)**

At the very beginning of Boris Yeltsin rule, the dramatic situation inside the post-Soviet Russia paved the way to the rapprochement between Russia and the West. A clear example of this is an agreement on nuclear weapon destruction, according to which the US could store nuclear weapons whereas Russia agreed to destroy them. That led to the state of misbalance in the relations. Another important event was the democratization initiative of the US and NATO's intention to spread to the East. Such political move by the US had been accepted by Russia in accordance with adopted by Moscow a Euro-Atlantic trend for its foreign policy.<sup>84</sup>

The Euro-Atlanticism in the Russian foreign policy was not an entirely new. In fact, the new Russian leaders including Kozyrev and Yeltsin kept on pursuing Gorbachev's foreign policy which prioritized universal human values. Therefore, at the very beginning of its sovereignty, Russia faced a fiasco in a foreign policy due to these ambiguous principles. Sergei Lantsov pointed to these doctrinal weaknesses claiming that principles of universal human values were too general and blurred for identifying the Russian foreign policy. Even though Gorbachev was not completely pro-westernized when introducing his New Thinking concept, his successor took the direction which was predominantly for the West benefit. Hence, the Russian foreign policy stance until 1996 was characterized as pro-Atlantic and romantic.<sup>85</sup>

Gradually, with the advent of Mikhail Gorbachev, the foreign aid to the third world had been significantly decreased due to the political and economic crisis in the Soviet Union. Hence, at the beginning of the 1990s, the world witnessed Russian shift towards the US which was observed in the Iraq-Kuwait crisis. During that international crisis, Russia supported sanctions against Iraq, a state that the Soviet Union had cooperated with for decades. In brief, the waves of socio-political and economic reforms in the

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<sup>84</sup> Анатолий Смирнов, "Концепции Внешней Политики Российской Федерации: Сравнительный Анализ", Валерий Буянов (ед.), **Внешняя Политика России: Теория и Практика**, Москва: Книга и Бизнес, 2013, p.543 .

<sup>85</sup> Смирнов, p. 550.

Soviet Union during the last years of its existence prepared a ground for a relatively passive policy of independent Russia in the Middle East. Simultaneously, in the sphere of bilateral relations with the Middle Eastern states, Zeynep Dağı in her article *Russia Back to the Middle East* asserts that the new Russian elites and bureaucracies were engaged in discrete business in the Middle East. Eugene Rumer highlighted this state of affairs in Russia in the early 1990s as the situation when neither a single interest nor comprehensive strategy regarding the Middle East was present. A fractured Russian Middle Eastern policy was a result of a weak state establishment and an emergence of technocrats who privatized a number of heavy industrial enterprises. A problem had appeared in Russian Middle Eastern policy because the state adopted a constrained and narrow policy towards the Middle East, putting more inclination to the West. Despite Russian constrained policy in the Middle East, some certain Russian companies such as Gazprom and Minatom, were known as the first semi-private companies that embarked on cooperating with the Middle Eastern states, as opposed to the governmental ones. It is worth emphasizing that the private firms did not care about the Russian foreign policy in the Middle East, they acted according to their own interests. Dağı highlights that official Russian authority could not take control over those potent bureaucracies while being busy with the liberalization of the economy and the democratization of socio-political life inside Russia. In short, Russia was lacking a unified aim, national interest, and a good strategy in the Middle East. Russian activities in the region were gradually decreasing until 1996, at the time when Kozyrev was replaced by Yevgeni Primakov, as a new foreign affairs minister.<sup>86</sup>

With Primakov's arrival to power in the post of a minister of foreign affairs, a multipolar policy and principles of pragmatism were introduced in the Russian foreign policy. It is worth to noting that the new minister had always highlighted a great role and huge importance of the Middle East for Russia. Primakov deemed that the firm stance of Russia in the Middle East could facilitate control over the southern frontiers of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).<sup>87</sup> The situation with the CIS southern states had always been influenced by developments in Afghanistan and the Middle

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<sup>86</sup>Владимир Короткевич, *История Современной России 1991-2003*, Санкт-Петербург: Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет, 2004, р.41.

<sup>87</sup>Роберт Айрапетян, "Геополитика и Внешняя Политика СССР и России во Второй Половине XX Века", [Electronic Version], *Вестник Российского университета дружбы народов*. Серия: Политология, Номер 2, 2011, pp. 68-79.



Eastern countries. For this reason, Russia peace installation activities in the Middle East could positively affect the situation with stability in Russia and in neighboring countries. Although the Middle East was a part of a Russian multipolar foreign policy, it was not considered as being the main vector. Instead, such Eastern states as China, India and partially Japan were determined as the most appropriate states for the strategic partnership.

The Russian Federation's Foreign Policy Doctrine of 1993 called the Basic Provisions for the Russian Federation Foreign Policy Doctrine is the first foreign policy doctrine which was issued since Russia gained its sovereignty in 1991. The doctrine presented Russian national interests and its basic principles and attitudes towards the external world. The part which included the Russian position towards the Middle East was of major interest for this thesis. However, before embarking on the analysis of that part, it is important to look at and to make a brief review of the entire doctrine.<sup>88</sup>

The doctrine is a thirty-seven page document that encompasses all aspects of the Russian foreign policy in a comprehensive way. In regards to the contents, there are two basic sections. The first is a very short part, which is dedicated to the goals and objectives that independent Russia formulates for its foreign policy. Those goals in the foreign policy are listed as follows: a revival of free democratic Russia that guarantees a decent life for its people, the financial-economic independence of Russia, the inclusion of Russia in the world politics as a great state with a solid historical background and a unique geopolitical location. Besides these goals in the foreign policy, a prevention and regulation of the military clashes in Russia; a provision of human rights, particularly for Russian minorities living throughout the country, and the preservation of unity and territorial integrity of Russia.<sup>89</sup>

The second section explains the basic provisions of Russian foreign policy. At the very beginning of the section, the principles of a new political thinking of Gorbachev had been recognized as the first attempt to overcome a West-East confrontation. Furthermore, it claims that the West is not solely a military-political force but rather one

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<sup>88</sup> *Концепции внешней политики Российской Федерации 1993, 2000 и 2008 годов: сравнительный анализ*, <https://articlekz.com/article/7879>, (December 20, 2017).

<sup>89</sup> *Концепции внешней политики Российской Федерации 1993, 2000 и 2008 годов: сравнительный анализ*, <https://articlekz.com/article/7879>, (December 20, 2017).

of the important centers of the world economy and international relations. Another pivotal point is a Russian stance against the utilization of the force in the world politics.

A subsection called Priorities and Principles of the Foreign Policy is included in the same section. According to the Russian national interests, Russian priorities include provision of Russian security via political means. A notion of security in this context encompasses the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and stability of Russia. The defense of the rights and freedoms of Russian people, democratic reforms, maintenance of market economy are also among Russian priorities. In regards to the world politics, Russia respects the UN charter and stands for the idea that borders cannot be changed without three things: the UN consent, a mutual agreement, and a peaceful way. The second subsection is called the Basic Directions of Foreign Policy Activities. Right at the beginning of the document it claims that Russian geopolitical location requires an active, pragmatic, balanced and a multifaceted foreign policy.<sup>90</sup>

The remaining part of the doctrine is entirely dedicated to the directions of Russian foreign policy. The first direction is the Commonwealth of the Independent States. In that context, Russian priorities include establishing and reviving new economic, political and social relations. The protection of the Russian minority is put forth as one of the main tasks as well. Among other outstanding claims in this field is Russia's determination to confront any attempt to install a military-political entity near the Russian borders. The second section is a Control over Disarmament and International Security. It is remarkable that Russia supports cooperation with NATO in the sphere of disarmament and security. The third section contains information on Promotion of Economic Reforms. In this regard, Russia offers the creation of a common economic zone for the post-Soviet states. The fourth part is dedicated to the USA, in which Russia emphasizes their will to see a strategic partner and an ally in the US. However, Russia also stresses that it should confront transformation of the US into a "single super state". Russia also expects encouragement from the US in the internal economic transformation of Russia and expresses a desire to have common military planning with the US. The fifth direction is Europe: Russia expresses a will to cooperate with Europe in political, economic and security spheres by gaining the right to be a member of the European Council and cooperating with the OSCE in conflict areas of the post-Soviet states. The

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<sup>90</sup> *Концепции внешней политики Российской Федерации 1993, 2000 и 2008 годов: сравнительный анализ*, <https://articlekz.com/article/7879>, (December 20, 2017).

sixth direction is the Asia-Pacific Region: and here Russia highlights the possibility of sharing the duty of a security provider in the region along with the US. The next one is devoted to the Southern and West Asia region. In this part, Russia emphasizes economic and political cooperation with India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Turkey.<sup>91</sup>

The eighth direction contains approaches related to the Middle East: here all interactions with the Middle East are explicated. Among the essential reasons why Russia is interested in the region are the geostrategic and geopolitical location of the Middle Eastern states, possession of hydrocarbon sources, with proximity to the region of the Caucasus and Central Asia. That in turn implies a security issue and Russian membership in the UN requiring mediation facilities in the world conflicts. Thus, among the pivotal activities of Russia in that region are: regulation of Arab-Israeli conflict; installation of a security system in the Gulf region for prevention of such conflicts as the Iraq-Iran war; the aggression of Iraq towards Kuwait; prevention of the proliferation of weapons of the mass destruction and a hard stance against international terrorism; economic cooperation with neighboring countries in the region, political and economic cooperation with.<sup>92</sup> In other words, Russia as one of the influential powers in the world politics keeps on mediating facilities in the Middle East. Stability in the Middle East is essential for Russia because the insecure situation in the Middle East could spill over to the Caucasus and Central Asia, an area that Russia attempts to keep under its sphere of influence. Hence, it could be concluded that Russian position in the world and in the field of it is internal and regional affairs require a mediating and conflict preventing stance in the Middle East.

Besides the foreign policy doctrine, another important agreement was signed in 1995, a Memorandum on Russian Policy in the Mediterranean. This agreement could pave a way to a deeper comprehension of Russian economic interests in the Middle East, particularly in the Mediterranean region. The memorandum elevates and promotes cooperation in political, military, economic and ecologic spheres. In the political sphere initiative for a dialogue, a discussion, a conduction of research and promotion of cooperation in the Mediterranean region had been developed. More precisely, installation of the post-conflict security system and resolution of Cyprus issue had been

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<sup>91</sup> “Russian Federation Foreign Policy Dctrine of 1993”, **Diplomatic Herald**, #1-2, pp. 3-32.

<sup>92</sup> *Концепции внешней политики Российской Федерации 1993, 2000 и 2008 годов: сравнительный анализ*, <https://articlekz.com/article/7879>, (December 20, 2017).

put forward. In the area of military security, openness in the sphere of nuclear projects, an idea of the non-nuclear zone in the region, transparency in the military area and a promotion of international cooperation that would discourage proliferation a weapon of mass destruction had been discussed. In regards to economy, Russian Federation claimed to be open to cooperation with any international and regional actors to set up a sound security and cooperation system for the Mediterranean. The last but not least important decision was taken in the sphere of ecology. The memorandum aims to elaborate a program within the UN frames to improve and recover the Black Sea-Mediterranean basin environment.<sup>93</sup>

In 1999 Vladimir Putin came to power as a Prime Minister and in January 2000 Putin became a President whose Russian foreign policy initially complied with Primakov's lines. Furthermore, Putin had continued to develop an idea that Russia is a great power. Analysis of the Russian foreign policy doctrine of 2000 might help to reveal both the general lines and Russian position towards the Middle Eastern states.<sup>94</sup>

Regarding the Middle East, a mediating role of Russia in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and in Iraq, peace preservation activities in the region and active participation in the market of weapons and resources are highlighted. Russia as a permanent member of the UN SC continued mediating in grave conflict cases around the world including the remaining Palestinian-Israeli conflict and then Iraqi aggression on Kuwait. It could be concluded that Russia being a mediator in international conflicts, particularly in the Middle East, attempts in this way to participate in the world politics. Another side of Russian Middle Eastern policy is tied to economic interests since Russia has maintained the armament trade with the Middle Eastern states from the Soviet Union era.<sup>95</sup>

## **2.2. The Russian Federation's Foreign Policy towards Egypt: Political, Economic and Military Relations (1991-2010)**

Most Russian diplomatic relations with the Middle Eastern states have been inherited from the Soviet Union, and similar statement could be made in regards to Russian-Egyptian relations. However, it is necessary to point out that the tendency in Soviet Union foreign policy since the advent of Mikhail Gorbachev has been gradually

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<sup>93</sup> *Меморандум о Политике России в Средиземноморье*, 1995, <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/902056512>, (Январь 18, 2018).

<sup>94</sup> Коновалов, р. 100.

<sup>95</sup> "Russian Federation Foreign Policy Dctrine of 1993", *Diplomatic Herald*, #1-2, pp. 3-32.

changed and instead of communist ideas a universality of liberal-democratic values had been admitted. Furthermore, with dissolution of the Soviet Union and the advent of Andrei Kozyrev in the role of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the general trend in Russian foreign policy became pro-Western. Such transformation also had an impact on Russian-Egyptian relations. Moreover, the economic crisis that had been inherited from the Soviet Union had aggravated in Russia with the demise of the Soviet Union. As a matter of fact, an immediate and intensive transition to the liberal-economy precipitated the strongest social, economic and political crises inside Russia. Thus, in the 1990s Russian-Egyptian trade turnover decreased by more than 50% and by 1991 the bilateral commercial turnover made up 1 billion dollars, and then between 1991 and 1996 it fell down to 400 million dollars. In addition, the pro-western ideology precipitated a passive Russian policy towards the Middle East. The situation changed with coming of the orientalist Yevgeni Primakov to the post of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia in 1996. At that time, Russia having experienced the failure of the pro-western foreign policy embarked on development of the multifaceted foreign policy. Development of the relationship with the Middle Eastern states was part of the new policy. Furthermore, Russia put major emphasis on pragmatism instead of ideology. The relations with Egypt entered in a new stage as well.<sup>96</sup>

In the economic area the debt issue with Egypt was resolved through an agreement on economic and technical cooperation. During that new period, Hosni Mubarak visited Russia for the first time in 1997. Following the meeting, Russian-Egyptian political declarations and agreements on the ministerial level regarding counter-terrorism, crime prevention, and scientific-technical cooperation had been signed to accelerate bilateral interactions. Simultaneously, the intergovernmental Russian-Egyptian commission and Russian-Egyptian Business Council had been established to coordinate scientific, technical and trade collaboration. Thus, afterwards, Russia started delivering industrial products, machines, radar systems, helicopters and other heavy industry productions to Egypt.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup>Михаил Богданов, “Трансформация Отношений между Россией и Египтом (1991-2011)”, **Опубликованная Докторская Диссертация**, Московский Государственный Университет им. М.В. Ломоносова, Институт стран Азии и Африки, 2017, р. 15.

<sup>97</sup> Мамед-Заде, р. 4.

In 1999 a trade volume made up 700 000 dollars whereas in 2000 the volume of shared business made up 4.7 million dollars. Moreover, in 2003, in order to encourage and plan common enterprises, 100 Egyptian delegates came to Russia. Having witnessed a gradual flourishing of trade with Egypt, Russia decreased customs tariffs on goods from Egypt by 25%. Also, in September 2000 projects on the elaboration of nuclear power for peaceful purposes and also cooperation for space development were concluded.<sup>98</sup> As a result of further trade interactions, Russian export volume had risen by 100%, whereas Egyptian export to Russia rose by 50% in 2004. In 2005 commercial turnover between states reached 1.25 billion dollars. It also should be pointed out that between 2005 and 2009 the trade turnover had risen as much as five times, exceeding 2 billion dollars. Speaking of the trade items, 90% of Egyptian export comprised of fruits. Basic products from Russia were wheat, wood, metals, equipment, and machines. It is notable to mention that 40% of Egypt import was wheat. Then in 2007 the talks about launching of industrial zones in energy and machine engineering took place.<sup>99</sup>

The tourism sector had been of an utmost importance for Egypt, as it represented one of the most lucrative economic spheres - 40% of the budget and 12% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was made up of tourism income. The income from the tourism sector made up 4 billion dollars. In 2007 some 1.5 million tourists from Russia visited Egypt; that number almost doubled in reaching 2.5 million tourists in 2010.<sup>100</sup>

As for the political aspect of the relations, the Russian minister of foreign affairs, Andrei Kozyrev, arrived in Egypt to negotiate pivotal aspects of bilateral relations and regional issues in 1995. Soon after that, a slow but efficient recovery of relations between Russia and Egypt started developing. In March 1996 the first President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin, met Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak in Sharm al-Sheikh. The leaders had a discussion about the peaceful settlement of the regional conflicts and fighting against terrorism. In April 1996 the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yevgeni Primakov, within the framework of Middle Eastern business trips, visited Egypt to ensure a coordinated policy between Cairo and Moscow. In September

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<sup>98</sup> Богданов, р. 32.

<sup>99</sup> Богданов, р. 68.

<sup>100</sup> Богданов, р. 55.

of 1997 Mubarak arrived in Moscow to assure that Egypt was interested and ready to develop multifaceted relations with Russia.<sup>101</sup>

In 2001 in the light of Mubarak's visit to Moscow, a Declaration of Friendly Relations and Cooperation principles was adopted. Furthermore, long-term programs on trade, economics, industry, and scientific collaboration were discussed; and additionally, measures against terrorism and organized crime were negotiated. In September 2004 Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov paid a visit to Cairo to discuss global and regional issues and peace processes within the framework of the international quartet. Russia and Egypt reassured adherence to the shared approach to settle the major crises in Palestine, Iraq and Sudan.<sup>102</sup> Additionally, the protocol on strategic cooperation and dialogue between ministers of foreign affairs was discussed. According to Lavrov, the protocol was assessed as mutually lucrative owing to the decree that envisaged a consultation between the respective sides over the global and regional issues and coordination of foreign policy actions. In October 2004 a Memorandum on Mutual Understanding in the areas of heavy industry, mechanical engineering, tourism, and agriculture, energy sector and oil, gas production was adopted.<sup>103</sup>

A significant event took place in April 2005 during the visit of Vladimir Putin to Egypt. The meeting resulted in signing of a treaty on strategic partnership between Russia and Egypt that aimed to strengthen bilateral relations. Respective sides agreed to promote cooperation notably in the fields of education and culture. The Russian leader claimed Russia endorse Egypt's will to be a permanent state of the UN in case such development would take place since the reformation of the UN structure was on the agenda in the 2000s. During the meeting, Putin suggested Egypt to hold an international conference in Cairo in the coming autumn of 2005 to discuss Middle Eastern problems' settlement with participation of a quartet: the US, the European Union (EU), the UN and Russia. The Middle Eastern issue primarily involved the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. On this issue, Russia and Egypt had a similar view. For Andrej Kreutz, both Russia and Egypt were against the sanctions on Hamas in the Gaza Strip whereas the US attempted to suppress all struggling groups in Palestine. Secondly, Russia and Egypt were against

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<sup>101</sup> Nizameddin, p. 57

<sup>102</sup> *Об Итогах Визита Министра Иностранных Дел РФ С.В. Лавров в Египте, 2004*, [http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/foreign\\_policy/news/-/asset\\_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/461266](http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/461266), (Февраль 27, 2018).

<sup>103</sup> Kreutz, p. 123.

the US intervention in Iraq without the UN resolution on the intervention. Thirdly, Russia and Egypt were against the US dominance in the Middle East. In particular, they opposed George Bush initiative of the Great Middle East project that aimed to transform the Middle East's social and political order. Moreover, Russia just like Egypt, respects international law, self-determination of people, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs of states. The fourth important issue on which Russia and Egypt agreed on was combating international terrorism taken the fact that both states had suffered from problems of extremism and terrorism. Generally speaking, both states were eager to settle regional conflicts to prevent further spillover of armed radicalized groups in the region.<sup>104</sup>

In 2008 Egyptian Prime Minister, Ahmed Hafiz made a visit to Russia. During the meetings with Russia, Hafiz invited both then President Medvedev and the Prime Minister Putin to visit Egypt the following year. Furthermore, a bilateral commission for the coordination of the military-technical ties was established. The sides discussed matters related to development of space and nuclear energy station projects. Egypt expressed readiness for cooperation in the field of air and sea transit services. Cairo also invited Russia to restore and modernize Egyptian train, highway roads and infrastructure. Moreover, Egypt was interested in participating in dialogue over the gas issues in the framework of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum due to the fact that Egypt was a large regional gas exporting country.<sup>105</sup> In March 2009 Mubarak visited Moscow to discuss bilateral and regional issues. As a result, an agreement on the peaceful usage of the nuclear energy was agreed on. Later on, in the same year, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev attended the Egypt Treaty Talks on strategic partnership during which the Arab-Israeli conflict was also discussed. In April 2009 the fourth regular session of the Russian-Egyptian work group on combating terrorism took place, in that case the sides preferred to act at the UN level.<sup>106</sup>

In June 2009 for the first time, Russia and Egypt laid down a plan to consult on interaction with the Middle Eastern, African and Atlantic international organizations and other relevant issues. Additionally, a consultation on the military and national security issues, Palestinian-Israeli conflict, international terrorism and free trade zone

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<sup>104</sup> Kreutz, p. 120.

<sup>105</sup> Богданов, pp. 53-54.

<sup>106</sup> Богданов, p.161.



matters were on the table of talks. In October 2009 during the Russian-Egyptian intergovernmental commission session, an agreement was reached for establishing four working groups that would deal with the nuclear energy project. The first group would engage in training staff; the second one would be devoted to the study of Russian technology of nuclear electric stations; the third one would observe institutions in the sphere of elaboration of nuclear energy; and the fourth one would look after and assess the elaboration of a uranium deposit. So, In April-May of 2010 the Russian officials introduced a project AES-2006 (Nuclear Electro Station).<sup>107</sup>

An agreement on cultural interaction was signed in 1965 to develop education and culture. Russian Scientific and Cultural Centers were established in Cairo and Alexandria with the help of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. In 2000 the Middle Eastern Institute of Russian Science Academy and Cairo University adopted a protocol on scientific collaboration between institutions. At the same time, in 2003 a Day of Russian culture in Egypt and in 2005 a Day of Egyptian culture in Russia was introduced for the first time after a long break. In 2004 an initiative to launch an Egyptian-Russian University was agreed on by both countries. Thus, in 2006 an Egyptian-Russian University started to function in Cairo. The university was dedicated to preparing engineers to improve collaboration with Russia in scientific-technical spheres. In the same year, in May 2004 an interaction between Moscow-based ITAR TASS and Cairo-based MENA news agencies took place.<sup>108</sup>

The answer to the question why Egypt turned out to be Russia's friend and partner is in the fact that Egypt had not been Russia's rival in the oil and gas sector. Secondly, Egypt's secular political system attracted Russia in terms of cooperation against international terrorism. Thirdly, the fact that both Russia and Egypt had friendly relations with Israel facilitated their regional peace process efforts. In 1991 the minister of foreign affairs of Egypt, Amr Musa, stated that Russian mediation might have a positive role in peace building in the Middle East due to its constructive relations with both Arab states and Israel. Fourthly, as far as economic cooperation is concerned, Russia considers Egypt as one of the most stable actors in the Middle East to cooperate

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<sup>107</sup> Мамед-Заде, pp. 2.

<sup>108</sup> Мамед-Заде, pp. 5-6.

with. Egypt in its turn approves cooperation with Russia partially due to its will to balance the US presence and influence in Egypt.

Speaking of the trade volume between Russia and Egypt in the 1990s and 2000s, it is visible from the statistics of the Russian Federation that since the early 1990s the dynamics of bilateral trade had changed. Egypt kept on providing Russia with fruits and vegetables but in significantly smaller amounts, whereas Russia increased its imports of fuel and wheat to Egypt.<sup>109</sup>

**Table 3.** Trade Volume between Russia and Egypt between 1992 and 2009 (1 million dollars)

Year	1992	1995	2000	2005	2009
Total Trade Turnover	378	431.2	453.9	1125.4	1826.2
Export	139	394	449	1048	1824
Import	239	37.2	4.9	77.4	2.2

**Source:** “Российский статистический ежегодник 2000”, <http://istmat.info/node/45859>, “Российский статистический ежегодник 2010”, <http://istmat.info/node/45859>.

### **2.3. Russian Federation’s Foreign Policy towards Libya: Political, Military and Economic Relations (1991-2010)**

With disbanding of the Soviet Union, Russia turned to the West. However, soon after the advent of Putin, cooperation in the energy and military sectors had risen up with the Middle Eastern and North African countries.

The demise of the Soviet Union in 1991 did not promptly bring positive changes to the Russian-Libyan relations. The bilateral relations had started to deteriorate since the 1980s. Such a tendency was stipulated by different factors, such as Libya's unreasonable aggression towards Chad in the early 1980s, then the fall of oil prices provoked by the the US embargo in 1986, the economic crisis in the Soviet Union in 1985 and

<sup>109</sup>See: Валентина Скрыбина, “Торгово-Экономические Отношения России и Египта: База Свободной Торговли”, [Electronic Version], *Торговая Политика*, 2015, Серия 3, Номер 3, (Февраль 20, 2018), pp. 121-122.

eventually Gorbachev's reconstruction reforms and rapprochement with the West. Egorov highlights that since 1985, the Soviet income from military trade with Libya had radically decreased and in 1991 Libya had completely ended its military relations with the Soviet Union. However, despite the decreasing economic and military ties with Russia, on the eve of the Soviet Union demise, the Libyan President Qadhafi claimed Moscow lost its confidence and called to not give in to the West. Also, he displayed a wish to develop further bilateral relations with Russia.<sup>110</sup> However, international sanctions had severely damaged relations between Russia and Libya in the early 1990s.

It is important to point out that the sovereign Russian Federation continued the Soviet Union foreign policy of the last decade. However, during that period the Russian Federation lost its principles of socialism and turned towards the Western world. As a result, Russia had turned its back to its Arab partners that opposed the West. For instance, Russia had endorsed Kuwait against the Iraqi invasion in accordance with other Western states. Russia criticized Libya involvement in the explosion of a US plane over Lockerbie as well and accordingly supported the UN SC sanction against Libya in 1992. Abduraof Elmalyan defines Russian behavior as a withdrawal of its partnership with developing countries and a rapprochement with the developed states. In the course of such orientation, Russia recalled its specialists particularly in the military sphere and did not return the equipment taken for for the purpose of repair to their owners. While observing such attitude, Libya refused to pay a fee to support a joint intergovernmental commission on bilateral multi-vector cooperation.<sup>111</sup>

An event that actually led to a total freeze of bilateral relations between Russia and Libya was the UN SC resolution 748 that announced economic sanctions over Libya. These sanctions were put on air communication, military-technical cooperation and decreed diplomatic personnel in Libya. It is worth noting that Russia had voted for the sanctions due to their shift towards the West in its foreign policy at the beginning of the 1990s. Additional sanctions under resolution 843 that were adopted in November 1993 by the UN SC had severely worsened the plight of Libya and its bilateral relations with other states including Russia. Russia was restricted to sell arms or oil producing

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<sup>110</sup> Егоров, *Современная Ливия*, pp. 171-173.

<sup>111</sup> Абдураоф Эльмалян, "Отношения между Ливией и Российской Федерацией на Современном Этапе", [Electronic Version], *Журнал Международного Права и Международных Отношений*, 2007, Номер 4, p. 71.

equipment, and also to have any significant economic ties except for humanitarian purposes with Libya. However, not only because of the embargo did Russia prefer to stay away from Libya; generally speaking, Russian new foreign policy orientation included Atlantism which made Russia adopt decisions in favor of the West. Therefore, when embargos were declared Russia chose to cut its ties with Libya. Additionally, Libya's inability to pay off its debts to Russia also made it unattractive to continue cooperation.<sup>112113</sup>

The chilled relations between Russia and Libya did not last long - with termination of the excessively pro-Western policy in Russia and especially with the advent of Yevgeni Primakov as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia in 1996; Russian-Libyan relations were restored and strengthened. With lifting of the UN sanctions on Libyan in 1999, Russia regained interest in Libya's oil and gas sector to the extent that Russia decided to write off a Libyan 4.5 billion dollars debt that traced back to the Soviet time, in exchange for oil and gas contracts, and projects in the sphere of construction and building railroad.<sup>114</sup>

The last decade of the 20th century had started for Libya with heavy international sanctions that had obviously weakened relations with Russia. The UN SC sanctions of 1992 and 1993 had taken place as a result of the US, Britain, and France accusation of two Libyan citizens participating in the explosion of "Pan Am 103" plane over Scotland in 1988. In January 1992 the US, Britain, France, and Ireland within the framework of the UN SC began an investigation on the Pan Am and French UTA planes explosion cases. When they requested Libya to facilitate the process of investigation of these two cases given that the two suspects were Libyan citizens, Libya declined that call. Such events brought the issue to the UN SC in February 1992, in the wake of which the SC adopted resolution 748 which surrounded Libya with economic sanctions. Those sanctions restricted Libya from air communication and military-technical ties. However, since Libya refused to hand over the two suspects, sanctions were severed by the adoption of resolution 883, which aimed to forbid other states from selling spare of oil

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<sup>112</sup> Мамлук, "Внешняя Политика Муаммара Каддафи и Отношения Ливии с Советским Союзом и Россией, p. 115.

<sup>113</sup> Mark Katz, "The Russian-Libyan Rapprochement: What Has Moscow Gained?", *Journal Compilation*, 2008, p. 4.

<sup>114</sup> Katz, p. 1.

producing equipment. Undoubtedly such ban negatively affected Libyan economy owing to the fact that 90% of Libyan revenue was tied to the oil trade.<sup>115</sup>

The most striking outcome of the tough embargo regime was the drop in the quality of the produced oil. Libya started to sell more than 50% of its oil in the form of gasoline that significantly influenced the Libyan economy. As for cooperation agreements with other states, they were suspended, including treaties with Russia, and Russian-Libyan cooperation in the area of oil, gas, electricity, nuclear energy, transport, and infrastructure ceased to exist. Henceforth, Russia could not deliver machines and equipment and spare parts for previously provided machines. Russia also withdrew its specialists and ceased the training of Libyan specialists in Russia.<sup>116</sup>

Libyan Minister of Energy, Abdallah Salem el-Badri visited Moscow in July 1995 in order to conclude an agreement on trade-economic and scientific-technical cooperation. This document in a way presumed replacement and enlargement of the Soviet -Libyan agreement on economic and scientific-technic cooperation of 1972. The agreement on creating an intergovernmental commission on economic and scientific cooperation was a renewed version of intergovernmental Soviet-Libyan Commission on economic and scientific-technical cooperation. The multi-vector agreement of 1995 had encompassed a broad area of cooperation including energy, black metallurgy, machine building, geology, oil and gas production, transportation and communication. As for the intergovernmental commission, it embarked on seating in 1997 and continued annually in Moscow and Tripoli interchangeably.<sup>117</sup>

The year of 1996 symbolized a reset of bilateral relations between Russia and Libya. Reportedly in 1996 Qadhafi expressed a wish to have economic relations with Russia at the previously existing level. The Russian government staff Oleg Davydov attended Tripoli in the same year, and in the wake of Libyan-Russian negotiations, a number of mutually lucrative agreements in the sphere of oil, gas, electricity, and building had been achieved. More concretely, Moscow and Tripoli agreed upon launching a joint investment company to promote Libyan investment in Russian economy, building of two metallurgy complex around Misurata, a city located in the north-west of Libya, with a capacity to produce 1.7 million ton of steel in a year, to modernize fuel-energy

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<sup>115</sup> Dirk Vandewalle, **A History of Modern Libya**, pp. 167-169.

<sup>116</sup> Эльмалян, р. 70.

<sup>117</sup> Эльмалян, р. 72.

complex in Libya.<sup>118</sup> Further on, in 1997 Russia gained the right to take part in communication, transportation projects and building oil and gas pipelines. An agreement on joint investment had completed with establishment of Russian-Libyan Investment Bank in 2001. In 1999 Russian delegation led by the Russian deputy prime minister, Ilya Klebanov had negotiations with Libyan leader and Libyan Minister of Defense, Abu Bakr Yunus Djaber and the Minister of Energy, Abdallah Salem el-Badri. In the wake of this meeting, a number of protocols on cooperation in different spheres were signed.<sup>119</sup>

In 2000 Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Igor Ivanov invited his Libyan counterpart, Abdel Rahman Shalkam to visit Moscow. As a result, Shalkam had met Vladimir Putin and Klebanov and had talks with Igor who also visited Libya soon after that meeting. In July 2001 Primakov visited Libya to convey a message from Putin on discussing questions related to bilateral relations and further cooperation between the two states. Within the same year, Moscow provided Libya with arms amounting to 100 million dollars. Previously signed contracts between the two states foresaw repair or modernization of arms and equipment due to the fact that most of the Libyan army weaponry became outdated and worn out during the years of heavy sanctions on Libyan economy and military. One may outline that between 1991 and 1995 Russia alienated from Libya owing to its pro-Western reorientation. However, with the sudden wake up from the foreign policy illusions, Libya and Russia nevertheless found enthusiasm to restart bilateral relations with a new page. Such reset of relations was facilitated with the advent of a prominent Russian orientalist Primakov in the role of a minister of foreign affairs in 1996. Russia sought pragmatic targets such as economic benefits from Libyan geopolitical location and from arm trade, whereas Libya fought for the restoration of its dying economy following severe embargo sanctions.<sup>120</sup>

In April 1999 as soon as Libya handed over two indicted Libyan citizens who were involved in Lockerbie trial, the UN SC temporarily suspended sanctions. Following this move, the Russian leader Yeltsin also suspended Russia's sanctions against Libya for a month. Afterward this event, Russian airplane service Aeroflot embarked on its flight between Moscow and Tripoli. Simultaneously, a contract to launch a 117 kilometers

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<sup>118</sup> Абоусаида, р. 178.

<sup>119</sup> Абоусаида, р. 176.

<sup>120</sup> Эльмалян, р. 60

long gas pipeline in Libya had been signed. Further, in 2000 Russian Promeksport started to realize military agreements that were signed a year before. Factually, Russia agreed to deliver ammunition to Libya and to renovate machines and defense equipment that was delivered at the Soviet time.<sup>121</sup>

In August 2000 Libyan Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdel Rahman Shalgham paid a visit to Moscow to meet Putin. In the wake of the meeting, Putin accepted an invitation to visit Libya. In September 2003 with the consent of Libya to pay compensation to relatives of victims of the US Pan Am 103 and in 2004 to the French UTA victims' relatives, in 2003 the UN SC had removed sanctions over Libya. The US had entirely ceased sanctions by October 2004.<sup>122</sup> Moscow had welcomed such unfolding and in aftermaths of this, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs met with his Libyan colleague, Abdel Rahman Shalkam at the end of September 2003. Within the UN General Assembly meeting in New York, they had exchanged their views on international and regional events; particular attention had been paid to the settlement of the Middle Eastern conflicts. Finally, they expressed a desire and interest to develop bilateral relations and to broaden a mutually beneficial collaboration in different areas.<sup>123</sup>

As relations between Russia and Libya had been normalized, an issue of Libyan debt remained to be unresolved, and Russian officials considered this to be a serious problem. In September 2005 during his interview to the Ria News about Russian-Libyan relations, representative of the ministry of foreign affairs of Russia articulated that the return of the Libyan debt would facilitate a growth in bilateral collaboration in various areas. However, the next three years the debt question would still remain unsolved, and only in April 2008 during Putin's visit to Tripoli, it was decided that debt would be completely written off.<sup>124</sup>

It is worthwhile to point out that Russian-Libyan relations had been intensified in the second half of the 2000s given the the fact that it was for the mutual benefit of both

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<sup>121</sup> Эльмалян, р. 79.

<sup>122</sup>“Timeline: Libya Sanctions”, October 15, 2004, **BBC**, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3336423.stm>, (March 31, 2018).

<sup>123</sup> “О Встрече Министра Иностранных Дел России И.С.Иванова С Главой Внешнеполитического Ведомства Ливии А.Шалькамом”, September 30, 2003, from The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, [http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/foreign\\_policy/news/-/asset\\_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/504378](http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/504378), (March 31, 2018).

<sup>124</sup> “Russia/Libya: Putin visit”, <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/21/news/21iht-21oxan-Putin.12185813.html>, April 21, 2008, (June 31, 2018).

countries. Russia was interested in oil and gas exporting potential of Libya, whereas Libya was interested in Russian economic and technical capacity that might facilitate the rise of the Libyan economy. In December 2006 Russian Tatneft and Gazprom gained tenders to develop 4 oil areas out of 14. With intensification of cooperation notably in oil and gas areas, bilateral trade volume had increased significantly; for instance, the 2006 trade amounted to 130 million dollars, and in 2007 it grew to 232 million dollars. In 2007 Sergei Lavrov and Abdel Rahman Shalkam had a meeting in New York within the framework of the UN General Assembly's 62nd Session. In December 2007 Qadhafi gave a phone call to Putin to congratulate him with winning of the United Russia party at parliamentary elections in November 2007. Soon after that in the same month the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov visited Tripoli to deliver Putin's message to Qadhafi and to discuss economic and military relations. Also, Russia displayed a will to facilitate Libyan attempt to launch a nuclear energy station for peaceful purposes.<sup>125</sup>

Following those negotiations, in April 2008 Putin paid a visit to Libya and concluded a number of agreements including a declaration on strengthening friendship and development of cooperation; a declaration on the development of multifaceted cooperation; several memorandums documents and contracts between the units of economic institutions of the two states. The head of Libya in his turn attended Moscow in autumn 2008. Afterward, an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the sphere of utilization of nuclear energy for peaceful aims and a treaty on the launch of the joint bank had been achieved.<sup>126</sup>

Following the achieved agreements in July 2008, CEO of Gazprom, Alexei Miller met Qadhafi and the head of the Libyan National Oil Company. Libyan side had suggested Gazprom a project to connect Libyan gas to Europe. In its turn, Gazprom had offered to purchase all gas and oil that was intended to be sold. At the end of July, the Libyan Prime Minister met Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev to strengthen collaboration between states in the framework of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum and to intensify an intergovernmental commission work in the area of trade and techniques. Additionally, contract to build a railway between Sirte and Benghazi, contracts in the sphere of oil and nuclear energy cooperation had been concluded. Another pivotal

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<sup>125</sup> Katz, p. 3.

<sup>126</sup> Мамлук, "Основные Направления Внешней Политики Ливии (1990-2010 гг.)", p. 218.



subject of negotiations was a contract on the sale of Russian weaponry amounting to 2 billion dollars.<sup>127</sup>

Factually, in the early 21st century Russia and Libya started their relations with a new page: Russian writing off a Libyan 4.5 billion dollar debt brought a breakthrough to the bilateral relations. Russia had shown mercy to Libya in exchange for Libyan approval for Gazprom to participate in exporting of Libyan oil and gas to Europe and further to control the export of Libyan oil and gas. Libya from its side was interested in economic independence and in lucrative sale of its oil and gas to the West. In terms of the trade volume between Russia and Libya it has had insignificant amounts and was not displayed in the statistics of trade.

#### **2.4. The Russian Federation's Foreign Policy towards Egypt and Libya under Dmitri Medvedev's Governance (2008-2012)**

During Dmitry Medvedev's governance, Russia experienced a number of significant issues in the Middle East. Practically, the main events started in 2011 with the emergence of the Arab uprisings. In the case of the Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings, Russia remained to be an observer. However, as soon as mass protests had reached Libya, Russia and China preferred to abstain from the UN SC resolution 1973. Later on, with the escalation of the situation in Libya and in the wake of a military operation against Qadhafi by NATO, Russia and China expressed their great disappointment with this incident. Moreover, Medvedev called such actions an overstepping of mandate. The UN SC resolution 1973 aimed to launch a no-fly zone to protect civilians, however; the result brought to an overthrow of Qaddafi.<sup>128</sup>

In regards to Egyptian developments, Russia welcomed any leader chosen by the people. Even though Mohammed Morsi was from the Muslim Brotherhood, which is

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<sup>127</sup>“Владимир Путин удовлетворён итогами визита в Ливию и уверен, что заключённые договорённости пойдут на пользу экономикам обеих стран”, from Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia, April 18, 2008, <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/44150>, (March 31, 2018).

<sup>128</sup>*NATO, Security Council: Resolution 1973, 2011*, [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2011\\_03/20110927\\_110311-UNSCR-1973.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_03/20110927_110311-UNSCR-1973.pdf), (February 10, 2018).

banned in Russia, Moscow welcomed his advent to politics as well. Nevertheless, Russia was anxious regarding Morsi's governance in Egypt.<sup>129</sup>

Practically, in order to understand the logic of such behaviors as the Russian Federation's policy towards the Arab uprisings, and particularly towards Egypt and Libya, one must look at the foreign policy doctrine that was in action under Medvedev's governance. General principles of the foreign policy are an essential part of the foreign policy actions.

The Russian Foreign Policy doctrine which was ratified in 2008 is a concise twenty-page document which consists of five chapters. The first chapter is called General Provisions: this part contains the main aims of the Russian foreign policy. Among the pivotal purposes of the Russian foreign policy is the provision of the state's security, a preservation of sovereignty, a sound stance in the world community, participation in establishing of the just democratic world via the supreme power of the UN. The second part is a Modern World and the Russian Federation's Foreign Policy. This chapter discusses ways of involvement in the world affairs. A particular attention has been given to the network of diplomacy, collective engagement in problem resolution, versatility of international relations, and a pragmatic approach to the issues in the framework of national interests. A chapter called the Priorities of Russia in the Solving of World Problems encompasses a variety of subjects and includes such subtopics as a formation of the new world order, supremacy of the right in the international relations, strengthening international security, international economics and ecological cooperation, international humanitarian cooperation and human rights and informational sphere of foreign policy. Generally speaking, this part covers such issues as multipolar world, strategic and regional stability, non-proliferation of mass destruction weapons, inter-ethnic and inter-religious dialogues, economic cooperation and Russian policy in dissemination of information.<sup>130</sup>

The fourth part is called Regional Priorities, and apparently is a key to clarifying Russian policy towards the Middle Eastern states and their role in the Russian foreign

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<sup>129</sup>Российский Совет по Международным Дела, Россия и “Новые Элиты” Стран “Арабской Весны”: Возможности и Перспективы Взаимодействия, 2013, <http://russiancouncil.ru/activity/workingpapers/rossiya-i-novye-elity-stran-arabskoy-vesny-vozmozhnosti-i-pe/>, (4 Февраль 2018), p. 39.

<sup>130</sup>*Концепции внешней политики Российской Федерации 1993, 2000 и 2008 годов: сравнительный анализ*, <https://articlekz.com/article/7879>, (December 20, 2017).

policy. In the wake of the analysis of this chapter one can conclude that Russian regional priorities regarding the Commonwealth of Independent States takes a primary place for Russia; second being Euro-Atlantic cooperation; the third being the Asian Pacific region, China and India; the fourth being the Middle East; the fifth being Eastern Asia; and the sixth region being Latin America. Hence, the Middle East is mentioned after the post-Soviet republics, Western states, Asian Pacific region, China and India. Such hierarchy conveys a lot about the importance of the Middle East for Russia. The Middle Eastern region is in the fourth place out of six. Significance of security and an economic cooperation are remarkable points to note. For example, security and stability notions have been highlighted in the case of preventing terrorism, extremism and narco-trafficking from Afghanistan to nearby CIS states, appeasement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the restoration and unification of Iraq. Russian mediating role in regards to Iranian nuclear power project is also emphasized. In this regard, Russia promoted the right of all states that had signed a non-proliferation agreement to use nuclear power for peaceful means and warns of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Economic cooperation is mentioned in the frame of the Group of Eight initiatives in the Middle East and North Africa. Cooperation in the sphere of energy has been emphasized as well.<sup>131</sup>

As a matter of fact, the doctrine is concluded by a Chapter called Formation and Realization of the Russian Foreign Policy. The chapter lists state institutions that are responsible for the formation and realization of the Russian foreign policy. According to this order, the President of the Russian Federation administrates the design and implementation of the foreign policy and represents the state in the international arena in accordance with the Constitution. The Parliament of the Russian Federation provides legislative basis for the foreign policies improves parliamentary diplomacy and engages in the fulfillment of the foreign policy. Furthermore, the government engages in the performance, the Security Council assesses threats for the foreign policy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs elaborates on strategies to carry out Russian foreign policies.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> *Концепции внешней политики Российской Федерации 1993, 2000 и 2008 годов: сравнительный анализ*, <https://articlekz.com/article/7879>, (December 20, 2017).

<sup>132</sup> *Концепции внешней политики Российской Федерации 1993, 2000 и 2008 годов: сравнительный анализ*, <https://articlekz.com/article/7879>, (December 20, 2017).

Overall, Russian Federation's foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya under Boris Yeltsin and Andrei Kozyrev was quite passive due to the Westernist orientation of new leadership. Further on, as Primakov came to power Russia prioritized the Middle East again. Until now the Middle East is considered being a priority for Russia. Moreover, one may summarize that as Russia started to gain strength, the more its foreign policy became assertive. In the new era, Russia reinforced its economic capacity and economic interactions with Egypt and Libya. A particular attention is to be paid to the strategic engagement of Russia in the new era in building nuclear stations for the Middle Eastern states.



### **CHAPTER 3: THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS EGYPT AND LIBYA DURING AND AFTERWARDS THE ARAB UPRISINGS (2011-2017)**

Uprisings in the Middle East in 2010-2011 presented a challenge for Russia. Arab insurgencies were, as Sergei Lavrov described, “an expected surprise” for all. Although Russia, the US, and other leading countries have been aware of the socio-economic tension and political disturbances in the Arab countries, and even made some efforts to support reforms in these countries, masses have exploded at the time when nobody was expecting this.

While those events were taking place in the Arab streets, Russia was watching the situation, and later on, expressed its position regarding those events. Russia's first reaction looked like a panic partially due to the growing anti-Putin attitudes in Russia at the time. Moscow was associating those events with the so-called "color revolutions" that occurred in the post-Soviet space in the 2000s. The original aim of those revolutions was mainly to approach the western standards of well-being and adopting liberal and democratic principles for the public administration.<sup>133</sup>

Soon after the protesters have poured into the streets, Russian leaders Dmitry Medvedev and Sergei Lavrov made statements about the situation in the Middle East which were full of the alarmist rhetoric regarding the revolutions as a whole. After the revolts occurred in Tunisia and in Egypt, in February 2011 Lavrov made one of the first statements regarding these events. Lavrov highlighted that the world community should develop peaceful dialogue and make a joint resolution on these disturbances.<sup>134</sup>

Moreover, he emphasized principles of non-interference are to be applied in such situations. Basically, that statement was propagating the idea that the western policies which were promoting democracy throughout the world and especially in the Middle Eastern area were failing. Another crucial statement was proclaimed by a Russian president Dmitri Medvedev in February 2011. Medvedev asserted that a plight in the Middle East became critical: a collapse of several states as well as probability of

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<sup>133</sup>Викен Чечерян, “Арабский Бунт и Цветные Революции”, **Russia Today**, March 13, 2011, <https://inosmi.ru/asia/20110313/167305328.html>, (April 2, 2018).

<sup>134</sup>«Лавров: Призывы к Революции контрпродуктивны», **КР**, February 15, 2011, <https://www.kp.ru/online/news/832075/>, (April 2, 2018).

religious fanatics gaining the power became an agenda. Medvedev said that such scenario had also been prepared for Russia but apparently it would not work in this country.<sup>135</sup>

However, later on, a situation in the Arab states changed, and Russia had transformed its view regarding the Western involvement in the revolts. At that time Russia concluded that not all radicals are a threat but only those that oppose Russian interests at home and in the region. Russia also constantly emphasized its commitment to support people's choice. When in June 2012 Mohammed Morsi, a leader of the Muslim Brotherhood was elected a president, Russia reluctantly continued friendly relations with new Egyptian authority.<sup>136</sup> In the aftermath of the July 2013 military coup, Russian interactions with the new regime of Egypt increased significantly.

### **3.1. The Russian Federation's Foreign Policy Doctrines and the Middle East (2013 and 2016)**

In order to define the Middle East's place and its role in the Russian foreign policy, the series of foreign policy doctrines had been analyzed. The importance which was allotted to the Middle East has always fluctuated. As far as the Middle Eastern affairs are concerned, a foreign policy doctrine of 1993 put more emphasis on the Arab-Israeli conflict and Iraqi issue. As for the doctrine of 2000, such aspects as Russian willingness to take part in settling the Middle Eastern conflicts to create a zone of peace in the region, and its economic interests in the energy sector of the Middle East were dominant. However, there was not much information about how Russia was going to achieve these goals in the Middle East.<sup>137</sup>

Apparently, the doctrine of 2008 turned out to be more concrete. For the first time, all Middle Eastern allies and partners of Russia had been mentioned in the doctrine. Russia asserted its eagerness to develop bilateral and multilateral relations with major countries in the region. Egypt and Libya were included into the major partners of Russia as well. Additionally, the doctrine stressed the importance of cooperation with regional organizations, such as the League of Arab States and the Cooperation Council of Arab

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<sup>135</sup>«Д.Медведев: Сценарий арабской революции в России не пройдет», **RBC**, February 22, 2011, <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/22/02/2011/5703e3d19a79473c0df1aaf6>, (April 2, 2018).

<sup>136</sup> Alexey Malashenko, "Russia and the Arab Spring", Carnegie Moscow Center, October 2013, p. 8.

<sup>137</sup>«Концепция Внешней Политики Российской Федерации», **CNTD**, June 28, 2000, <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/901764263>, (February 14, 2018).

States in the Gulf and African Union.<sup>138</sup> Another key point mentioned in the doctrine was about providing support for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

A doctrine of 2013 has similarities with the previous doctrines as far as the Middle East is concerned. In the previous doctrines the significance of bilateral and multilateral cooperation with Arab state via Arab League, Cooperation Council of Arab Gulf States and Organization of Islamic Conference, settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and solving Iranian nuclear program issue were stated. The novelty included an idea to launch a free zone of weapon of mass destruction in the Middle East. The rise of the terrorist groups in the Middle East and especially the use of chemical weapon in the Syrian civil war had scared the world. Those events most probably had influenced Russia and pushed it to embark on proactive initiatives regarding the Middle East.<sup>139</sup>

As for the latest version of the doctrine that was issued in 2016, two pivotal amendments had been made in regards with the Middle East. First, a support to Syria to establish secular, democratic and pluralistic state according to the UN resolutions and Geneva Communiqué had been spotlighted. Second, Russian stance against military intervention under the pretext of protection of civilians and the call upon neutralization of terrorist groups in the region was put under stress.<sup>140</sup>

### **3.2. The Russian Federation's Approach to the Arab Uprisings: General Review**

Just like other countries in the world, Russia was caught by surprise while series of unrests exploded in the Middle East. Because of the internal controversies, Russia pursued the policy of 'watch and see'. Such an approach was considered as the most appropriate at that time of uncertainties.

The unrests that have always been expected had appeared surprising to the world community. Speaking of the way Russia has reacted to the coups and revolts, alarmist behavior was apparent.<sup>141</sup> At the beginning of the revolutions, leading Russian analysts

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<sup>138</sup>«Концепция Внешней Политики Российской Федерации», Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia, January 12, 2008, <http://en.kremlin.ru/SUpplement/4116>, (February 14, 2018).

<sup>139</sup>«Концепция Внешней Политики Российской Федерации», Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, February 18, 2013, [http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign\\_policy/official\\_documents/-/asset\\_publisher/CptICkV6BZ29/content/id/122186](http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkV6BZ29/content/id/122186), (February 14, 2018).

<sup>140</sup>«Концепция Внешней Политики Российской Федерации», Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, December 1, 2016, [http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign\\_policy/official\\_documents/-/asset\\_publisher/CptICkV6BZ29/content/id/2542248](http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkV6BZ29/content/id/2542248), (February 14, 2018).

<sup>141</sup> Pavel Baev, "Russia: Moscow Does not Believe in Change", **The Arab Awakening: America and the Transformation of the Middle East**, Washington, Brookings Institution Press, 2011, p. 291.

recalled “color revolutions” that occurred at the onset of the 21st century. Thus, the minister of foreign affairs of the Russian Federation, Sergei Lavrov called upon the world community to stay away from interfering in the situation by radical pieces of advice which might provoke people to revolt.<sup>142</sup>

The then president of the Russian Federation described the Arab uprising as a big complex problem, which could result in a split of countries and the advent of religious fanatics to power. Medvedev added if the consequences of those events directly impact the situation in Russia, then Moscow might take tangible measures to counter its negative effects.<sup>143</sup> Here, it is obvious that Russia initially suspected the third forces being a source of the social disturbances in the Middle East. Thus, Russia perceived unrests being chaos under control. Medvedev emphasized that Arab uprisings were detrimental due to the risk of power gaining by radicals.

However, later on in 2013, as the tendencies of revolts appeared clearer, the authoritative Russian politician Yevgeni Primakov, pointed out that indeed transformation in the Middle Eastern states did not bring any benefit to the US, and in fact was undermining the position of the US in the region. Previously, authoritarian regimes have suppressed radical groups, but after the Arab uprisings, the so-called fanatics took advantage of the situation.<sup>144</sup>

A well-known Russian pundit, Dmitri Trenin after the social division has subsided in the Middle East, stated that Moscow was never interested in the change of regimes in the region due to the apprehension of the advent of religious groups to powers. Russian fear of possible advent of radical groups was based on the experience of the struggle against such groups in early 1990s.<sup>145</sup> Also, internal instabilities pushed Russia to pursue the solicitous policy towards the Arab uprisings.<sup>146</sup> As plight in the revolutionary countries had been eased, Russian view on the Arab uprisings had been changed. Some

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<sup>142</sup>“Лавров: Призывы к Контрреволюции Контрпродуктивны”, **КР**, 15 Февраля, 2011, <https://www.kr.ru/online/news/832075/>, (April 9, 2018).

<sup>143</sup>“Дмитрий Медведев провёл во Владикавказе заседание Национального антитеррористического комитета”, Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia, February 22, 2018, <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/10408>, (April 10, 2018).

<sup>144</sup>“Евгений Примаков: «Кое-кто в правительстве хочет взять за образец американскую матрицу», **Stoletie**, April 16, 2013, [http://www.stoletie.ru/obschestvo/jevgenij\\_primakov\\_koje-kto\\_v\\_pravitelstve\\_khochet\\_vzat\\_za\\_obrazec\\_amerikanskuju\\_matricu\\_552.htm](http://www.stoletie.ru/obschestvo/jevgenij_primakov_koje-kto_v_pravitelstve_khochet_vzat_za_obrazec_amerikanskuju_matricu_552.htm), (May 27, 2018).

<sup>145</sup>Ирина Гривастова, “Москва остается на стороне Асада”, *Politobrazovanie*, 29 October 2016, <http://lawinrussia.ru/content/moskva-ostaetsya-na-storone-asada>, (May 27, 2018).

<sup>146</sup>Баев, p. 297.



Russian analysts stated the basic element of color revolutions, such as the presence of the US, was absent in the Arab uprisings<sup>147</sup> and that the West was rather pro ex-regimes than pro-revolutionaries.<sup>148</sup>

As a whole, having analyzed Russian initial reaction to the Arab revolts, it may be concluded that besides the general approach of “wait and see”, Russia had also followed a discrete policy towards the Arab Spring states.<sup>149</sup> According to Muharrem Erenler, Russia has not pursued the certain consistent policy towards the Arab Spring phenomenon. Erenler emphasizes that Russia was not in a hurry to determine its position towards revolts in some cases; however, in other cases Russia did display its position promptly and obviously. Russia maintained Tunisian revolution due to the insignificant ties with this country, while in the case with Egypt, Russia preferred to wait, and then had chosen a definite policy dictated by the strategic significance of Egypt for Russia.<sup>150</sup>

### **3.2.1. The Russian Federation’s Approach to the Egyptian Uprising**

Egyptian uprising had caught great powers in surprise and made them wonder about the causes of the revolution. As situation continued to escalate in Egypt, Russian foreign minister of foreign affairs, Sergey Lavrov, in his interview to Russia Today had stated that there were many revolutions in the Russian history and that they were always about the bloodshed and chaos, in the wake of which the countries remained destroyed for a long time. Lavrov stated that Egypt was a strategic partner for Russia and that there should be no external pressure on Egypt.<sup>151</sup> However, soon after that, on the 11th of February 2011 Mubarak regime fell down. Russia had accepted this and expressed its hope that a process of settlement of the crisis in Egypt would be non-violent and the interests of all Egyptians would be taken into consideration, with no pressure from outside.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>147</sup>Четерян, “Арабский Бунт и Цветные Революции”.

<sup>148</sup>Тамара Беридзе, “Революции на Ближнем Востоке – причины и следствия”, **Russia Today**, September 1, 2011, <https://inosmi.ru/asia/20110901/174084084.html>, (May 27, 2018).

<sup>149</sup> Muharram Erenler, "Russian Arab Spring Policy", **Bilge Strateji**, Vol. 4, No 6, Spring 2012, p. 173.

<sup>150</sup> Erenler, pp. 174-175.

<sup>151</sup>“О ситуации в Египте”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation, February 5, 2011, [http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/eg/-/asset\\_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/220162](http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/eg/-/asset_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/220162), (April 4, 2018).

<sup>152</sup>“Заявление официального представителя МИД России А.К.Лукашевича в связи с событиями в Египте”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation, February 12, 2011,

One of the first reactions Russia has expressed towards the Egyptian revolt was of a skeptical character. Russia was pondering about the reasons of revolutions. Russian deputy prime minister, Igor Sechin during his interview for the Wall Street Journal had expressed his suspicion about the factors that had induced revolution in Egypt, stating that the business of Google officials in Egypt and their manipulation over people should be figured out.<sup>153</sup>

One can conclude that Moscow tried to sustain its relations with old regime until the collapse of the regime. According to Erenler, Moscow was comfortable to continue its cooperation with the Mubarak administration, presumably due to the fact that the Mubarak regime had maintained profitable trade contacts with Russia. According to the statistics, bilateral trade volume made up 2 billion dollars at those years. On top of all, one should remember that Moscow has always been supporting the authoritarian governance which suppressed radical elements.<sup>154</sup>

### **3.2.2. The Russian Federation's Approach to the Libyan Uprising**

In February 2011 unrests started to spread in Libyan cities as well. Initially, the scenario of unrests looked similar to the Egyptian and Tunisian revolutions. However, during month of March 2011 the situation rapidly changed. With an adoption of the resolution 1973 by the UN SC on 17th March, an installation of no-fly zone over Libya was approved. All of those events were analyzed within the context of Russian policy towards the Libyan revolution below.

As soon as the first controversies between Libyans and their authority had emerged in Libya, the Russian Federation minister of foreign affairs had contacted his Libyan counterpart to reassure peaceful resolution of mass unrests in Libya. Since the first days of protests, Moscow called on Libyan authority to hold back from the using force against civilians, and instead, to appeal to the national dialogue to settle the social crisis.<sup>155</sup> Besides the bilateral negotiations, Russia has joined the international initiative

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[http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/eg/-/asset\\_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/219002](http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/eg/-/asset_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/219002), (April 4, 2018).

<sup>153</sup> Gregory White, "Russian Sechin Defends Investment Climate", **The Wall Street Journal** February 22, 2011, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704476604576158140523028546>, (June 5, 2018).

<sup>154</sup> Erenler, p. 175.

<sup>155</sup> "Телефонный Разговор между С.Лавровым и Главой МИД Ливии М. Кусой", The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, February 27, 2011, [http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/telefonnye-razgovory-ministra/-/asset\\_publisher/KLX3tiYzsCLY/content/id/217458](http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/telefonnye-razgovory-ministra/-/asset_publisher/KLX3tiYzsCLY/content/id/217458), (May 31, 2018).

to prevent severe oppression of insurgents in Libya. Thus, on 9th March 2011 Medvedev ratified a document that allowed an implementation of international sanctions against the Libyan government. The sanctions aimed to prevent financial, technical and any sort of assistance to Libya; it also envisaged freezing assets of Qadhafi and his relatives in Russian banks.<sup>156</sup>

On 17th March 2011, the UN SC adopted a no-fly zone over Libya. Russia, in this voting, had abstained; Russian ambassador in the UN, Vitaly Churkin had advocated Russian abstention in the voting referring to the uncertainties around "how and by whom" the no-fly zone would be implemented and what its borders would be. Despite the blurred position of Russia towards a non-fly zone, Moscow was obviously against the escalation of situation in Libya.<sup>157</sup>

On 20th March the US, France, and Italy within the framework of the NATO forces, started an air operation over Libya in order to assist insurgent forces against Qadhafi. As a reply to this event, the prime minister of Russia, Vladimir Putin, called the resolution of 1973 an inadequate and detrimental, as it allowed undertaking military actions towards the sovereign state. Putin said that this recalled the middle age crusades when someone called others to go to a certain place to liberate something.<sup>158</sup> Further on, Putin condemned the interventionist policy of the US, calling this a political tendency which was lacking logic and conscience. Putin also recalled unsuccessful examples of intervention to Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq.<sup>159</sup>

At the same time, such hot-headed approach of the Russian prime minister, Putin was disapproved by then president Medvedev. On the same day (21 March), Medvedev stated that Russia consciously abstained from voting on resolution of 1973. Russian president also stated that under all circumstances, it was unacceptable to utilize insights

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<sup>156</sup> “Об Указе Президента Российской Федерации Д.А. Медведева "О мерах по выполнению резолюции Совета Безопасности ООН 1970 от 26 февраля 2011 года ", The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, March 10, 2011, [http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/ly/-/asset\\_publisher/wcPZCnhgb1aW/content/id/215822](http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/ly/-/asset_publisher/wcPZCnhgb1aW/content/id/215822), (May 31, 2018).

<sup>157</sup> “Security Council Approves ‘No-Fly Zone’ over Libya, Authorizing ‘All Necessary Measures’ to Protect Civilians, by Vote of 10 in Favor with 5 Abstentions”, UN, March 17, 2011, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2011/sc10200.doc.htm>, ( June 3, 2018).

<sup>158</sup> “Путин назвал операцию в Ливии бессовестным крестовым походом”, **Lenta.ru**, 2011, <https://lenta.ru/news/2011/03/21/criticize/>, (June 3, 2018).

<sup>159</sup> “Путин назвал операцию в Ливии бессовестным крестовым походом”.

like crusade, because all this might lead to the clash of civilizations and aggravate today's plight.<sup>160</sup>

### **3.3. The Russian Federation's Policy towards Egypt after the Uprisings: Political, Military, and Economic Relations**

Before 2011, the relations between Russia and Egypt have been of a strategic character, however, after the upheavals, Russia found it difficult to continue the warm partnership relations with the new regime. After a year of the transition period in June 2012, Mohammed Morsi, from the Muslim Brotherhood, became Egyptian president. A key problem for Russia was the uncertain situation around the newly chosen president and his administration. Russia felt uneasy situation: on the one hand, Muslim Brotherhood had officially been banned in Russia since 2003, and on the other hand, Russia had committed to recognize any regime that would be elected by Egyptians as legitimate.<sup>161</sup> Despite all doubts and uncertainties, Russia had welcomed Morsi administration. On June 28th Putin individually congratulated Morsi with a victory on the presidential elections.<sup>162</sup> Russia also sent a telegram in July 2012 to ensure Egypt that Russia has a motivation to cooperate with Egypt in different spheres. The most important event in bilateral relations took place when Morsi met Putin in Sochi in April 2013. Morsi had expressed a wish to continue to cooperate with Russia in sphere of heavy industry projects such as building nuclear stations in Egypt and in the sphere of politics as well. Putin from his side drew attention on diversification of economic relations and development of bilateral investments. To conclude, the meeting has been assessed as being mutually productive.<sup>163</sup>

However, in a couple of months after that meeting, Morsi was removed with a military coup. There have been a few interactions between Russia and Egypt under the Morsi rule. As Morsi was maintained by the US; his ouster has irritated the US, so that it has

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<sup>160</sup>«Крестоносцы: Медведев и Путин кардинально разошлись по ливийскому вопросу», **Lenta.Ru**, March 22, 2011, <https://lenta.ru/articles/2011/03/22/rulibya/>, (3 June, 2018).

<sup>161</sup>Anna Borchevskaya, **Russia in the Middle East: Motives, Consequences and Prospects**, Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2016, p. 112; “Заявление официального представителя МИД России А.К.Лукашевича в связи с событиями в Египте”, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, February 12, 2011, [http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/eg/-/asset\\_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/219002](http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/eg/-/asset_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/219002), (June 28, 2018).

<sup>162</sup> “Telephone Conversation with President-Elect Muhammad Morsi,” Kremlin, June 28, 2012, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/15788>, (June 28, 2018).

<sup>163</sup> Кира Латухина, “Сочи, пальмы, пирамиды: Москва и Каир открыли двери для сотрудничества”, April 22, 2013, <https://rg.ru/2013/04/22/putin.html>, (June 30, 2018).

ceased its annual aid to the Egyptian military, which was given annually around 1.5 billion dollars.<sup>164</sup> Many scholars pointed out that deterioration of the US-Egypt relations had coincided with the rapprochement between Russia and Egypt. The best example of the revival of the bilateral relations became the "2+2" meetings, the first round of which took place on 14th of November 2013 in Cairo. The main negotiators were Russian and Egyptian ministers of foreign affairs and ministers of defense. The general discussions were about the strengthening of partnership in regional and international levels and development of multifaceted cooperation between Moscow and Cairo. Both sides have agreed to cooperate on settling the regional and international issues.<sup>165</sup> Also, Cairo and Moscow stressed that they have common threats such as terrorism. Thus, in order to combat terrorism in their countries, both sides have expressed their desire to cooperate in this sphere as well. In this regard, the perspective of launching a free zone from the weapon of mass destruction had been discussed at the meeting. Special attention has been paid to the Syrian crisis. Moscow and Cairo views on a resolution of the crises in the Middle East have, to some extent, coincided. Both Russia and Egypt condemned terrorism in Syria and were categorically against extremism and terrorism anywhere. They supported self-determination of people in the MENA states and were against the external interference in order to settle down the regional problems.<sup>166</sup>

On July 2013, Mohammed Morsi was toppled with a military coup led by Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi. The new autocratic regime in Egypt was particularly interested in advancing bilateral relations with Russia. There were number of direct interactions between Sisi and Putin in the aftermath of the military coup. The second round of "2+2" talks took place in Moscow on 12th-13th of February in 2014. One of the significant achievements of the talks was signing the agreement that allowed the Russian-Egyptian intergovernmental Commission on trade and economic cooperation to start its work in March 2014. In order to resolve the regional crises, the sides have agreed to pursue such

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<sup>164</sup>"US withholds military aid to Egypt", Aljazeera, October 10, 2013, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/10/us-withholds-military-aid-Egypt-201310920450117937.html>, (June 30, 2018).

<sup>165</sup> «Два плюс два», The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, November 11, 2014, [http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/kommentarii\\_predstavatelya/-/asset\\_publisher/MCZ7HQuMdqBY/content/id/88598](http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/kommentarii_predstavatelya/-/asset_publisher/MCZ7HQuMdqBY/content/id/88598), (June 30, 2018).

<sup>166</sup> «О переговорах министров иностранных дел и обороны России и Египта в формате «два плюс два», The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, November 14, 2013, [http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/eg/-/asset\\_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/87942](http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/eg/-/asset_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/87942), (June 30, 2018).

tools as a dialogue and respect of the self-determination right for people. Speaking of the Syrian case, Cairo and Moscow had common views considering the Geneva Communiqué as a roadmap for the resolution of the crisis. Free zone from the mass destruction weapon in the MENA and anti-terrorism cooperation had also been discussed at the meeting. Generally, so-called "2+2" meetings indicated a new level of bilateral relations, pointing on a strategic character of the relations between Cairo and Moscow.<sup>167</sup> While Russia was looking for the new foothold to expand its influence in the Middle East, Egypt was concerned with balancing the US influence in Egypt. It is crucial to remember that Russian president Putin at the opening speech wished a success to Abdel Fattah al-Sisi who came to Moscow meeting as a minister of defense. That way, Putin determined his bid for the coming presidential elections in Egypt in 2014.<sup>168</sup>

Abdel Fattah al-Sisi won the presidential election in Egypt that took place on 26th-28th May 2014. For the first foreign destination al-Sisi was invited to Moscow. On 12th August 2014 Putin welcomed al-Sisi in Moscow and in the resort city of Sochi. During the meeting Putin proposed to sell arms to Egypt and in exchange of launching an industrial zone in the Suez area for Russia in order to facilitate trade relations. Also, Moscow proposed Egypt to launch a free trade zone.<sup>169</sup> Some Russian sources reported about the military deal by Moscow on purchasing missiles and military aircrafts to Egypt, approximately on 3.5 billion dollars. Additionally, the sides have agreed on conducting joint marine exercises.<sup>170</sup>

The next crucial event took place on 9th-10th February 2015 when Putin paid a visit to Cairo. In the wake of the meeting, a Memorandum of Understanding on Russian aid for the construction of a nuclear reactor in Western Egypt had been signed. In the frame of this agreement, Moscow was obliged to give 25 billion dollars loan for the construction of the first Egyptian nuclear station in the area of al-Dabaa. Totally, several energy

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<sup>167</sup> “Выступление и ответы на вопросы СМИ”, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, February 13, 2014, [http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/eg/-/asset\\_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/76718](http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/eg/-/asset_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/76718), (June 30, 2018).

<sup>168</sup> “Vladimir Putin pre-empts presidency bid by Egypt's military chief”, **The Guardian**, February 13, 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/13/vladimir-putin-backs-sisi-military-president-egypt-russia>, (June 30, 2018).

<sup>169</sup> “Putin vows to boost arms sales to Egypt's Sisi”, **AFP**, August 12, 2014, <https://www.yahoo.com/news/egypts-Sisi-visits-Putin-arms-purchase-talks-150438527.html>, (June 30, 2018).

<sup>170</sup> “Russia, Egypt seal preliminary arms deal worth \$3.5 billion: agency”, **Reuters**, September 17, 2014, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-egypt-arms/russia-egypt-seal-preliminary-arms-deal-worth-3-5-billion-agency-idUSKBN0HC19T20140917>, (June 30, 2018).

blocks were planned to be built. The first one was planned to be completed by 2026. At the meeting, Egypt had indicated its interest for Russian investment for the Egyptian infrastructure. Thus, agreements on economic cooperation and development of collaboration on investment had also been signed.<sup>171</sup>

At a glance, the Russian firm interest in enhancing relations with Egypt was predetermined by the deterioration of the US-Egyptian strategic relations. A thorough analysis exposes an ultimate Russian goal which was to establish a staunch foothold in the MENA in order to challenge the West due to the ongoing confrontation that had severed with the Crimean Crisis. As for the benefit that Egypt was to extract from cooperation with Russia, it was the necessity of the time for Egypt to lead tight relations with Russia. Egypt, on the one hand was eager to show its multi-vector foreign policy, via diversification of its partners; on the other hand, Egypt attempted to replace the US aid by the Russian aid for some time, even though the Russian assistance capacity could not be compared with the US aid.<sup>172</sup>

Another aspect of the Russian-Egyptian rapprochement was the convergence of their stances towards Syrian crisis. This became even clearer with al-Sisi advent to power. Al-Sisi regime was accepting the legitimacy of Assad regime and even cooperated with Damascus in military and intelligence fields. In other words, both Russia and Egypt supported Bashar al-Asad as a way to install stability in Syria and in the MENA as a whole. Cairo along with Moscow and Riyadh played a role of mediator in the Syrian Crisis. Cairo had arranged a series of small-scale talks amongst Syrian opposition groups in an attempt to consolidate them for the Geneva Negotiations. The first round of Cairo talks was held in January and the second one in June 2015. These conferences were dedicated for the consolidation of Syrian opposition groups. At the first meeting, Cairo had convened 100 politicians from the opposition; and in the second one a number of participants had reached 150. Cairo conferences, in other words, became auxiliary to Moscow and Riyadh platforms. Cairo affirmed that it coordinated its

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<sup>171</sup> “Переговоры, вызванные симпатией: Владимир Путин начинает визит в Египет”, **TASS**, 9 February, 2015, <http://tass.ru/politika/1753188>, (July 3, 2018).

<sup>172</sup> Ephraim Kam and Zvi Magen, “President Putin Visits Egypt”, The Institute for National Security Studies, February 22, 2015, <http://www.inss.org.il/publication/president-putin-visits-egypt/>, (July 2, 2018).

regional mediation with Russia.<sup>173</sup> According to al-Sisi, such initiative was also induced by the desire to replace center of opposition from Istanbul to Cairo. Abdel Fattah al-Sisi regime was conducting anti-Brotherhood crackdowns and has attempted to eliminate the activity of political-military entities in Syria that had ties with the Muslim Brotherhood or had a similar ideology with the Muslim Brotherhood. Al-Sisi who was well-known for his anti-terrorism and anti-extremism initiatives saw the Cairo platform as an attempt to cease the regional terrorism that threatened Egypt as well.<sup>174</sup>

Another notable aspect of Russian-Egyptian relations has been a military one. As was agreed in 2014, Russia and Egypt embarked on joint naval exercises in the Mediterranean in June 2015. In October 2016 in the northwestern Egyptian city of Al-Alamein joint military exercises “Protectors of Friendship 1” were successfully conducted.<sup>175</sup> The military operation had encompassed 700 participants. “Protectors of Friendship 2” with some 600 participants were held in the southern city of Russia Novorossiysk in September 2017.<sup>176</sup> Russian cooperation with Egypt in the naval and terrestrial military exercises meant Russian naval forces expand in the Mediterranean.<sup>177</sup>

Regarding the economic relations between Russia and Egypt after the uprising in Egypt, in 2012 a total trade turnover reached 4.26 billion dollars; in 2013 it decreased almost by half madding up 2.14 billion dollars. The decrease in the trade turnover in 2013 was caused by a diminution of demand for the Russian wheat in 2013. Bilateral trade had restored its prior capacity in 2014 with the advent of al-Sisi. That year trade turnover made up 4.5 billion dollars.<sup>178</sup> During the first year of al-Sisi governance, an agreement on launching Egyptian Center on Black Sea Coast had been signed. The center was to be used for storage and revision of imported goods, in order to facilitate a trade process

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<sup>173</sup> “Конференции представителей сирийской оппозиции в Каире”, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, June 11, 2015, [http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/eg/-/asset\\_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/1428679](http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/eg/-/asset_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/1428679), (July 3, 2018).

<sup>174</sup> Geoffrey Aronson, “The Syrian Opposition Meeting in Cairo: One Small Step”, Middle East Institute, January 31, 2015, <http://www.mei.edu/content/at/syrian-opposition-meeting-cairo-one-small-step>, (July 4, 2018).

<sup>175</sup> “Rusya ve Mısır'dan Akdeniz'de ortak tatbikat”, **Sputnik**, June 10, 2015, [https://tr.sputniknews.com/dogu\\_akdeniz/201506101015935336/](https://tr.sputniknews.com/dogu_akdeniz/201506101015935336/), (July 5, 2018).

<sup>176</sup> “Rusya-Mısır ortak askeri tatbikatı sona erdi”, **Sputnik**, September 24, 2017, <https://tr.sputniknews.com/savunma/201709241030280226-rusya-misir-ortak-tatbikati-sona-erdi/>, (July 5, 2018).

<sup>177</sup> Nikolai Novichkov, “Russian New Maritime Doctrine,” **IHS Jane’s**, August 13, 2015, <http://www.janes.com/article/53643/russia-s-new-maritime-doctrine>, (July 5, 2017).

<sup>178</sup> Russian International Affairs Council, Working Paper, 2015, <http://russiancouncil.ru/upload/WP-Egypt-22-Eng.pdf>, p. 10.



between Egypt and Russia. Another important unfolding was a conclusion of the agreement that envisaged growth of the trade turnover up to 10 billion dollars by 2020. It was discussed during the business meeting between the Russian ministry of economy and Egyptian companies in March 2014.<sup>179</sup> Despite such economic initiatives that sought to promote bilateral trade relations, a commerce volume between the states have grown insignificantly, madding up approximately 4.1 billion dollars in 2015 and 2016.<sup>180</sup>

Generally, the Arab uprisings had brought a breakthrough in the bilateral relation between Moscow and Cairo. Moscow had caught a moment to enhance its political consultative works with Egypt over regional issues, and also to improve the military-technical cooperation, and finally to conclude a series of beneficial economic agreements.

#### **3.4. The Russian Federation's Policy towards Libya after the Uprising: Political, Military, and Economic Relations**

Before embarking on the discussion and analysis of Russian policy towards Libya after the uprising it would be viable to make a brief introduction to the Libyan unfolding at the transition period. As the mass demonstrations took over a scene of Libyan politics, an interim government under the leadership of the largest opposition group called National Transition Council (NTC), has been established. The interim government was chaired by Mustafa Abdul Jalil who was a minister of justice at the time of Qadhafi rule. NTC announced commence of its work in March 2011. Some international players, such as France promptly recognized it. Eventually, NTC was admitted by the UN in September 2011. However, NTC representatives in Benghazi were in the discontent with the NTC of Tripoli. By August 2012 NTC ceased to exist and handed over its authority to the General National Congress (GNC). Basically, NTC was criticized because most of its members were bureaucrats who worked previously with Qadhafi

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<sup>179</sup> Татьяна Безрукова and Илья Шанин and К. Круглова, “Перспективы Развития Российско-Египетских Отношений”, [Electronic Version], *Международный Журнал Прикладных И Фундаментальных Исследований*, 2015, # 10, (July 5, 2018), p. 2.

<sup>180</sup> “Арабская Республика Египет”, (2017), [http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/eg/-/asset\\_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/76718#content-popup](http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/eg/-/asset_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/76718#content-popup), (July 5, 2018).

regime. Hence, social unrests led to the parliamentary elections that held on July 7th 2012.<sup>181</sup>

A parliament of the GNC was committed to prepare and adopt the new constitution within 18 months. Mohammed al-Magariief had been elected by the Congress as the chairman and an interim leader. In October Ali Zeidan, a new prime minister of the GNC was elected. However, due to the worsening of the situation in Libya which was prompted by the social disturbances, GNC did not accomplish its commitments until the end of its period of governance. Despite the termination of the GNC term of governance, it attempted to continue its ruling. Such behavior by the GNC was met with mass protests in Libya. In March 2014 the Parliament sacked Ali Zeidan from the rank of a prime minister and replaced him with a businessman Maiteg. In the wake of the parliamentary elections, in June 2014 the Council of Representatives (CoR) took place of the GNC. However, the election was denounced by the GNC and by other Islamist groups due to the minor turnout at the elections that made up 18%. This discontent eventually led to the breakout of the Second Civil War between the pro-Islamist and anti-Islamist political entities. In response to the rise of Islamist forces in Benghazi, a defector of Libyan National Army, a general Khalifa Haftar, had launched an operation Dignity in May 2014 in order to combat terrorist groups in the Eastern Libya. After a couple of months the Islamist militia from the city of Misrata and from other places formed a coalition that became known as Operation Libya Dawn. It should be pointed out that the leading figures of the Libya Dawn were the former members of the GNC. This political entity was against both the CoR' and Haftar forces.<sup>182</sup>

In November of 2014 the Libyan Supreme Constitutional Court denounced the parliamentary elections of 2014 and called the CoR illegitimate. Hence, the CoR was forced to relocate its' headquarter from Tripoli to Tobruk. The CoR had acquired a potent support from the Libyan National Army that was under the leadership of general, Khalifa Haftar. On the other hand, the GNC was sustained by the militia of Libya Dawn which included members from the Muslim Brotherhood and Ansar al-Sharia as well.

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<sup>181</sup> "National Transitional Council – Libya", **National Transition Council Libya**, <http://ntclibya.org/>, (July 16, 2018).

<sup>182</sup> Erin Neale, "Timeline: How Libya's Revolution Came Undone", **Atlantic Council**, February 15, 2018, (July 24, 2018).

First they attempted to occupy Eastern Libya and later the Western part of the country.<sup>183</sup>

In the light of such events in Libya, the UN SC, the GNC and the CoR had adopted Libyan Political Agreement as a roadmap for the political reconstruction of united Libya. As a result of this agreement, a united force, a Government of National Accord under the rule of the prime minister, Fayeze al-Sarraj had been established. The new formation was made up of the nine-membered Presidential Council, seventeen-membered Government of National Accord which implemented a role of the executive branch, the High State Council as an advisory body and the CoR as a legislative branch. However, the CoR accused the GNA members of being Islamists. Since that time the Government of National Accord and authorities of the CoR started to compete with each other. Both embarked on the harsh competition for the international support. In some cases, several states while recognizing the official government in Libya endorsed financially the CoR and Libyan National Army. Such attitude was true for Russia as well.<sup>184</sup>

Speaking of the political relations between Russia and Libya at the transitional period, in March of 2012 the NTC decided to suspend cooperation with Russia in such key areas as military and energy sectors. Russian skeptical stance towards NATO military intervention in 2011 determined Libyan policy towards Russia. Overall the foreign policy of the new Libyan government was pro-Western. As far as Russian policy towards Libya is concerned, Russia put efforts to preserve friendly relations predominantly due to the canceled 4.5 billion dollars of debt and newly signed lucrative contracts with Libya.<sup>185</sup>

Even though the NTC general stance was against the close cooperation with Russia, Abdurrahim El-Keib, the prime minister of Libya, claimed that Libya would welcome return of Russian businesses to Libya. Further on, the head of the National Forces Alliance, Mahmoud Jibril al-Warfally stood for the restoration of contracts with Russia in energy, transportation and construction spheres. Moreover, in September 2013 then minister of foreign affairs, Mohammed Abdulaziz paid a visit to Moscow to discuss

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<sup>183</sup> Yulia Krylova, "Lock-in effect in the Russian-Libyan Economic relations in the post-Arab-Spring period", [Electronic Version], *the Journal of North African Studies*, 22:4, (July 22, 2018), pp. 578-594

<sup>184</sup> "Libya profile – Timeline", **BBC**, May 29, 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13755445>, (July 24, 2018).

<sup>185</sup> Krylova, p. 581

with Sergey Lavrov the prospective spheres for the bilateral cooperation. Eventually, Libyan side had approved Russian firms to invest in the infrastructural and industrial facilities in Libya.<sup>186</sup>

In August 2014 an inauguration of the CoR members took place in Tripoli. However, the new legislative entity did not exist for a long time. In November 2014, the Libyan Supreme Court recognized the CoR being unconstitutional. Thus, the CoR moved to Tobruk to preserve its further survival. This way, the two discrete authorities have again emerged in Libya. As far as Russian attitude regarding such unfolding is concerned, it was ambiguous. Russia while having recognized the official government in Tripoli under the GNC, did not develop relations with the legislative authority in Tobruk. One of the best examples of thriving diplomatic relations between Moscow and Tobruk was a visit of the prime minister of the CoR, Abdullah al-Thani, to Moscow to re-establish bilateral relations with Russia. At the meeting, revival of contracts in the economic sphere, in infrastructure and in oil extradition projects have been discussed. In other words, it was vivid that both authorities in Libya attempted to conquer potent international supporters.<sup>187</sup>

As far as the military aspect of the Russian policy towards Libya at the transition period is concerned, arms trade was of the utmost significance. The main Russian arms importers were the former customers of the USSR, including Libya. Most of the munitions of Libya were made by Russia. Libyan militants were trained in Russia because of the similarity of the munitions systems they utilized. Prior to the overthrow of Qadhafi Russia concluded with Libya the contracts amounting 4 billion dollars. However, as soon as the regime was changed, new Libyan government fell in uncertainties regarding the renewal of the cooperation with Russia. Finally, the interim government appealed to Moscow to repair of arms that were previously imported from Russia.

It was noted that in September of 2016 Haftar appealed to Moscow seeking for a military aid from Russia in order to maintain the anti-terrorist campaign led by the Libyan National Army (LNA) since 2014. In November of 2016 arms technicians from Russia visited Cyrenaica (one of the three large states of Libya) with the aim to restore

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<sup>186</sup> Krylova, pp. 587-588

<sup>187</sup> Krylova, p. 585

and modernize weapons pertaining to the LNA. In the same month, Haftar went to Moscow to negotiate anti-terrorist campaign against ISIS. Later, in January of 2017 the general Haftar was invited as a distinguished guest aboard of the Russian Admiral Kuznetsov that had anchored on the Libyan coast while was arriving from the navy operation in the Eastern Mediterranean. Simultaneously, Russia led a military cooperation with the GNA under the prime minister, Fayeze al-Sarraj. For example in March 2017, Putin hosted Sarraj in Moscow to discuss the development of the bilateral relations.<sup>188</sup>

Briefly speaking, Russia along with Egypt, the UAE and France actively supported the LNA forces under the General Haftar. These groups of states were severely against the Islamist expansion in Libya and in the whole MENA area. Russia was involved in the Libyan affairs unilaterally and also coordinated its actions with Egypt. In this regard Putin, al-Sisi, and Haftar have seen in the future Libya as a secular state. Egypt in this context served as an attempt to establish a buffer zone in its border with Libya to prevent a leakage of terrorists and smuggling. As for the economic cooperation between Moscow and Tripoli in the post-Arab uprising period, Russia substantially increased its export to Libya. For example, in 2011 Russia exported goods to Libya amounted to 106.926 dollars; in 2012 this amount was doubled making up 259.927 dollars. In 2013 the trade volume was again doubled. However, in 2014 a sudden recession was marked in the trade turnover between Russia and Libya. Libyan import to Russia was measured only in tens of thousands of dollars; 96% of goods from Libya to Russia were fruits and vegetables. In 2012, 2013 and 2014 the Libyan export to Russia made up a smaller amount. As far as Russian goods are concerned, 60% of its exports made up of wheat, 23% made up of mineral fuel and oil products and 16% made up of metals.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>188</sup>Karim Mezran and Arturo Varvelli, "Libyan Crisis: International Actors at Play", Karim Mezran and Arturo Varvelli (ed.), **Foreign Actors in Libya's Crisis**, Milano: ISPI, 2017, pp.13-23.

<sup>189</sup>"Торговый оборот между Россией и Ливией за 2014 год", April 28, 2015, <http://www.rusexporter.ru/research/country/detail/2158/>, (July 24, 2018).

**Table 4.** Trade Turnout between Russia and Libya within 5 years (thousands of dollars)

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total Trade Turnover	319.502	123.557	259.927	386.458	1089.622
Export	169.502	106.926	259.927	386.458	221.622
Import	150	16.631	0	0	868

**Source:** “Торговый оборот между Россией и Ливией за 2014 год”, 28.04.2015, <http://www.rusexporter.ru/research/country/detail/2158/>.

To conclude, the uprisings in Egypt and Libya, at the beginning, had undermined Russian interests there but then have benefitted Russia. Arrival to power of Morsi in Egypt and National Transition Council and General National Council in Libya in 2012 has jeopardized Russian interest in these two countries due to the different foreign policy orientation of the new administrations. However, removal of regime in Egypt in 2013 has brought about a breakthrough in Russian-Egyptian bilateral relations. Al-Sisi being prominent for his hardline policies in regards the religious groups inside and outside Egypt facilitated Russian-Egyptian relations. However, in the case of Libya, scenario went in different way. Since 2014 Libya turned to the battle ground between two fighting groups: General National Congress and Council of Representatives, latter were supported by the Libyan National Army. Russia has recognized and maintained both of them in order to make sure its relations with Libya in any case.<sup>190</sup>

### **3.5. Findings and Analysis**

The initial aim of this study was an investigation of the general trajectory of the Russian foreign policy from the Cold War period until recently. In order to accurately and successfully accomplish our goal, one principal and five auxiliary research questions have been initiated. The findings which have appeared as a result of examining five auxiliary sub-research questions are provided below.

The first research question tackled the main foreign policy principles that Russia has practiced towards the countries in the Middle East, Egypt and Libya in particular, during the period from WWII until recent period. As a result of the in-depth analysis of

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<sup>190</sup> Karim Mezran and Arturo Varvelli, pp.13-17.

divergent data on this theme, it was found out that Russian foreign policy has fluctuated during the different historical stages. For example, foreign policy principles at the time of the Soviet era and then during the sovereign Russian Federation time are completely different. As far as the USSR foreign policy is concerned, the leading historians highlighted that the Soviet Union intensified relations with the Middle Eastern states after WWII primarily due to the competition between the Soviet Union and the USA. The rise of the USA and the formation of the NATO in 1949 pushed the USSR to initiate the Warsaw Pact in 1955. In the meantime, the US focused more on the Middle East, providing them with military and financial aid. The best example of such support initiative was the Eisenhower Doctrine of 1957 which aimed at prevention of the Soviet expansion in the Middle East. As a response to such policy, the Soviets with the flash of the Arab-Israeli war took the side of anti-imperialist revolutionary forces in their struggle against Israel, which was being supported by the leading capitalist states. At that time the Soviet Union behavior was driven by their ideological priorities.

Speaking of the sovereign Russian Federation foreign policy towards the above-mentioned countries, their motivation was driven more by the policy of pragmatism rather than the ideological values. Instead of assisting one particular side in the Middle Eastern conflict, Russia has preferred to be a mediator to advance an influence on the Middle Eastern states. With the collapse of the bipolar world order, terrorism became crucial component in the Russian foreign policy. Russia began to develop cooperation with Egypt in order to combat terrorism in the Middle East. As for the Russian foreign policy towards Libya, it was dictated by the prospects of the economic gaining and opportunities for the geopolitical expansion in the Mediterranean area. The current Russian policy towards Egypt has basically three aspects: economic, military and political. It is remarkable that after the chemical weapon was applied in Syria in 2013, Russia included in its doctrine of the foreign policy of 2013 an article which says that Russia supports zones free of mass destruction weapon in the Middle East. Such approach had been prompted by the fear of possible use of WMD by the terrorist groups in the Middle East. Taking into account Russian experience in fighting the terrorist groups in Caucasus and the growing globalization, it was assessed by Russia that events in the MENA had potential to quickly spread around the world. The outbreak of the Islamic State is vivid example of such consequences.

It is widely known that after the collapse of the USSR, Russia needed aid from the

USA. Therefore the foreign policy doctrine of 1993 reflected necessity of Russian involvement in the Middle Eastern affairs dictated by security concerns and threats coming from the Middle East. Apparently, the foreign policy doctrine of 2000 states that Russia was interested in the preservation of peace and stability in the Middle East due to its own interest to secure the energy routes.

Russian recent rise in the Middle East is partially explained by the growing tension between Russia and the US which intensified after the Ukrainian and Crimean crises in 2013 and 2014. Sanctions against Russia imposed by the Western countries, forced Russia to re-enforce its position in the MENA as well. Russia allegedly conducted its inflexible policy in the MENA in the wake of rivalry between the USA.

The second research question explores how the Soviet foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya differs from that of the Russian Federation. The Soviet Union foreign policy towards the third world states, including Egypt and Libya was predominantly stipulated by the environment of the Cold War. Ideological and military competition between the USSR and the USA pushed them to pursue a proactive policy in the Middle East. The Soviet Union not only pursued its arms, but it also got involved in the military training in Egyptian, Libyan and other Middle Eastern countries' armies. It is clear that if Soviet involvement in the Middle Eastern affairs was of merely an economic interest, Soviets would not train Arab forces in its land. As for the economy, the USSR sponsored substantial projects such as building dams, investing in heavy industry enterprises, developing infrastructure and other projects. In that way, the Soviets made their allies dependent on them. It is notable that the USSR was less involved in the economy of Libya that was conducted by Qadhafi specific ideology of Arab nationalism. In the military area, Libya has not had many partners to request weapons from except the USSR, due to the isolationist and aggressive foreign policy towards neighbors and western states.

The Russian Federation policies towards Egypt and Libya, after the collapse of the USSR in 1990, the successor of the Soviet Union fell in difficult plight politically and economically. Such situation has also badly influenced cooperation with Egypt and Libya. The collapse of the corrupted system of the planned economy has been accelerated by the Openness and Reconstruction reforms of Gorbachev. Russia had to turn towards the West, mistakenly considering itself a part of the Western world. At the



time the foreign policy decisions were taken in a way profitable for the USA. Hence, a feeble Russian economy and the Western-oriented foreign policy detached Russia from the Middle Eastern affairs. However, as Russia got disappointed with alienation with the West and with advent of Evgeny Primakov in the rank of the minister of foreign affairs; Russia started changing the situation to improve the relations with the Middle East. Later on, beginning with 2000 and beyond, Russia assertively cultivated its economy and reinforced own stance in the world politics. Gradually, political and economic relations between Egypt and Libya started to revive. At this time Russia and Libya found reciprocal interest to cooperate more intensively to allow Russia to write off 4.5 billion dollars of Libyan debt in exchange of signing arm and oil contracts in favor of Russia.

The third research question examines the ways Russia has perceived the uprisings in Egypt and Libya. The phenomena of Arab uprisings or the Arab spring have been long time expected but it has broken out spontaneously when nobody expected this. Russia as many other countries initially chose the policy of observers primarily because Russia was not sure of the nature of uprisings. Russian first reaction was skeptical due to its experience of the color revolutions which happened in the post-Soviet area in the 2000s. In the case with Egypt, Russia until the revolution outbreak, endorsed the side of Mubarak regime, constantly giving advice to not use the force against civilians and to continue leading a peaceful dialogue. In other words, Russia preferred to support old authoritarian regime, as they considered those relations as stable and reliable. However, after the insurgents and military force took power in Egypt, Russia smoothly moved its support to the interim authority, expressing hope that the interim government would be able to prepare and conduct fair elections, according to people will. Eventually, Russia realized the revolution was induced by mass amount of people without the Western support.

As far as the Libyan uprising is concerned, Russia behaved itself differently. It was small-scale unrest in Libyan cities at the beginning and it was NATO air forces not the masses that made a collapse of the Qadhafi regime happen. Russia advised the Qadhafi regime to not utilize a force against civilians but as Qadhafi continued to suppress civilians via heavy military force, Russia started to speak about the loss of legitimacy by Qadhafi. Moreover, Russia had approved the UN sanctions on Libya and abstained from the UN SC 1973 resolution on the installation of the no-fly zone over Libya although,

such Russian stance was risky for Russia to lose one of the major customers for the Russian arms. In part, Russia did not expect the fall of the regime so its reaction to the NATO's air operation against Qadhafi was quite critical. But as soon as the interim government came to power, Russia officially recognized it. However, the relations with the new authority did not develop promptly due to the Russian critics towards the NATO intervention happening at the time of unrests.

The fourth and fifth research questions are interconnected, and therefore discussed as a joint aspect in this part. These questions are as follows: how have the Arab uprisings affected the Russian-Egyptian and the Russian-Libyan relations and what are the main lines of the new Russian policy towards the post-Arab uprising Egypt and Libya? After the revolutions in Egypt and Libya, Russia had to deal with the states having new authorities. Regarding the foreign policy actions, Russia was left with a limited number of options. It accepted the new governments despite their pro-Islamic natures and indicated attempts to interact with these states. All contracts, Russia had concluded previously with Egyptian and Libyan governments had been put under the risk and uncertainty. However, in the case with Egypt, Morsi regime was soon replaced by the military man, general al-Sisi. The world community, especially the USA didn't approve such forceful modification in Egypt, whereas Russia caught in this momentum to enhance bilateral relations with the new Egyptian authority and did it successfully. Relations with Egypt has been improved so that al-Sisi and Putin embarked on the larger projects such as building the atom electro stations, establishing the industrial zone for Russia on the coast of Suez, and on smaller projects in sphere of infrastructure. Al-Sisi regime benefitted Russia not only at economical level but in terms of the regional affairs as well.

Al-Sisi government stance towards Syrian and Libyan crises has coincided with Russian. That became a great point of convergences between the two countries. Both Russia and Egypt were against the advent of any Islamist group to the authority in Syria and/or in Libya. Have they taken a different scenario, they would risk losing their old partners. Also, Russia and Egypt apprehend of the rise of terrorists in the region that might threaten the energy routes and economic stability of the region and might induce the awakening of the political and radical Islamist groups in their territories. Due to these reasons, Egypt and Russia attempted to play role of mediators in Syrian and Libyan crisis. In the case with Syrian civil war, Egypt has arranged several Cairo

platforms to consolidate dispersed Syrian opposition groups whereas in the case with Libya, Cairo insisted in the UN the international sanctions be removed from Libya. That way Egypt could assist Libyan National Army under the general Haftar. Moreover, Egypt and UAE actively intervened in Libya to facilitate general Haftar campaign against terrorism in the East of Libya.

As for the relations with Libya, it was problematic for Russia to regain Libyan government trust in Russia and make them stick to the signed contracts in military and economic spheres. In the wake of the rivalry and competition for the international aid between the two different governments in Libya, Russia was able to advance diplomatic relations with both governments. Russia, while recognizing the GNA government in Tripoli, had also continued to have meetings with the members of the Council of Representatives, particularly with the general Haftar. Overall, it is obvious, that after the Arab uprisings Russia chose to follow a proactive policy towards Egypt and Libya, that is to say a policy of restricted and covert intervention.

Speaking of the continuous and changing variables in the Russian foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya, Russia always acted in accordance with its national interest and international environment. International context has been well explained throughout the research whereas internal factors of the foreign policy stayed latent. As security, sovereignty, identity and welfare are the main components of the national interest we have examined importance of these elements for the Russian foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya in every particular period.

The Soviet foreign policy in the Middle East had been activated at the time of Khrushchev, then a major priority was put on the communist identity as well as on security. By leading relations with Libya and Egypt, the USSR desired to protect and advance its sovereignty and identity, and to strengthen security. Less attention was paid to economic interests in relations with Egypt and Libya.

As for the Brezhnev period, the USSR started to follow so called “correlation of forces” doctrine. According to the doctrine the Soviet Union followed balanced and mutual relations with other states. Also, as the Soviet economy at that time began to decline, the Union felt necessary to prioritize economic interest as well. Thus, the Soviet Union had pursued not only sovereignty, identity and security interests but also economic interest in relations with Egypt and Libya.

As Gorbachev came to power in 1985, identity, economic and sovereignty interests had prevailed in its foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya. At this period identity was changed, from authentic communism to the liberal-democracy. At part it was a necessity of time to adopt liberal-democratic values as the Soviet economy was about to collapse what directly threatened its further existence.

During Boris Yeltsin and Andrei Kozyrev governance the Soviet Union followed the path of Gorbachev, prioritizing a sovereignty and economic prosperity. The West had gained a status of “allie” for Russia. Relations with Egypt and Libya were decreased to minimum due to the socio-economic crisis within the Russian Federation and uncertainty in its identity.

Regarding Primakov era, it brought about a breakthrough in relations with the Middle Eastern states as a whole. At the very that period an identity of great power was adopted and the Russian Federation started adequately addressing to all four components of the national interest which are sovereignty, security, identity and economic welfare. Russia had significantly improved relations with Egypt and Libya at that time.

The same is true for the Putin leadership. Such multi vector policy was continued in 2000s as well. However, in Putin period of governance relations with the Middle Eastern states were constrained to some extent. Nevertheless bilateral relations with Egypt and Libya had gradually acquired a more assertive nature due to the improvements and shifts in the Russian economy and identity.

To summarize, at the time of the Soviet Union foreign policy towards Egypt and Libya was based more on sovereignty, security and identity priorities. They were continuous components of the Soviet foreign policy. With the advent of liberal leaders attention was drawn to the economic welfare and survival of state entity as well as to the identity. Eventually, since 1996 the Russian Federation started equally prioritizing all four components of its national interests (sovereignty, security, identity and welfare) in relations with Egypt and Libya.

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