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**To:** ehud barak <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** first edit for your comments

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>>> Wait Until Its Too Late,- seems to be the new fashionable foreign policy .The unfolding tragedy in Syria has already cost 75 thousand precious lives and millions displaced. . The complex dilemmma recently illustrated in bright colors , by the recent juxtaposition of the evidence of nerve agents being used by the Assad regime against its own, alongside the vivid videos of executions and canibalisms carried out in the name of the rebel God . Though it appears red lines have been crossed , the world still hungers for waits for a coordinated plan of action.

>>>The human suffering has been staggering. In a region where the pursuit of happiness often takes a back seat to the pursuit of revenge , the very continuation of the bloodletting will be a strong driving force for sectarian killings for many years to come. In addition, the conflict already has become a powerful magnet for various extremist groups greatly increasing the odds of the post Assad Syria ending up, at best , as Lebanon , a failed state, or further down the failed line as a somolia

>>> Another factor , often overlooked is the liklihood of the much wider use of chemical weapons with every unpunished round of its actual use. This is as a direct consequence of the psychological thresholds being more easily breeched as impact of external deterrence wanes . With it comes the undeniable increased prospect of chemical weapons in the hands of terrorist groups, as the internal civil war sparks a much wider regional conflict. This could be as a direct result of Syrian attempts to transfer advanced weapon systems to Hezbollah . Israel cannot simply wait until its too late.

>>> Often overlooked but of paramount concern should be the strategic distraction caused by the intensive ,risky and resource demanding attention needed in dealing effectively with the Syrian crisis. We cannot take our eyes off the ball. That nuclear ball is moving toward goal in the hands of the iranian military.

>>> Assad's armed forces are weak, and heavily affected by the attrition and infighting .

Though there are many players on the world stage that can destroy his airforce and air defence within a relatively short timeframe. that will not end the fighting or secure the CW arsenal. When one considers the alternatives which have been raised so far - the :no- fly zone imposed by US, Nato orTurkish forces, the " cordon sanitaire" for refugees along the Turkish and Jordanian borders or the US or Israeli attacks on the cw storage facilites. I beleive that the shortest and best plan currently lies in the hands of Moscow. As a result of wait until its too late strategy ,the wests best winning tactics are no longer available,

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>>> I strongly beleive that the Kremlin has at its disposal the leverages that can convince Assad to eventually leave and to stop fighting immediately . The Russian leaders are clever and fully understand that Assad has and lost legitimacy.It is nothard to asses why they are reluctant to say it out loud at this juncture .If we want to see an end to the near term fighting and do not want to see Jabhat al Nosra or the likes running Syria .likely massacres of Alawites and a no man's land in Syria ,we need Russia. Russia leading and others less accustomed to following , supporting her . In a way ,the mirror image of what happened in Libya, where Russia was asked to support the effort lead by the Europeans and backed by the US..

>>> The Kremlin ,for more than forty years,hs invested a lot of political capital,financial resources and prestige in the Assads dynasty.They still do. Their readiness to keep their commitment to give him SA300 AD and improved radars for the Yakhont land to sea missile systems is troubling . In the past they have trained and equipped the Syrians,provided intelligence gathering capabilities and know the CW unit generals by thier first names .

They perceive the naval outpost in Tartous and Latakia as strategically important and t are making an effort ,against our wishes to protect those assets.We need to be realistic. The challenge is not to educate Russia. they can't seem to educate us/ The real challenge for both of us is to end the massacre while maintaing the the capability to later help remove Assad from power. be achieved Russians should take a leading role. Howver I beleive that a stiff price will need to be paid for their involment ie naval rights etc.

>>> The Russians are an important world power with special relevance to Eastern Europe, the Middle East and the Caucasus. They like everyone else have their own interests and perspectives. This will need to be taken into account. Russia might want to negotiate other issues from MD, to other points of difference with the US or its allies.

>>> To be fairminded, Putin has behaved in a very responsible way when it came to the supply of advanced air defence systems to Iran, and even as of now Syria is still several months from having its SA300 systems operational. Keeping in mind that these are in no way invincible.

>>> It is my judgment that giving Russia the opportunity to lead and hopefully succeed in such an effort can help shape, not just Syria but a new Russian attitude towards cooperation on the world stage.

>>> Secretary Kerry's recent trip to Russia has not yet yielded this result. It was however an important visit that proves the sincerity of the Secretary and the Administration. I believe strongly that so far, Iran is the beneficiary of this crisis, but Russia holds a uniquely powerful position that I sincerely hope it will not squander, and the U.S. waits.

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