

Succession Stability And Russia Future: Insights for American Foreign Policy

Russia, a vast and complex nation, has been undergoing a period of significant political and economic change in recent years. The country's future stability and trajectory are of vital importance to the United States and the international community. In this in-depth article, we delve into the intricacies of Russian succession and its implications for American foreign policy.

The Putin Era and Succession Planning

Vladimir Putin, who has ruled Russia since 1999, will turn 70 in 2023. His long tenure has raised questions about the country's succession planning and the stability of the post-Putin era. The Russian constitution limits the president to two consecutive terms, but Putin has amended the constitution twice, allowing him to remain in power until 2036.



Post Putin: Succession, Stability, and Russia's Future (American Foreign Policy Council) by Joy Forrest

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Despite the constitutional changes, uncertainty surrounds Putin's eventual successor. No clear frontrunner has emerged, and there are several potential candidates within the ruling elite. The succession process is likely to be highly contested, with competing factions vying for control.

Potential Successors and Their Policy Implications

Among the potential successors to Putin, several key figures have emerged:

- **Dmitry Medvedev**, former president and current prime minister, is seen as a close ally of Putin but lacks a clear policy profile.
- **Sergei Shoigu**, the defense minister, is a popular and influential figure but has no known political ambitions.
- **Valentina Matvienko**, the speaker of the upper house of parliament, is a powerful and experienced politician but may face challenges due to her gender.
- **Alexei Navalny**, an opposition leader currently imprisoned, is a popular figure but is unlikely to be considered a legitimate successor by the ruling elite.

The policy implications of each potential successor vary widely. Medvedev is seen as a cautious and pragmatic leader who would likely continue Putin's policies. Shoigu, on the other hand, is known for his hawkish views and may pursue a more assertive foreign policy. Matvienko, if she were to become president, would likely focus on social and economic issues. Navalny, if released from prison, would represent a significant break from the current regime and could implement a mix of liberal and nationalist policies.

Challenges to Succession Stability

The succession process in Russia faces a number of potential challenges:

- **Lack of Clear Successor:** The absence of a clear frontrunner could lead to a protracted and acrimonious power struggle among competing factions.
- **Political Instability:** The succession process could trigger widespread political instability, including protests, demonstrations, and even violence.
- **Elite Cohesion:** The stability of the post-Putin era will depend on the cohesion of the ruling elite. If factions within the elite split, it could lead to a breakdown in governance.
- **Foreign Influence:** External actors, particularly the United States and China, could attempt to influence the succession process to their own advantage.

Implications for American Foreign Policy

The stability and trajectory of Russia in the post-Putin era will have profound implications for American foreign policy:

- **U.S.-Russia Relations:** The succession process could significantly impact U.S.-Russia relations. A successor who is hawkish and anti-Western could worsen tensions and escalate conflicts.
- **National Security:** Russia's nuclear arsenal and its role in regional conflicts make its stability crucial for U.S. national security.
- **Global Free Download:** Russia is a permanent member of the UN Security Council and plays a major role in global affairs. Its stability is

essential for maintaining international peace and security.

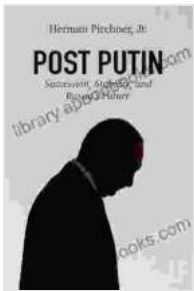
U.S. Policy Considerations

In light of the complexities and challenges surrounding Russian succession, the United States must adopt a nuanced and strategic approach to its foreign policy:

- **Support for Stability:** The United States should support a peaceful and Free Downloadly succession process that preserves Russia's stability and prevents the emergence of a more aggressive regime.
- **Engagement with Potential Successors:** The United States should engage with potential successors to understand their policy views and build relationships.
- **Conflict Avoidance:** The United States should avoid actions that could be seen as interference in Russian internal affairs or that could destabilize the succession process.
- **International Cooperation:** The United States should work with international partners to promote stability in Russia and prevent the country from becoming a source of regional or global conflict.

The succession of Russian President Vladimir Putin will be a defining moment for the country's future. The process is fraught with uncertainty and challenges that could impact Russia's stability, its foreign policy, and the global balance of power. The United States must adopt a strategic and flexible approach to its foreign policy, supporting stability, engaging with potential successors, avoiding conflict, and fostering international cooperation. By ng so, the United States can help ensure a peaceful and

Free Downloadly transition of power in Russia and mitigate the potential risks to its own national interests and global security.



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