

# The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire

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## Russia and the End of the Ottoman Empire the Balkan States after 1878

Not that the traditional ‘historic tasks’ of the Eastern Question had been forgotten or forsaken. Control over the Straits, national statehood for the Balkan Christian peoples, and ascendant political influence throughout the region remained the ultimate goals of Russian policy.<sup>2</sup> But these very long-term, elusive—even utopian—targets had to be stalked with ever greater caution and patience. Broadly speaking, Russia could pursue these ends in three ways: by the use of force, by diplomatic combination with the Powers, or by alliance with the Porte itself. The events of 1877–8 had emphasised once again, and with unparalleled clarity, that the issues involved were inextricably intertwined, of general European concern and incapable of solution simply by Russian pressure against the Porte.