Now that RT is no longer available on television in Philadelphia, I watch more France 24 than before, when I divided my TV-watching between those two and MSNBC. The difference in offerings never ceases to amaze me, but while ‘Putin’s bullhorn’ tended to focus on non-typical Russian subjects and America’s failings, France’s English language channel concentrates heavily on the Middle East and Africa.

Although many people are vaguely aware of China’s growing presence in Africa, without France 24, we wouldn’t know that it now welcomes African students. The Chinese have long been suspected of being allergic to Black people, but this report suggests that the government has made a decision in favor of color blindness - the students interviewed largely deny having encountered racism. Add to this that the One Belt One Road transportation project linking China and Russia to Europe will also have an African spur, and it becomes clear that in the post American era, Russians, Arabs, Orientals and Blacks are determined to work together.

This may seem like a contradiction with respect to President Vladimir Putin’s oft-heard criticism of multiculturalism, directed at Europe’s efforts to integrate Muslims. (Not to mention President Trump’s efforts to ‘whiten’ America, most recently by declaring that Haitians, who were welcomed on a ‘temporary’ basis after the 2010 earthquake, will have to leave by 2019…) President Putin’s position is that different ethnic groups should live in harmony with each other, each within their own borders. Today’s Russia, or rather the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) includes nine of the fifteen former member states of the Soviet Union, most of whose people are Muslims. (For reasons which are not entirely clear, Russia fought two wars to keep Chechnya under its control, and it has been a
While the US is mesmerized by ‘Russiagate’, Vladimir Putin draws to Moscow — or the Black Sea resort of Sochi — one national leader after another, offering Russia’s mediation in Africa and the Middle East.

Most recently he received Bashar al-Assad, as well as the President of Sudan, while the Saudi King (with a 1500 person retinue) was in Moscow in October, Netanyahu having been there in March. Seven rounds of detailed Syrian peace talks involving the opposition have taken place in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, under President Putin’s leadership.

Meanwhile, notwithstanding criticism from readers about a recent article that reflects the current Russophobia, Harpers magazine’s forum on the nuclear clock, which is currently at two minutes to midnight, while evoking a possible nuclear attack by North Korea, informs us that “the Russians have rehearsed the use of nuclear weapons” without mentioning the buildup of NATO troops on its European border to which these preparations respond.

When Americans decry their choice of President, rather than blaming Russia, they should consider themselves lucky that there is at least one adult in the room, and that is Vladimir Putin. However, the Russian could be running a race against time, as he gathers around him the leaders of the majority of the planet.

Deena Stryker is an international expert, author and journalist that has been at the forefront of international politics for over thirty years, exclusively for the online journal “New Eastern Outlook”.