



Russia's double-bluff

The Wagner Group and UN peace operations

Christoph Matschie & Annika S. Hansen

In Europe, the Wagner Group only received greater attention after Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. In truth, the private military company had already appeared in many conflicts, from Syria and Libya to the Central African Republic (CAR), Mali and most recently in the violent power struggle in Sudan.

Wagner is often present in areas where UN peace operations are also deployed. What does the Wagner Group's engagement in conflict areas mean for international peace operations? To what extent does it affect the implementation of their mandates? How does it impact the relationship between host governments and peace operations on the ground? And how do geopolitical tensions influence this dynamic?

Recommendations

- With allies, the German government should confront the Russian government with the Wagner Group's atrocities and bring non-Western peers on board.
- The UN, EU and NATO should continue closely monitoring and reporting on the Wagner Group's activities.
- The propaganda of host governments, the Wagner Group and the Kremlin should be countered with alternative value-based narratives.
- Crimes committed by the Wagner Group should be legally prosecuted.
- The EU should impose further sanctions against elements of the Wagner network.
- Cooperation with African partners to politically and economically curb Wagner's activities should be intensified.
- A binding international legal framework on private military and security companies must be created.

Update

This briefing was finalised before the aborted Wagner coup/mutiny on 24 June. In its aftermath, Wagner's future role in Africa is unclear. Most imminently, it will impact the situation in Mali, where – bolstered by the promise of more Russian military support – the government has asked the United Nations peacekeeping mission MINUSMA to leave. On 30 June, then, the UN Security Council voted to close MINUSMA. For Wagner's future in the wider African theatre, key factors will be

1. How interchangeable and mutually dependent Russian bilateral assistance and Wagner operations are;
2. How dependent Wagner is on the personal leadership of Yevgeny Prigozhin;
3. Whether Wagner in Africa is and will be maintained as a distinct organisation or become part of another security institution;
4. Whether Moscow will try to take more direct control of Wagner's business web and disinformation machinery.

Russia's strategic interest to project power in Africa remains strong and it is highly unlikely that it would wish to give up its footprint. Wagner-type operations will continue to be a tool of choice, under the name of Wagner or another.

Emergence and role of the Wagner Group

The military arm of the Wagner Group was founded in 2014 by Dmitry Utkin, a former lieutenant colonel in the GRU military intelligence service, and was first deployed in Crimea, eastern Ukraine and then Syria. However, the existence of this group was long denied by Russian officials.¹

Wagner was initially composed of former personnel from the private military company Slavic Corps, the GRU, airborne units and various special units of the army and the Ministry of Defence. The Wagner Group is the best known, but by no means the only private military company in Russia.² It not only consists of mercenary troops, but also includes a complex network of companies and organisations active in the fields of po-

litical strategy development and disinformation as well as in gold and diamond mining or timber trading.³



The Wagner group is not just a mercenary force, but encompasses a complex web of companies and organisations.

This network of companies is led by Putin's close confidant Yevgeny Prigozhin. Although Prigozhin has repeatedly criticised the actions of the Russian military leadership, his close ties to Putin strongly suggest that he and the Wagner Group are an instrument of the Kremlin and not an independent entity. In September 2022, Wagner's involvement in the Ukraine war led Prigozhin to admit

his role as head of the group, although he had previously denied its existence. In December 2022, the St. Petersburg-based company “PMC Wagner Centre” was legally registered in Russia.⁴

How does the Wagner Group work?

As indicated above, the Wagner Group has three interconnected pillars.⁵ Best-known is their role as a mercenary force that offers military support to – often weak and autocratic – governments in their fight against insurgents or other armed opponents.

Wagner increasingly links this role with its second mainstay, strategic and political advice to commissioning governments and direct influence on elections, e. g. through biased “election observers.” To this end, the group also conducts propaganda and disinformation campaigns mainly through social media, working closely with the troll farm Internet Research Agency (IRA). Russia has been using the IRA to attack political opponents since at least 2013.⁶ At the same time, Wagner also claims to have brokered a peace deal between the CAR government and rebels in 2019.⁷

The Wagner Group is financed through its third pillar, namely its network of companies primarily in the mining sector. Concessions that give Wagner access to natural resources such as gold and diamonds are often the payment for military support provided and promised. This type of payment has also been made in the past to similar mercenary forces in Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) or Liberia.⁸ It should also be noted that the granting of licences to mine gold, diamonds or other raw materials is

often at the expense of local populations and businesses.

As an instrument of the Kremlin, the Wagner group works in the interests of the Russian state, which uses the mercenary force to expand its influence. The distinction between Wagner mercenaries and official bilateral support from Russia becomes blurred, for example, when the group appears in CAR at the same time as Russian military trainers.⁹ In addition to massive logistical support from the Russian army, Moscow delivers arms into areas where Wagner is operating. Finally, propaganda and disinformation orchestrated by the Wagner Group closely mirror Russian foreign policy interests.

The Wagner Group's operations in Africa

Wagner's activities on the African continent are part of a long history of mercenaries that began in 1960 in what is now the DR Congo.¹⁰ In the 1990s, the notorious South African mercenary force Executive Outcomes had a role in civil wars in Sierra Leone and Angola similar to the one Wagner plays in Mali or CAR today. Some even claim that Executive Outcomes is the primary role model for the Wagner Group.¹¹ The fact that mercenaries often operate where UN blue helmets are also present is especially true in Africa, where 80 per cent of the world's UN peacekeeping personnel are deployed.

A common trait among mercenary troops over the years has been their appalling record of human rights abuses. In March 2022, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights warned of mercenaries' destabilising

influence on conflict dynamics as well as the high risk of attacks on civilians.¹²



Wagner calibrates its instruments on a case-by-case basis

Wagner calibrates its instruments differently from case to case, pursuing its most comprehensive approach that combines political, military and economic activities in Sudan and CAR.¹³ Wagner first arrived in Sudan in 2017 with 500 mercenaries to support the then ruler Omar al-Bashir and fight local insurgencies. In return, the group received licences for gold mines and Russia was promised a naval base in Port Sudan on the Red Sea. At the same time, the UN Mission UNAMID was operating in the Sudanese province of Darfur (2007-2020). The following year, 2018, what observers described as the Wagner Group's "state capture" began in CAR, where the UN mission MINUSCA has been on the ground since 2014. Here, too, they were remunerated with licences to mine gold and diamonds.¹⁴

In Mozambique in autumn 2019, the Wagner Group focused on purely military assistance. There, the mercenaries were tasked with stopping the advance of the local extremist group Ansar Al-Sunna Wa Jamma in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, but failed to do so.¹⁵ In Libya, where the UN mission UNSMIL has been trying to find political solutions since 2011, Wagner also provided mainly military support to General Haftar, and his control of the oil fields, from September 2019. The Libyan case deviates from the usual set-up in that Wagner is not backing the government, but its challenger Haftar. Here, its deployment was preceded

by a targeted information campaign in favour of Haftar.¹⁶

In Mali, where the UN mission MINUSMA has been deployed since 2013, the military government asked Russia for support after seizing power in August 2020 and a further coup in 2021, officially to train Malian security forces and ensure the protection of the government. Wagner has been in Mali since the end of 2021.

The Wagner Group could also be playing a role in the current power struggle in Sudan. Some reports suggest that one of the conflict parties, General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (also called Hemeti), has been working with the group for a while and that his Rapid Support Forces have been militarily upgraded as a result.¹⁷ While Prigozhin vehemently denied a Wagner presence in Sudan in April 2023,¹⁸ there are obvious business interests, such as gold being smuggled from Sudan to Russia (to evade sanctions), that make ongoing cooperation between the Wagner group and Hemeti likely.¹⁹

The Wagner Group as an instrument of the Kremlin

Russia has significantly increased its influence on conflicts in Africa in recent years.²⁰ Building on the legacy of old Soviet ties, Russia's offer is quite appealing to many African governments. Between 2015 and 2019 alone, Moscow signed 19 military cooperation agreements with African governments. At present, Moscow no longer appears as insistent on delineating official Russian security actors from the Wagner Group as an independent, private company, as was still the common narrative in Libya and initially in Mali.²¹

Today, the Russian government openly flanks Wagner's activities with parallel state visits or arms deliveries. In that way, Russia creates further dependencies in military cooperation and arms exports beyond the activities of the mercenaries. The numbers speak for themselves: For sub-Saharan Africa, Russia was by far the most important arms supplier in the period 2016-2020, according to the Stockholm Peace Research Institute SIPRI.²² In Sudan, for example, 80% of arms deliveries since 2003 have come from Russia.²³

Finally, Moscow has massively expanded its network of propaganda and disinformation in Africa, using Russia Today (RT) and social media in particular.²⁴ Social media campaigns are especially difficult to distinguish from similar initiatives by the Wagner Group.

What then do host governments gain from bringing the Wagner Group on board? They receive maximally violent, and hence in their eyes 'valuable', support in the fight against armed opponents, be they terrorists or rebel

The Wagner Group in Mali

Mercenaries of the Wagner Group were first sighted in Mali in November 2021. Shortly afterwards, the Malian military government escalated the conflict with Paris to the point of expelling the French ambassador. In the wake of these disputes, France decided to completely withdraw its Barkhane counter-terrorism mission and the European mission Takuba, also led by France. In some locations, the Wagner Group even moved into abandoned camps only days after the withdrawal of French units. At present, observers estimate that up to 2,000 Russian mercenaries are carrying out operations together with the Malian military.²⁵

There are serious indications that Russian actors had already been preparing the political upheaval in Mali from around 2017 onwards with anti-French and pro-Russian media campaigns, especially on social networks.²⁶ To this day, the junta in Bamako repeatedly uses anti-French sentiment to stabilise its own power and justify its close military cooperation with Moscow. The intensive propaganda is clearly bearing fruit. According to a survey conducted by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in March 2023, more than 80% of respondents believed that Mali's general situation has improved. In the year before the Wagner Group arrived, this was only around 30%. It is not entirely clear, however, what role the military governments, increasing suppression of free speech plays in the survey responses.²⁷

In January 2023, Mali received a further eight fighter jets and two combat helicopters from Russia, in addition to the arms deliveries of the previous year.²⁸ This followed a visit by Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov to Bamako in early February, during which he accused the West of neo-colonial behaviour and highlighted Russia's support in Mali's fight against terrorism.²⁹ This demonstrates just how the Russian state and the Wagner Group are working together as part of Moscow's foreign policy strategy to pull Mali further into Russia's sphere of influence. Russian support, which includes Moscow's voting behaviour in the UN Security Council, also encouraged the military government in Bamako to hamper the UN mission MINUSMA's work and restrict its freedom of movement. The non-approval of overflight rights and deployment of reconnaissance drones as well as the restriction of human rights monitoring are cases in point.

groups or a mixture of both. The Malian government even cites what it sees as the failure of MINUSMA to justify the need for alternative support.³⁰ In CAR, observers describe the group as the government's "survival guarantee."³¹ Better still, governments do not have to spend budgetary funds to pay for the support upfront, but can defer payment to concessions and future revenues. Another bonus that has manifested itself with the withdrawal of French troops from Mali and CAR is that host governments can now claim to have pushed back the influence and presence of unloved former colonial powers. At the same time, governments that cooperate with the Wagner Group acquire the political backing of Russia, for example in the UN Security Council. Other governments in the Sahel region are following these developments very closely.³²

Impact on peace operations

For peace operations, such as MINUSMA, the presence of Wagner mercenaries poses a number of immediate risks.³³

Protection of civilians

Firstly, the brutality of the Wagner Group creates a central dilemma for UN peace operations in the exercise of their mandate to protect civilians. Operations involving Wagner have resulted in significant civilian casualties. The massacre in the Malian town of Moura in March 2022 with an estimated 300 civilian deaths is the best-known example. In Mali and CAR, Wagner is the actor that perpetrates the most political violence directed against civilians, ahead of state actors and insurgent groups in both coun-

tries.³⁴ This not only prevents UN missions from fulfilling their protection mandates, for which they have limited capabilities anyway, but also carries significant risk of a direct confrontation.³⁵

Attempts to cooperate with Wagner can in turn negatively affect the relationship between a UN mission and the local population. In CAR, the UN Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Private Military and Security Companies warned that cooperation between MINUSCA and "Russian military advisors" – specifically, coordination with advisors or medical evacuation of injured advisors to MINUSCA bases – risked significant reputational damage to the UN mission and could undermine its credibility.³⁶

Implementation of mandates

Second, the close cooperation between the Wagner Group and its host governments – in combination with Russian foreign policy – constrains mandate implementation in additional ways. It limits the ability to investigate human rights violations and thus undermines accountability for abuses. A motion in the UN Security Council to hold an independent investigation into the events in Moura to shed light on the massacre was rejected by Russia.³⁷ In early February 2023, MINUSMA's long-time human rights director, Guillaume Ngefa-Atondoko Andali, was even expelled from the country by the military government in Bamako for inviting a critical voice from Malian civil society to a Security Council briefing. In CAR, the UN mission is committed to retaining its agency by promoting transparency and, together with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, publishing reports on human rights

violations by Wagner and the Central African government's security forces.³⁸



Operations involving the Wagner Group have resulted in significant civilian casualties.

Other mandate tasks, such as developing or reforming the security sector, are also negatively affected and can become downright meaningless when – as is the case in CAR – the Wagner Group undeniably controls the national security apparatus.³⁹ Multidimensional peace operations are only able to make progress in implementing normative mandated tasks, such as the protection of human rights and the strengthening of democratic and rule-of-law structures, if governments concerned provide a minimum of cooperation. Accordingly, the success of peace operations becomes increasingly elusive if host governments commission the support of the Wagner Group and Russia's associated backing in the Security Council. Ultimately, it may become necessary to adjust mandates to what is realistically possible in these circumstances and to justify this with a clear reference to the cooperation between governments and Wagner.⁴⁰



The security of UN personnel is particularly threatened where operations are conducted to protect civilians.

Security of UN staff

Thirdly, the security of UN personnel is threatened by the risk of clashes, especially where the UN is conducting operations to protect civilians. In Mali, the security risk for the mission grew further when the govern-

ment in Bamako both restricted the mission's freedom of movement and banned MINUSMA reconnaissance flights. It appears that the reason was to protect Wagner's activities from UN scrutiny. In CAR, Wagner itself blocked MINUSCA patrols and restricted the UN mission's movements.

UN peace operations can encourage the exchange of information with Wagner to avoid unwanted clashes. But they need to hold host governments, which have primary responsibility for the safety of UN personnel, accountable for exercising their oversight responsibilities vis-à-vis Wagner.⁴¹

Credibility of other UN instruments

A fourth political challenge is that Wagner – and Russia – make a mockery of instruments such as the UN sanctions regime by freely violating sanctions adopted by the UN Security Council, i.e. with Russian approval. For example, Wagner supplied weapons and military equipment to South Sudan and Libya in contravention of international sanctions and took part in hostilities itself. In this way, Wagner constitutes an effective instrument through which the Kremlin can act covertly.

Troop contributors

The fifth and perhaps most serious risk for crisis areas such as Mali or the CAR is that the above-mentioned challenges in sum lead to the perception of participation in UN missions as politically unpalatable, which in turn leads to troop-contributing countries withdrawing their military contingents.⁴² The partly implemented, partly planned exit of mainly Western troop contributors is resulting in a "withdrawal cascade"⁴³ for MINUSMA, leaving considerable gaps in capabilities and personnel.

Outlook

The interplay between the Wagner Group and the Russian government results in considerably more difficult conditions for UN peace operations. Russia supports and provides cover for host governments in the UN Security Council. Some observers suspect that Russia is looking to expand the presence of the Wagner Group to other African countries – but also, for example, to Haiti.⁴⁴ In many ways, the unfolding course of the war in Ukraine is an important factor in this. Wagner's role on multiple fronts – in Ukraine and in Africa – risks overstressing the group's available resources. At the same time, the Russian war of aggression has increased the strategic importance of Russia's African engagement. Last but not least, Moscow needs to strengthen its relationship with African governments in order to secure their support in debates, such as in the UN context. Due to the sanctions imposed on Russia, the inflow of revenues, especially those generated by the Wagner Group concessions, has also become more important.⁴⁵

The sanctions against Wagner by the EU since 2021 and its classification as a transnational criminal organisation by the US government have so far not had the desired effect of restricting the group's range of activities. At the same time, the comprehensive economic sanctions against Russia in connection with its war of aggression against Ukraine have rendered Wagner even more important as an instrument of evading sanctions.⁴⁶

A look back at previous cases shows that mercenaries and host governments often end up at odds with each other in the long

run. In part, mercenaries do not bring about long-term solutions – indeed, they benefit from continued instability; in part, they generate considerable resentment in national security forces, whose own capacities tend to be weakened and who are marginalised by privileged foreigners who are also much better paid.⁴⁷



Waiting it out is not an option – the Wagner group is an acute threat to international security.

Still, it is not a reasonable option to sit back and wait for Wagner's relations with host governments to sour. The activities of Prigozhin's mercenary force and his corporate network are an acute threat to international security. The influence of UN peace operations themselves on this dynamic is limited. It is political measures far away from the areas of operation that can impact the future presence and role of the Wagner Group.⁴⁸

The German government, together with its allies, should therefore repeatedly confront the Russian government with and hold it accountable for the human rights violations, war crimes, evasion of sanctions and threats to UN peace operations committed by the Wagner Group in Africa. The fact that Wagner is a direct instrument of the Kremlin and that Moscow therefore bears responsibility must be made clear by EU member states, especially in UN Security Council debates on peace operations. Furthermore, the leverage of these efforts can be increased if more non-Western troop contributors, whose personnel are equally in the firing line in conflict areas where Wagner is present, can be motivated to join them.⁴⁹

In addition to the publication of reports by UN missions and the High Commissioner for Human Rights, close monitoring of the Wagner Group's activities by the EU and NATO is also needed. The resulting findings must be made available to a broad public. In particular, they should be used for active media work in the countries of operation. The propaganda of host governments, the Wagner Group and the Kremlin must be countered with alternative value-based narratives.

Wherever possible, legal prosecution of crimes committed by the Wagner Group should be pursued. For this purpose, it is also necessary to collect data and track actions of the group as precisely as possible.

Further EU sanctions should be initiated in order to counter illegal activities of companies and important protagonists of the Wagner network more effectively. In doing so, the G7 should, as far as possible, proceed jointly when designing concrete sanction instruments.

In order to limit the Wagner Group's scope for action, cooperation with African partner governments, regional groupings such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) should also be intensified. Although the AU Convention for the Elimination of Mercenarism adopted in 1977 was hardly applied, there now seems to be some political will in the AU to raise the issue again.⁵⁰ On the one hand, it will be important to discourage governments with a discernible inclination to cooperate with Wagner from taking this step by making it clear that mercenaries do not bring about a sustainable strengthening of state security structures. On the other hand, attempts should be made to win over

states that serve as transit countries for Wagner's economic activities to enforce sanctions.



The existing voluntary regulatory framework is not sufficient to effectively control the use of PMSCs.

Through the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Private Military and Security Companies of the UN Human Rights Council, EU member states should contribute to creating binding international rules on the use of private military and security companies (PMSCs). Such an agreement should also include monitoring instruments and sanctions. The existing voluntary regulatory framework of the Montreux Document (2008) and the International Code of Conduct (2010) is not sufficient to effectively control the use of PMSCs.

Finally, it is crucial to act now. Any wait-and-see approach surrenders the playing field to the Kremlin and the Wagner Group and undermines the efforts of UN peace operations to stabilise conflict areas and find sustainable political solutions.

- [1] Federica Saini Fasanotti (2022) Russia's Wagner Group in Africa: Influence, commercial concessions, rights violations, and counterinsurgency failure, Brookings, 08 February 2022 [\[Link\]](#).
- [2] Andreas Heinemann-Grüder (2022) Russia's State-Sponsored Killers: The Wagner Group, Center for Security Studies, ETH Zürich, 22 December 2022 [\[Link\]](#).
- [3] Julia Stanyard, Thierry Vircoulon and Julian Rademeyer (2023) The Grey Zone Russia's military mercenary and criminal engagement in Africa, Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, February 2023 [\[Link\]](#), p. 8.
- [4] Stanyard, Vircoulon and Rademeyer (2023), p. 24f.
- [5] Stanyard, Vircoulon and Rademeyer (2023), p. 8.
- [6] Fasanotti (2022); "Wagner chief admits to founding Russian troll farm sanctioned for meddling in US elections", CNN, 14 February 2023 [\[Link\]](#).
- [7] Stanyard, Vircoulon and Rademeyer (2023), p. 50.
- [8] Alan Doss (2022) Africa and the Soldiers of Misfortune, African Arguments, 10 May 2022 [\[Link\]](#).
- [9] Dirk Druet (2023) Wagner Group Poses Fundamental Challenges for the Protection of Civilians by UN Peacekeeping Operations, International Peace Institute, 20 March 2023, [\[Link\]](#).
- [10] Doss (2022).
- [11] International Crisis Group (2023) Russia's Wagner in Africa, ICG Podcast The Horn, 23 March 2023 [\[Link\]](#).
- [12] OHCHR (2022) Statement by the UN Working Group on the use of mercenaries warns about the dangers of the growing use of mercenaries around the globe, UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 04 March 2022 [\[Link\]](#).
- [13] GITOC (2022) Observatory of Illicit Economies in West Africa, The number of civilian casualties is growing in West Africa as conflict areas increasingly overlap with illicit economies, Risk Bulletin – Issue 5, Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, October 2022 [\[Link\]](#).
- [14] Stanyard, Vircoulon and Rademeyer (2023), p. 12.
- [15] Fasanotti (2022).
- [16] Wolfram Lacher (2020) Drones, Deniability, and Disinformation: Warfare in Libya and the New International Disorder, Texas National Security Review, 03 March 2020 [\[Link\]](#).
- [17] "Bis einer der Generäle tot ist," Der Spiegel+, 16 April 2023 [\[Link\]](#); Bill Weinberg (2023) Russian 'fingerprints' on Sudan coup attempt, Countervortex, 19 April 2023 [\[Link\]](#); "Exclusive: Evidence emerges of Russia's Wagner arming militia leader battling Sudan's army," CNN, 21 April 2023 [\[Link\]](#).
- [18] BBC Monitoring, 19 April 2023.
- [19] "Ich kann keine konkrete Rolle Russlands erkennen," Der Spiegel, 19 April 2023 [\[Link\]](#); "Russian mercenaries in Sudan: What is the Wagner Group's role?" Al-Jazeera, 17 April 2023 [\[Link\]](#).
- [20] Andreás Rácz (2020) Afrikanisches Comeback, Internationale Politik. [\[Link\]](#).
- [21] Fasanotti (2022).
- [22] Pieter D. Wezeman, Alexandra Kuimova and Siemon T. Wezeman (2021) Trends in international arms transfers, 2020, SIPRI Fact Sheet [\[Link\]](#).
- [23] Raphael Parens (2022) The Wagner Group's Playbook in Africa: Mali, Foreign Policy Research Institute, 18 March 2022 [\[Link\]](#).
- [24] "Desinformation an allen Fronten: "Krieg besteht nicht nur aus Bomben und Panzern", Deutsche Welle Akademie [\[Link\]](#).
- [25] "88 Dschihadisten bei Angriff auf russische Basis ,neutralisiert', Euronews + dpa, 23 April 2023 [\[Link\]](#); Arthur Boutellis (2023) Will it be MINUS-MA à la carte or Geopolitical Endgame in Mali? IPI Global Observatory, 30 March 2023 [\[Link\]](#).
- [26] Peter Apps (2023) With arms and Facebook, Russia is entrenched in Mali, The Arab Weekly, 23 April 2022 [\[Link\]](#).
- [27] Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (2023) Mali Mètre XIV, Deutsche Vorabfassung, FES, April 2023, p. 2 [\[Link\]](#).
- [28] "Mali gets more warplanes, helicopters from Russia," Africa News, 20 January 2023 [\[Link\]](#).
- [29] Boutellis (2023).
- [30] Druet (2023).
- [31] Stanyard, Vircoulon and Rademeyer (2023), p. 12.
- [32] Parens (2022).
- [33] Druet (2023).
- [34] ACLED (2022) Wagner Group Operations in Africa: Civilian Targeting Trends in the Central African Republic and Mali, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, 30 August 2022 [\[Link\]](#).
- [35] Druet (2023).
- [36] "RCA : des experts inquiets de l'utilisation par le gouvernement de « formateurs russes » et de contacts étroits avec les Casques bleus," UN News, 31 March 2021 [\[Link\]](#).
- [37] "Mali: Russia blocks UN security council request for investigation into Moura massacre," Africa News, 10 April 2022 [\[Link\]](#); International Crisis Group (2022) MINUSMA at a crossroads, ICG, 01 December 2022 [\[Link\]](#).
- [38] Druet (2023).
- [39] Stanyard, Vircoulon and Rademeyer (2023).
- [40] Catrina Doxsee and Jared Thompson (2022) Massacres, Executions, and Falsified Graves: The Wagner Group's Mounting Humanitarian Cost in Mali, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 11 May 2022 [\[Link\]](#).

[41] Druet (2023).
 [42] Druet (2023).
 [43] Boutellis (2023).
 [44] "EU sanctions Russian Wagner Group for African operations," Deutsche Welle, 26 February 2023 [Link].
 [45] Stanyard, Vircoulon and Rademeyer (2023).

[46] Stanyard, Vircoulon and Rademeyer (2023), p. 47.
 [47] Doss (2022).
 [48] Druet (2023).
 [49] Druet (2023).
 [50] Doss (2022).

Glossary

AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
GRU	Główny Urząd Wywiadowczy (Head Office for Reconnaissance)
G7	Group of Seven
IRA	Internet Research Agency
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
PMSC	Private Military and Security Companies
RT	Russia Today

SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	United Nations-African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya
US	United States

Photo

Page 1: ©Alexander Jawfox, Unsplash

The authors

Annika S. Hansen is head of the Analysis Team.
 Christoph Matschie is a former member of the Bundestag and guest researcher at ZIF.

Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF)
 Ludwigkirchplatz 3 – 4 | 10719 Berlin | Germany
 research@zif-berlin.org
 @ZIF_Berlin
 www.zif-berlin.org



Supported by:



Federal Foreign Office