

Russia Delivers Weapons to C. African Republic – Envoy

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Vadim Savitsky / Russian Defense Ministry / TASS

Russia has delivered its latest weapons batch to the mineral-rich and violence-racked Central African Republic, Moscow's ambassador in Bangui [told](#) state media Monday.

The shipment of 5,000 pieces of small arms is the third delivery in as many years. Moscow donated hundreds of weapons in 2019 and airlifted 10 BRDM-2 armored personnel vehicles as a gift last year.

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“Russia has supplied the CAR with a third batch of weapons free of charge,” the state-run RIA Novosti news agency quoted Russia’s Ambassador in the CAR Vladimir Titorenko as saying.

“These are assault rifles, machine guns, sniper rifles, pistols, RPGs, hand grenades and

ammunition,” Titorenko said.

RIA Novosti’s partner news agency Sputnik [reported](#) that the handover ceremony took place at the Bangui airport and was attended by the CAR’s president and defense minister.

Russia has since 2018 openly supported President Faustin Archange Touadera’s regime, which according to AFP controls one-third of the country.

Though the UN Security Council cleared Russia to send arms to the CAR in 2017, Titorenko said small arms shipments do not require clearance but prior notification.

Russian paramilitaries from the shadowy private military contractor Wagner Group operate in the CAR under a bilateral defense accord with an official status to train its army.

Hundreds of other Russian paramilitaries joined the Wagner Group last December, playing a key role in putting down a rebel advance on Bangui ahead of presidential elections.

UN experts sounded the alarm about allegations of Russian forces committing major rights violations, including extrajudicial executions, torture and sexual violence in the CAR between December-April. Touadera’s spokesman earlier this month promised to investigate the claims.

Russia has stepped up its military support, nuclear energy and other services in exchange for mining rights in Africa amid President Vladimir Putin’s push to revive Soviet-era influence on the continent.

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