The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

# Russia Says Wagner's Future in Africa Depends on 'Countries Concerned'

June 30, 2023



Wagner Group mercenaries. **Erik Romanenko / TASS**

Moscow said Friday that the Wagner Group would continue to work in African countries if their governments chose to maintain contracts with the private military group.

"The future of the agreements between African countries and the Wagner private military company is above all up to the governments of the countries concerned," Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov told reporters during a briefing Friday.

His comments come as the Kremlin moves to dissolve Wagner by handing its military hardware to the regular army and offering exile to mercenaries who took part in Yevgeny Prigozhin's failed mutiny last weekend.

**Related article**: Kremlin Denies State Role in Wagner's Africa Businesses

The private military outfit was for years seen as an armed extension of Moscow's influence in

Africa, but its overseas operations have been called into question by its Prigozhin’s revolt.

Wagner and Prigoshin himself had already come under Western sanctions over their destabilizing role in several African countries.

The UN human rights body last month reported that foreign forces — identified by the United States as Wagner — were involved in a massacre of at least 500 people in the central Malian town of Moura in March 2022.

Lavrov said that while some Russian military trainers had been deployed to the Central African Republic at the request of local authorities, Wagner's presence in the region was beyond Moscow's jurisdiction.

"As for Wagner, which also worked there and in several other African countries, this agreement was concluded directly between the respective governments and Wagner," he added.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/06/30/russia-says-wagners-future-in-africa-depends-on-countries-concerned-a81706