

Wagner Fighters Will ‘Train’ Belarus Army, Minsk Says

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Tents for Wagner fighters in Belarus. **Natalya Talanova / TASS**

Russia's Wagner mercenaries will train the army of neighboring Belarus where they were exiled following a failed mutiny, the Belarusian Defense Ministry [said](#) Tuesday.

"They'll tell us about weapons: which ones worked well, which ones did not," Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko said in a statement issued by his ministry.

He said Wagner would also share its expertise on "tactics, armaments, how to attack, how to defend."

"This is invaluable," said Lukashenko, who mediated a deal between Wagner chief Yevgeny Prigozhin and Russian President Vladimir Putin to end the political crisis caused by Wagner's mutiny last month.

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The statement follows his [claims](#) last week that no Wagner fighters have set up in Belarus despite Russian President Vladimir Putin's offer to do so.

Speaking with reporters Thursday, Lukashenko said Wagner troops would be required to sign contracts with the Belarusian government and dismissed concerns about a possible Wagner mutiny in Belarus.

Putin met Prigozhin and dozens of Wagner commanders at the Kremlin five days after the aborted revolt on June 29, where he secured assurances of the mercenaries' loyalty and offered them "employment and combat options," the Kremlin revealed Monday.

The Belarusian military's announcement Tuesday did not say when Wagner fighters are expected to arrive in Belarus.

Multiple unconfirmed reports after the short-lived rebellion suggested that construction is underway in central Belarus for a camp that was said to be intended for thousands of Wagner fighters. Those reports prompted neighboring Ukraine and Poland to strengthen defenses on their respective borders with Belarus.

Belarus is one of Russia's closest allies in the 16-month invasion of Ukraine and served as a staging ground early in the conflict.

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