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Ex-Prigozhin Aide to Oversee Volunteer Fighters in Ukraine – Kremlin

By AFP

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Vladimir Putin meets with Yunus-Bek Yevkurov and Andrei Troshev. **kremlin.ru**

Russian President Vladimir Putin has tasked a former aide of late Wagner chief Yevgeny Prigozhin to oversee volunteer fighter units in Ukraine, according to a Kremlin statement on Friday.

"At the last meeting, we talked about you overseeing the formation of volunteer units that can carry out various tasks, first and foremost, of course, in the zone of the special military operation," Putin was quoted as saying to Wagner commander Andrei Troshev, who is known by his nom de guerre "Sedoi" ("Gray-haired").

The meeting, also attended by Deputy Defense Minister Yunus-Bek Yevkurov, underlined the integration of fighters from the mercenary group into Russia's regular military in the wake of Prigozhin's aborted mutiny in June.

Troshev, a retired colonel, comes from Putin's hometown of St. Petersburg and is a decorated veteran of Kremlin military campaigns in Afghanistan, Chechnya and Syria.

He was one of the leaders of the Wagner Group in Syria, for which the EU put him on its sanctions list in December 2021.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov later on Friday told journalists that Troshev now "works in the Defense Ministry."

In June, Prigzohin openly challenged Russia's military high command by leading a short-lived mutiny with his fighters after Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu had ordered “volunteer detachments” to sign contracts with the military.

Prigozhin called off the rebellion after apparently striking a deal with the Kremlin through the mediation of Belarus, but he faced no criminal prosecution.

The private military chief died with nine other people when a plane flying from Moscow to Saint Petersburg crashed on Aug. 23.

Updated with Peskov's remarks.

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