

Wagner Resumes Africa Recruitment After Prigozhin's Death – Report

April 04, 2024



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Russia's Wagner mercenary group is once again recruiting fighters for deployment in Africa, months after the death of its leader Yevgeny Prigozhin, the investigative news outlet [Vyorstka](#) and research group Nordsint [reported](#) in a joint investigation published on Thursday.

Wagner [disbanded](#) late last year and its fighters were transferred to units under the control of the Russian armed forces after Prigozhin launched a failed mutiny against Russia's military leadership. In August, the mercenary chief and his close associates were killed in a plane crash that is widely believed to have been an assassination plot orchestrated by the Kremlin.

According to Vyorstka and Nordsint's investigative report, anonymous Russian Defense Ministry sources say "several thousand" Russian soldiers have been transferred from Ukraine to Africa — both as mercenaries and regular soldiers — since mid-February. They were reportedly tasked with training local military personnel and other mercenaries.

Related article: [2023: The Rise and Fall of Wagner](#)

At the same time, Wagner has [posted](#) at least 18 recruitment ads on its Telegram channel over the past month, with a message that reads: “Wagner has a lot of work to do in Africa!”

The investigative report identifies Mali as the key destination for Wagner’s new recruits.

Russian President Vladimir Putin [spoke](#) last week with the head of the Malian junta, colonel Assimi Goita, with the two leaders agreeing to step up cooperation in energy, agricultural and mining projects, as well as in counterterrorism.

Wagner was for years seen as an armed extension of Moscow’s influence in Africa, but the future of its overseas operations had been called into question in the tumultuous months after Prigozhin’s revolt.

Vyorstka reported that it had contacted a Wagner recruiter, who was quoted as saying: “Ideally, to get everything done within two weeks, we plan to send the next group [of Wagner recruits] in mid-April.”

The joint investigation revealed that Wagner is currently offering six-month contracts with a starting salary of 240,000 rubles (\$2,600) per month, as well as life insurance for men aged 22-50. Those terms are similar to the ones promised to Wagner mercenaries who had been fighting in Ukraine.

Shortly before his death last year, Prigozhin said his military outfit was continuing its “activities” in Africa and Belarus, where the mercenaries were sent after their short-lived rebellion.

“PMC Wagner... makes Russia even greater on all continents, and Africa more free,” the late mercenary leader said at the time. “We’re recruiting real heroes and continue to carry out the tasks that have been set and that we promised to deal with.”

Original url:

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