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Nigeria Warns Citizens After Russian Army Recruitment Scams

By AFP

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Dmitry Belitsky / Moskva News Agency

Nigeria has warned its citizens against being recruited into armed conflicts abroad after reports surfaced that some Nigerians, as well as citizens of other African countries, were duped into fighting for Russia in Ukraine.

The Nigerian foreign ministry, in a statement Sunday, expressed its grave concern over the "rising and alarming cases of Nigerian citizens being illegally recruited to participate in foreign armed conflicts," without naming Russia.

A report published last week by the investigative collective All Eyes on Wagner said that at least 36 Nigerians had been recruited by the Russian army to fight in Ukraine, five of whom were killed in combat.

"Several Nigerians who have fallen victim to such unfortunate situations were deployed to

combat zones after being misled and coerced into signing military service contracts," the ministry statement said.

Last week, an AFP investigation gathered accounts from several Kenyans who fought in Ukraine after being promised well-paid jobs in Russia by a local agency.

They travelled to Russia and were forced to sign contracts in Cyrillic that they could not understand before being deployed to the front.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said last week that he had discussed the return of South Africans lured into fighting for Russia in Ukraine with his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin

Testimonies have also emerged in Uganda, a Russian ally that has so far avoided criticizing Moscow.

Ukraine said in November it had identified at least 1,436 people from 36 African countries fighting on behalf of Russia.

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