



**The Wagner Group's Blueprint for State Capture  
in the Central African Republic**



# Architects of Terror

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The Wagner Group's Blueprint for State Capture in the Central African Republic

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THE SENTRY

## Table of Contents

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|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <u>Executive Summary</u>   | <u>3</u>  |
| <u>Wagner Arrives in CAR</u>   | <u>5</u>  |
| <u>Laying the Foundation for Terror</u>  | <u>7</u>  |
| <u>Terror as a Weapon of War</u>   | <u>16</u> |
| <u>Commanders in Chief</u>   | <u>20</u> |
| <u>Wagner's Mine Control</u>   | <u>26</u> |
| <u>Perfecting the Blueprint</u>  | <u>32</u> |
| <u>Recommendations</u>   | <u>33</u> |
| <u>Annex 1: Who's Who? Mapping the Central African Armed Units<br/>Potentially Linked to Mass Atrocities</u> | <u>36</u> |
| <u>Annex 2: Named Wagner-Linked Individuals and Entities</u>   | <u>42</u> |
| <u>Endnotes</u>  | <u>43</u> |

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## Executive Summary

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When the paramilitary organization the Wagner Group—Vladimir Putin’s “private army”—first set foot in the Central African Republic (CAR) five years ago,<sup>1</sup> the Russian Federation was reestablishing diplomatic relations with CAR after a 40-year absence.<sup>2</sup> The country had been ravaged by 20 years of politico-military crises and cycles of deadly armed conflicts that the United Nations and Western countries were failing to adequately address.<sup>3, 4</sup> With no solution in sight, Russia offered Central African President Faustin-Archange Touadéra an alternative in the form of diplomatic support and military and political assistance via Wagner.<sup>5, 6, 7</sup> What resulted was a campaign of terror.

While various armed groups have continued to commit egregious human rights violations against civilians, The Sentry’s investigation found that, under the cover of a counteroffensive against anti-Touadéra armed groups, Wagner, Touadéra, and his inner circle have perpetrated widespread, systematic, and well-planned campaigns of mass killing, torture, and rape throughout the country. Executed by Central African armed forces and Wagner fighters backed by militiamen, these campaigns of terror have served as psychological warfare to force anti-Touadéra militiamen and their allies to accept defeat and the broader population to accept the authority of Wagner and of Russia’s ally, Touadéra.<sup>8</sup>

In order to “annihilate” their enemies, Wagner, Touadéra, and his inner circle raised a parallel army that could be controlled and privatized for their own interests.<sup>9</sup> In the past two years, Wagner has increased the training and outfitting of approximately a dozen military units—most of which were created after January 2021, with many of the newly incorporated soldiers being members of Touadéra’s ethnic community—and of militiamen who have been deployed as proxies in military operations. While Touadéra’s inner circle retains control of operations within the capital Bangui, Wagner has managed to establish military control of operations outside Bangui, for which their motto is “leave no trace”—in other words, kill everyone, including women and children.

In the midst of this, Wagner has shown intense interest in controlling Central African minerals, particularly gold and diamonds, targeting mining sites and using violent military campaigns to drive civilians away from mining areas.<sup>10, 11</sup> Wagner-affiliated mining companies—primarily Lobaye Invest, Midas Ressources, and Diamville—have been granted mining licenses and export authorizations, and Wagner has been using its transnational networks in CAR, Sudan, Cameroon, Madagascar, and Russia to help set up industrial-scale gold production, thereby escaping national and international scrutiny.<sup>12, 13, 14, 15</sup>

The situation in CAR today is more concerning than ever. A recent study found that 5.6% of CAR’s population died in 2022, which is “more than twice as high as estimates for any other country in the world.”<sup>16</sup> The authors of the study “raised the alarm over a humanitarian crisis exacerbated by Wagner’s activities,” concluding that “the efforts of the Wagner mercenaries at least contributed to increased difficulties of survival over the past two years.”<sup>17, 18</sup>

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In CAR, Wagner has perfected a blueprint for state capture, supporting a criminalized state hijacked by the Central African president and his inner circle, amassing military power, securing access to and plundering precious minerals, and subduing the population with terror. As Wagner continues to expand its reach into ever more countries—with Burkina Faso being the most recent example, and Chad being the next target in central Africa—it is likely that the paramilitary group will continue to deploy strategies that have seen success.<sup>19</sup> The use of propaganda and terror as psychological warfare has been observed in several African countries where the group has established its presence, particularly in CAR and Mali.<sup>20</sup> In these two countries, Wagner’s modus operandi has aimed to expand Russian influence, to the detriment of Western interests; Wagner’s hard and soft power—backed with Russian political and logistical support—has thus resulted in a diplomatic rupture with Western countries.<sup>21</sup> In other countries, such as Libya and Sudan, Wagner has infiltrated groups led by militia commanders Khalifa Haftar and Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, or “Hemedti,” that it then uses to guarantee logistical facilities and financial gains.<sup>22, 23</sup>

While Wagner has been building on established blueprints, the international community—critically including African states—has various tools to counter Wagner’s malign presence in CAR and on the African continent more broadly.

### Key recommendations

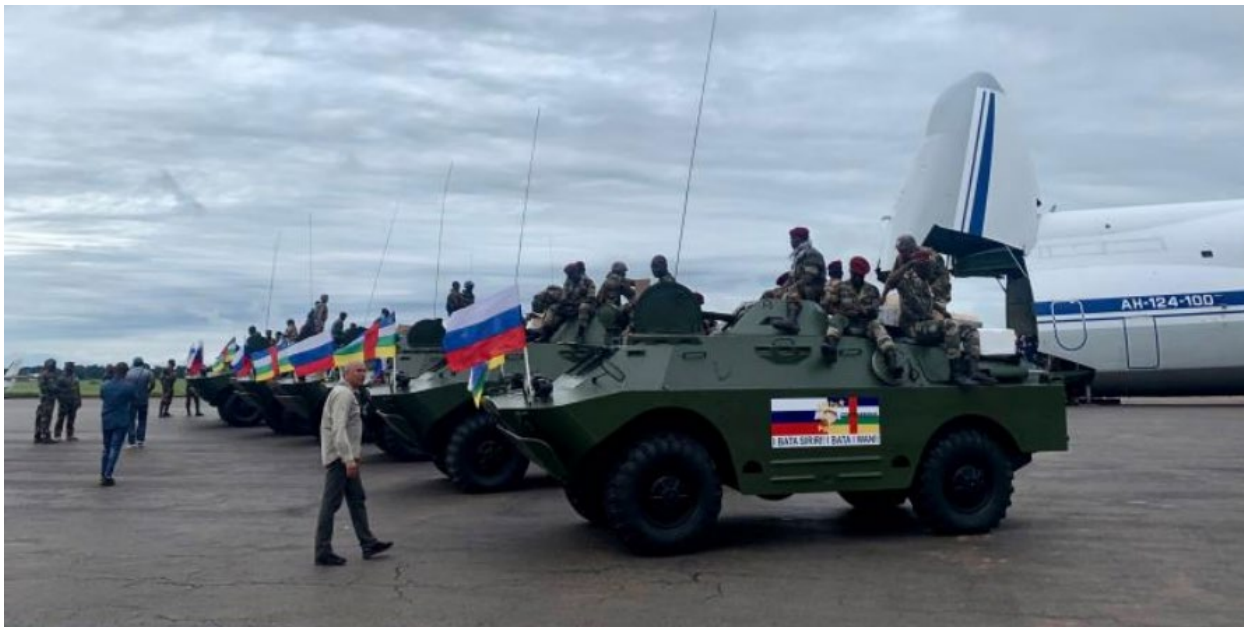
- UN member states should establish a coalition similar to the Global Coalition to Defeat Daesh/ISIS—critically including African states—to counter the Wagner Group’s malign influence on the African continent and elsewhere by focusing on the group’s finances, movement of foreign fighters, and propaganda.
- The United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union, Canada, Japan, and other jurisdictions should widen the scope of sanctions imposed against the Wagner Group’s network, including by investigating the individuals and entities named in this report. They should investigate and impose network sanctions against the individuals and entities linked to Touadéra’s inner circle that are enabling Wagner’s presence in CAR, and they should coordinate such sanctions actions to increase impact.
- The US should designate the Wagner Group as a foreign terrorist organization, as reporting by The Sentry and others clearly indicates that the group meets the three legal criteria for designation—a foreign organization engaging in terrorist activity that threatens national security.
- The EU and its member states should add Wagner to the EU terrorist list to allow for greater law enforcement and judicial cooperation on Wagner across EU member states and beyond.
- The UK should also consider taking steps to proscribe Wagner as a terrorist group under the Terrorism Act 2000.



## Wagner Arrives in CAR\*

As the war in Ukraine moves into its second year, the world has watched in horror as brutal and large-scale violence is committed with alarming frequency.<sup>24, 25</sup> The Russian offensive was supposed to be a lightning war to bring Ukraine under Russian influence,<sup>26</sup> but confronted with unexpected resistance, the assault has expanded to include psychological warfare that exploits terror and fear to force the population under attack to accept defeat—and Russian domination.<sup>27, 28</sup> The Russian Federation’s army in Ukraine, backed by private military groups including the notorious Wagner Group, has been accused of widespread and systematic human rights violations and mass atrocities, including massacres, torture, rape, and looting.<sup>29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34</sup>

Before drawing attention for its role in Ukraine in 2022, Wagner had already raised serious concerns about its presence in Syria and on the African continent, especially in the Central African Republic (CAR), Libya, Sudan, Mali, Mozambique, Madagascar, and Burkina Faso.<sup>35, 36, 37, 38</sup> Beginning in 2016, national governments—with the exception of Libya, where Russia has sided with militia commander Khalifa Haftar—have signed bilateral agreements with Russia that have called on Wagner for the provision of security services in exchange for access to valuable economic resources, especially minerals.<sup>39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45</sup> In several of these



The delivery of Russian BRDM-2 armored vehicles to Bangui in October 2020 marked the increase of Russian military support in CAR. Photo: UN Security Council/Wikimedia.

*\*Reports by The Sentry are based on interviews, documentary research, and, where relevant, financial forensic analysis. In some cases, sources speak to The Sentry on the condition that their names not be revealed, out of concern for their safety or other potential retaliatory action. The Sentry establishes the authoritativeness and credibility of information derived from those interviews through independent sources, such as expert commentary, financial data, original documentation, and press reports. The Sentry endeavors to contact the persons and entities discussed in its reports and afford them an opportunity to comment and provide further information.*



countries, the United Nations, nongovernmental organizations, and the media have accused the group of committing egregious human rights violations.<sup>46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51</sup> While protecting pro-Russia autocrats and militia commanders, Wagner fighters are reputed to be merciless and lawless.<sup>52, 53, 54, 55</sup>

The Sentry has been tracking and documenting Russia's expansionist strategy and Wagner's deployment tactics in CAR for the past five years.<sup>56, 57</sup> When Wagner first set foot in the country in early 2018, CAR had been ravaged by 20 years of politico-military crises and cycles of deadly armed conflicts that the UN and Western countries had failed to adequately address.<sup>58, 59</sup> Taking advantage of the political and security crisis, Wagner has—in just few years and with a limited number of personnel—achieved almost nationwide sway in CAR.

The Sentry's investigation sheds light on the modus operandi that has enabled Wagner to exert significant control over CAR's political and military leadership, as well as the country's economy. Members of the investigative team interviewed more than 45 people, including 11 members of the Central African Armed Forces (Forces armées centrafricaines, or FACA) and militiamen deployed in government military operations, victims, and sources with firsthand information on the military, and reviewed photos, satellite images, videos, and documents.<sup>60</sup>

The investigation found that Wagner—with the support of its Central African ally, President Faustin-Archange Touadéra—has been intentionally spreading terror and fear to submit the Central African population to Wagner's authority and to advance its financial interests. With a limited number of Wagner fighters backed by a parallel Central African army, Touadéra and his inner circle have been able to hijack CAR's state institutions and increase Touadéra's grip on power. In the process, Wagner fighters, Central African soldiers, and their proxies—militiamen trained and equipped by Wagner—have committed crimes that could qualify as war crimes and crimes against humanity.

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## Laying the Foundation for Terror

In October 2017, a discreet meeting took place in Sochi, Russia, between a Central African delegation and the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov.<sup>61</sup> On this occasion, Moscow and Bangui discussed three main components of Russia's involvement in CAR: political support, security assistance, and mining operations.<sup>62</sup> At the time, the reform of the Central African army was a major concern for the Russian authorities, who encouraged their Central African counterparts to quickly start introducing military organizational changes to ensure the security of the president, according to minutes of the meeting published by Mondafrique.<sup>63</sup>

Following the meeting, the decision was made to send Russian instructors, called “armed specialists of foreign origin” at the time, to CAR.<sup>64, 65</sup> For years, the term “Russian civilian instructors” has been consistently used by Russian and Central African authorities in speaking about the presence of Wagner fighters in the country, essentially willfully denying the existence of the paramilitary group despite increasingly clear material evidence.<sup>66, 67, 68, 69</sup> The discussions in Sochi also raised the possibility of disguising these armed specialists as employees of security companies.<sup>70</sup> Sewa Security Services, a CAR registered company affiliated with Wagner, was thus created in November 2017 and represented the legal channel through which Russia deployed Wagner mercenaries.<sup>71, 72, 73</sup>

Men wearing Sewa Security Services logos protect President Faustin-Archange Touadéra during an Independence Day commemoration ceremony in Bangui on August 13, 2018. Photo: UN/MINUSCA - Hervé Sereffo.



In January 2018, following notification to the UN Security Council (UNSC) sanctions committee concerning CAR, Russia delivered the first shipment of weapons alongside five military and 170 civilian Russian instructors—who turned out to be Wagner personnel—using a Russian military aircraft.<sup>74, 75, 76</sup> The coordinator of the Russian instructors, a Wagner representative, confirmed to the UN Panel of Experts on CAR “that all instructors were of Russian nationality and were recruited by the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation from an association of primarily former military officers called the Officers Union for International Security.”<sup>77</sup> Several UN reports, as well as sources interviewed by The Sentry, have since confirmed the presence of Syrians and Libyans among the Wagner rank, indicating the potential recruitment of fighters in countries where Wagner is deployed.<sup>78, 79, 80, 81</sup>







Central African President Faustin-Archange Touadéra with Russian President Vladimir Putin during a Russia-Africa summit in Sochi, October 2019. Photo: Kremlin / Wikimedia Commons.

Soon after Wagner had established its presence in CAR, Touadéra's reelection became a vital priority for the paramilitary group, which worked to maintain a pro-Russian regime after the December 2020 electoral deadline.<sup>82</sup> Wagner's representative in the country worked in the years leading up to the election to persuade the most influential armed group leaders and members of the political opposition to help secure Touadéra's reelection.<sup>83</sup> While the Constitutional Court confirmed Touadéra as president on January 18, 2021, the Central African Democratic Opposition Coalition (COD-2020), composed of the main figures of the political opposition, rejected the election results and refused to recognize Touadéra's victory, citing massive fraud and serious irregularities.<sup>84, 85, 86</sup> Meanwhile, on January 13, the Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC), a coalition of armed groups led by former president and putschist François Bozizé, launched an offensive in Bangui in an attempt to disrupt election outcomes and overthrow Touadéra.<sup>87, 88</sup>



The president of the Central African Republic, Faustin Archange Touadéra, escorted by the presidential guard, Russian mercenaries, and Rwandan UN peacekeepers, greets his supporters at an electoral rally in Bangui on December 19, 2020. Photo: ALEXIS HUGUET/AFP via Getty Images.



## Raising a parallel army

“I used the means at my disposal, in particular agreements that bind the Central African Republic with other countries, such as Rwanda and the Russian Federation. It was essential: If the CPC had entered Bangui, it was a guaranteed coup.”

- Touadéra<sup>89, 90</sup>

Although the coup ultimately failed, the CPC threat was a turning point in the military strategy of Wagner in CAR.<sup>91</sup> Vladimir Titorenko—CAR’s Russian ambassador at the time—declared in 2021 that “the military assistance that Moscow was providing to Bangui would continue” and “Russian instructors [Wagner mercenaries] would remain until the CPC (Coalition for Patriots for Change) rebels and armed group bandits are completely annihilated.”<sup>92</sup> Russian authorities thus announced the deployment of 900 additional personnel, quickly raising the total number of military instructors—Wagner mercenaries—to approximately 2,600 at the end of 2021.<sup>93, 94, 95, 96, 97</sup> Russia told the UN Panel of Experts on CAR that the number of instructors never exceeded 550 and insisted that they were unarmed and that their role was limited to training and transporting national armed forces to areas of military operations, assisting with advisory and logistical support, and ensuring medical evacuation.<sup>98, 99</sup> The UN Panel nevertheless noted in its 2021 report “the active participation of Russian instructors in combat operations on the ground, many [sources] having observed that they often led rather than followed FACA as they advanced on different towns and villages.”<sup>100</sup> This was also corroborated by multiple sources interviewed by The Sentry.<sup>101</sup> The Russian government did not reply to The Sentry’s request for comment.

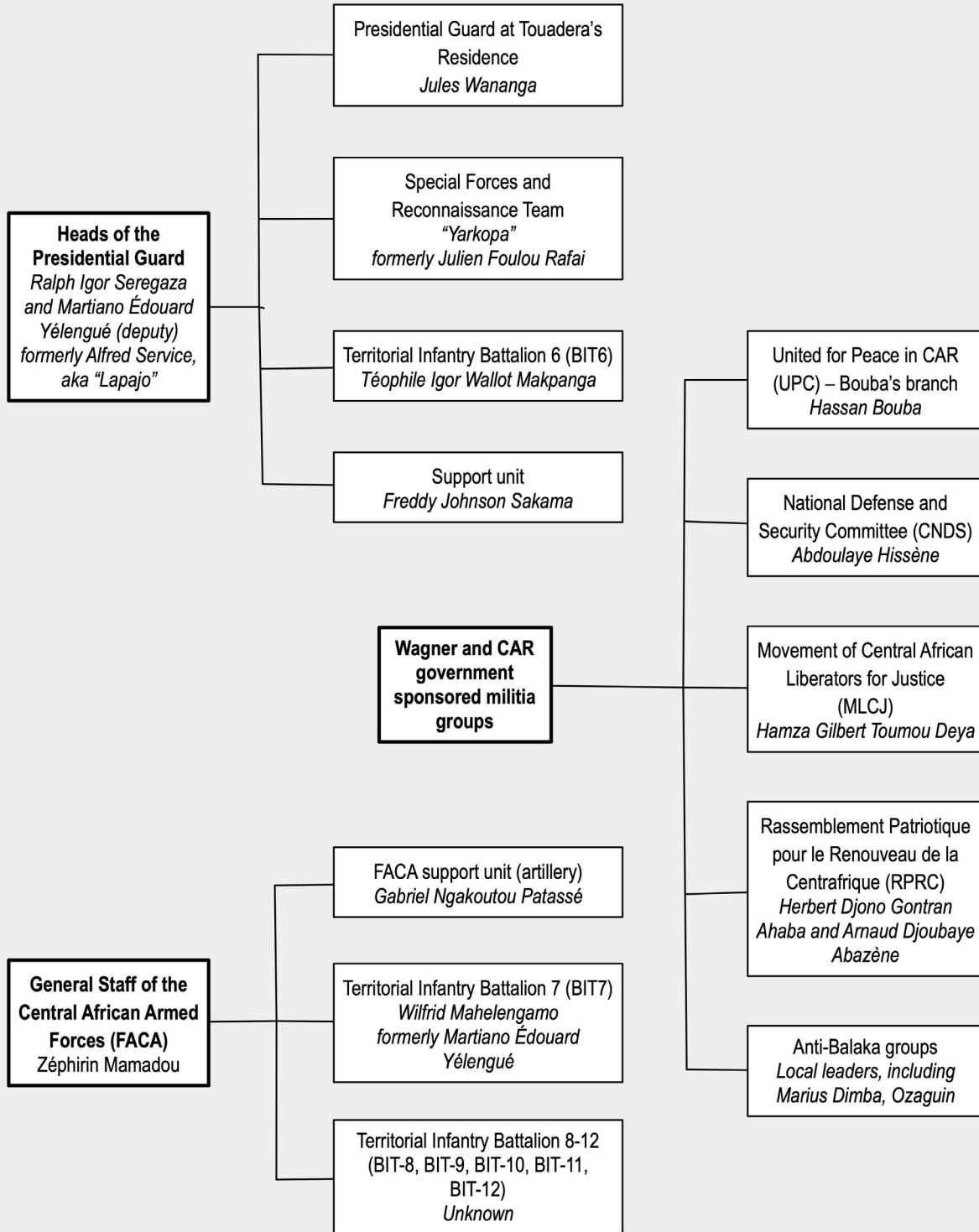
Beginning in early 2021, Wagner, with the support of Touadéra and his inner circle—influential members of the ruling party Mouvement cœurs unis (United Hearts Movement, or MCU)—took advantage of the launch of the counteroffensive against the CPC to raise a parallel army that could be controlled and privatized for their own interests (see Annex 1). Approximately 5,000 new FACA recruits avoided the legal recruitment procedure and the UN-backed vetting process between 2021 and 2022.<sup>102</sup> The Sentry also found that Wagner increased the training and outfitting of approximately 12 military units—most created after January 2021—that have been deployed in military operations against the CPC militiamen and their perceived sympathizers, including civilians and members of the COD-2020 (see Annex 1).<sup>103</sup> With this parallel army, Touadéra and his Russian partner have been able to circumvent the monitoring of CAR’s traditional partners, notably the European Union, the United States, and the UN.<sup>104, 105, 106, 107</sup>

The Sentry’s investigation, backed by UN reports, found that Russia also delivered heavy military equipment—weapons of war that had not previously appeared in the CAR conflict—including combat helicopters, aircrafts, ground vehicles, reconnaissance drones, and heavy weapons including 14.5 mm guns.<sup>108, 109, 110</sup> Sources with firsthand information also told The Sentry that Wagner has been using landmines in CAR.<sup>111</sup> The UN Panel of Experts on CAR noted that “deliveries of materiel in support of State security forces were observed at a pace unprecedented since the establishment of the arms embargo in 2013.”<sup>112</sup> While this response helped Touadéra and his Russian ally gradually regain control of major towns and strategic mining



# Who's Who? Mapping the Central African Armed Units Potentially Linked to Mass Atrocities

The presidential guard, Central African Armed Forces, and other militia groups often operate alongside Wagner fighters.







Lieutenant Colonel Théophile Igor Wallot Makpanga, commander of the Territorial Infantry Battalion 6 (BIT6), a presidential guard unit, wearing Wagner's insignia while deployed in Bangui during Touadéra's visit to the Central Mosque of Bangui on May 2, 2022. Photo: Hervé Cyriaque Serefo.

areas in the country—thereby protecting a pro-Russian regime—it also resulted in an unprecedented escalation of armed violence throughout the country.<sup>113, 114</sup>

In the wake of these deployments, military operations carried out by the FACA and Wagner fighters resulted in the commission of indiscriminate attacks against civilians perceived to be enemies of Touadéra and Russia.<sup>115, 116, 117</sup> As early as March 2021, a UN group of experts warned the international community and Touadéra that “mass summary executions, arbitrary detentions, torture during interrogations, forced disappearances, forced displacement of the civilian population, indiscriminate targeting of civilian facilities, violations of the right to health, and increasing attacks on humanitarian actors” were being committed by the FACA and Wagner mercenaries.<sup>118</sup> This was confirmed three months later by the UN Panel of Experts on CAR and by CNN and The Sentry, who published an investigation exposing mass atrocities being committed throughout the country.<sup>119, 120, 121</sup>

Despite all this, the CPC—composed primarily of anti-Balaka militiamen faithful to Bozizé and two largely Fulani armed groups, *Unité pour la Paix en Centrafrique* (Union for Peace in the Central African Republic, or



UPC) and Retour, Réclamation and Réhabilitation (Return, Reclamation, Rehabilitation, or 3R)—continued to pose “a constant threat to CAR internal security, as its structures [are] mostly intact,” the European External Action Service (EEAS) wrote in an internal note in November 2021.<sup>122</sup> As its modus operandi evolved and CPC combatants started acting in “a guerrilla style mode of operation in the countryside,” the FACA numbers were no longer sufficient to counter the CPC threat.<sup>123</sup> Moreover, the war in Ukraine has had direct implications on Wagner’s operations in CAR, with the group seeing its numbers drop by half to around 1,100 men by mid-2022.<sup>124, 125, 126, 127</sup>

Refusing to lose their advantage and cede the reconquered territories, in particular the country’s major towns and strategic mines, Wagner and Touadéra’s close circle have continued to sponsor the recruitment of thousands of militiamen, including ex-CPC combatants, and young people to compensate for the lack of men capable of countering the persistent CPC threat.<sup>128, 129, 130, 131</sup> The UN Secretary-General confirmed the recruitment of militiamen in a report, indicating that “national defence forces and other security personnel continued their military operations in the west and east, recruiting anti-balaka elements and dissident *Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique* combatants as proxies.”<sup>132</sup> Although some of these militiamen have been formally integrated into the newly created military units, other combatants have not and therefore do not hold any official military ranks (see Annex 1).<sup>133</sup>

## Trained to terrorize

“We were trained by the Russians to protect the [Touadéra] regime,” a presidential guard commander told The Sentry.<sup>134</sup> Since 2018, FACA members—and more recently militiamen—have been trained by Wagner instructors on a military base in Berengo, a town located 65 kilometers from Bangui.<sup>135, 136, 137</sup> According to FACA members, presidential guards, and militiamen interviewed by The Sentry, all of whom said they had been deployed in military operations alongside Wagner fighters, Wagner instructors delivered one- to six-month military trainings—depending on the military unit—that included firearm training, hand-to-hand combat, and espionage, interrogation, and torture techniques.<sup>138</sup> A member of the presidential guard who received this training told The Sentry, “It was a Russian instructor who gave the training ... it included commando training, interrogation, aggressive techniques, torture, violence.”<sup>139</sup> To obtain sensitive information from their enemies, several trained soldiers and militiamen explained that they were taught how to cut hands, fingers, and legs; remove nails; use knives to cut flesh; strangle; throw fuel and burn people alive; organize targeted kidnappings; and more.<sup>140</sup> These trainings have contributed to preparing the ground for the commission of mass atrocities and heinous crimes—confirmed by UN, NGO, and media reports—as part of the counteroffensive against the CPC.<sup>141, 142</sup>

## Wagner’s operational control

In parallel to providing military trainings, Wagner has also established a solid influence on the FACA and its chain of command.<sup>143</sup> In November 2021, the EEAS wrote in an internal note that “most deployed FACA units are operating under direct command or supervision by WG [Wagner] mercenaries.”<sup>144</sup> This observation was confirmed by multiple military and civilian sources interviewed by The Sentry, including a source with firsthand information on the military, who said, “The entire security and defense system is under Russian orders... all the General Directors are under the orders of Wagner.”<sup>145</sup> According to multiple sources with firsthand information, this arrangement has been encouraged by Touadéra’s close circle, which has been benefitting from Wagner’s protection.<sup>146, 147</sup>



The Central African military units sent to counter the CPC threat are thus controlled by dual chains of command issuing from Touadéra’s close circle and Wagner’s top representatives in the country. Some of the military sources who spoke to The Sentry noted that military orders and directives come through the Central African presidency for operations carried out in Bangui, but Wagner has full control of the military units and operations outside Bangui.<sup>148</sup> Speaking of the chain of command for operations outside Bangui, a Central African military officer said, “We work under the orders of the Russians, and it comes directly from the top. It’s the Central African presidency that has no trust in the army.”<sup>149</sup> All 11 military sources and militiamen interviewed by The Sentry confirmed that military orders were given by the Russians outside Bangui.<sup>150</sup> The Sentry reached out to Wagner, but the group refused to comment, stating that The Sentry “is not an official body.”<sup>151</sup>

In addition, Wagner has exclusive control over some units,<sup>152, 153</sup> including the Territorial Infantry Battalion (BIT) 7, which is composed of former members of self-defense groups—young men with arms who acted as bandits—and ex-militiamen who were incorporated into the army in early 2021 (see Annex 1).<sup>154, 155</sup> Some of the Wagner-trained militiamen who have not been incorporated into the army have allegedly been recruited and financed by Wagner directly.<sup>156</sup>



A photo published on Facebook in February 2022 showing Thierry Lébéné, or “Douze Puissance,” a former anti-Balaka leader incorporated into the Central African army wearing a Wagner insignia. Photo: Facebook.

In field operations, Wagner’s mottos are “cleansing” and “sweeping,” according to multiple military sources sent on operations.<sup>157</sup> Interviews conducted with Central African military sources confirmed that Russian commanders have been giving the order to “cleanse” or “sweep” entire herders’ camps, villages, rural areas, and—significantly—mining sites throughout the country.<sup>158</sup> Speaking of the “cleansing,” all the military sources and ex-militiamen said that they had to kill entire communities, including women and children.<sup>159</sup> One military source explained, “We kill villagers only, we bury them, or we throw them in the bush.”<sup>160</sup>





While Wagner commanders have been justifying the military operations with the need to eradicate the CPC threat, a Central African soldier provided details. He told The Sentry that, after he asked a Wagner commander whether he should kill women and children, “the Russians said it was necessary to kill them, too, in order to terrorize the other rebels, who will be afraid to settle in the villages.”<sup>161</sup> An ex-militiaman sent on military operations explained that the mission objective was to hunt the militias, but “all we have done is to make the population suffer.”<sup>162</sup> Members of the armed forces who agreed to speak with The Sentry said that they feel ashamed of the crimes they had to commit.<sup>163</sup> For them, there is no doubt that Wagner’s intention is to create terror and instill fear in the militias, the population at large, and the soldiers and militiamen under its control.<sup>164</sup>

Although multiple sources interviewed by The Sentry confirmed the almost unlimited power that Wagner has in CAR, it is difficult to obtain material evidence of their responsibility.<sup>165, 166</sup> Speaking about Wagner’s top leaders, a former MCU executive close to Wagner said that Wagner’s leaders “listen, but they do not talk too much publicly, they want no trace.”<sup>167</sup> This was confirmed by a member of the presidential guard, who told The Sentry, “The watchword given by the Russians ... it must be neither seen nor known.”<sup>168</sup> Five military sources declared that all the civilians encountered in the course of the military operations are eliminated so that the information does not return to the city.<sup>169</sup> To leave no trace, another soldier who took part in military operations said that sometimes mass graves are dug, sometimes bodies are abandoned in the wild, sometimes they move the bodies a few miles and leave.<sup>170</sup>

Similarly, all Wagner personnel—with the exception of Wagner’s top leaders in the country—are nameless, hiding their faces behind military scarves and sunglasses and making it difficult to identify the commanders leading operations in the field. A UN internal report from 2021 noted: “Exactions by national armed forces and bilateral forces [including Wagner] continue. Wagner maneuvers to never be seen in the photos either by systematically eliminating the photographer or by confiscating the camera.”<sup>171</sup> This “leave no trace” policy largely explains the difficulties that whistleblowers and journalists have had in attributing documented crimes to this shadow foreign army.

### **The attack in Boyo, a bloodbath**

“What shocked me was the massacres of the Boyo villages, hundreds of Fulani who were massacred in this attack.”

- A member of the presidential guard who took part in the attack

Orchestrated by Wagner mercenaries and national armed forces backed by hundreds of militiamen and dozens of young people, the attack on Boyo took place between December 6 and 13, 2021.<sup>172, 173</sup> Among the many field operations orchestrated by Wagner, this attack is particularly indicative of Wagner’s modus operandi. The attack was “coordinated and conducted in a premediated manner with the intention of punishing Muslims, considered to be committed to the cause of the UPC,” according to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which also noted that “in the months leading up to the attacks ... militiamen associated with the former anti-Balaka received training from FACA/APS [Wagner] in Bambari. The latter organized the transport of and equipment of weapons for the assailants who attacked the village.”<sup>174</sup>



An ex-UPC combatant deployed in Boyo told The Sentry, “When we go on a mission, [it’s] 3 land-cruisers of Russians, two land-cruisers of national forces, and three land-cruisers with anti-Balaka and [UPC]. We were given the weapons and outfits, kalash, and sometimes 12.7.”<sup>175</sup> Before entering the area, Wagner mercenaries gathered the armed elements, remembers a militiaman deployed that day: “They told us that drones flew over the villages, and all the men in the villages are CPC rebels, they have just hidden their weapons in the bush ... so the Russians told us to kill all the men.”<sup>176</sup> This was corroborated by several other men recruited for the operation.<sup>177</sup>

During the attack and after having taken control of Boyo, the assailants committed numerous violations and abuses of human rights, including murder, hostage-taking, looting and destruction of property, forced displacement, and sexual violence.<sup>178</sup> Two women, one of whom was eight months pregnant at the time of the attack, explained to The Sentry that their husband was beaten and attacked while they were both being raped. The pregnant woman was first raped by a Russian and then by an anti-Balaka; the other woman said she was raped by a member of the FACA. Their husband was never seen again.

According to the UN investigation, the attack left at least 20 civilians dead.<sup>179</sup> However, perpetrators and victims interviewed by The Sentry said that the scale of this massacre may have been underestimated and that between 60 and 100 civilians were potentially killed that day.<sup>180</sup> An ex-UPC militiaman deployed in the attack told The Sentry, “There was a lot of death in Boyo ... We dug mass graves, some were hidden, some were not really hidden ... We didn’t have time to finish. We left a lot of bodies because we feared that the CPC would arrive.”<sup>181</sup>

The Sentry could not find any photos or videos of this attack, or of its aftermath, reinforcing what several military and political sources said of Wagner’s instructions: No trace shall be left behind.<sup>182</sup> The massacre in Boyo was so brutal, however, that several people wanted to speak out despite the risk to their lives, and The Sentry spoke with several members of the FACA, militiamen, and surviving victims. Although the Boyo attack was particularly brutal and deadly, it was not the only attack of this kind. These types of raids have been systematic.



## Terror as a Weapon of War

In signing a defense agreement with Russia in 2018—just a few months after Wagner established its presence in the country—Touadéra promised peace.<sup>183</sup> Instead, he empowered Wagner, which engaged its fighters alongside the FACA and militiamen in a vast campaign of terror. The Sentry’s findings and analysis suggest that state violence deployed as part of the CPC counter-offensive refers to a well-established modus operandi that ultimately seeks to use terror as a weapon of war. By using techniques of psychological warfare, the objective appears to be to force the CPC militiamen and their allies to accept their defeat and the broader population to accept Touadéra and Wagner’s authority.<sup>184</sup>

The Sentry reviewed internal and public UN reports, photos, and videos and interviewed dozens of Central African witnesses, including victims, soldiers and military officers, militiamen, members of the political opposition and of Touadéra’s regime, civil society members, and international experts. The almost systematic use of the words “fear” and “terror” by those interviewed was both striking and revealing.<sup>185</sup>



### Mass killings and massacres

Since early 2021, The Sentry has been tracking the massacres of entire villages, herders’ camps, and mining sites that have been partially or completely wiped off the country’s map.<sup>186, 187, 188</sup> The 11 FACA members and ex-militiamen interviewed by The Sentry confirmed that they had been deployed with Wagner mercenaries in operations to commit mass killings and massacres outside Bangui in western, central, and eastern CAR.<sup>189</sup> According to them, these military missions are called “cleansing operations” or “sweeping



operations.” “When we’re on a sweeping mission, we kill everything that moves,” a member of the presidential guard said.<sup>190</sup> An ex-UPC militiaman explained that “for the cleansing, the Russians say: In this village, there are many mercenaries and informants, so when you enter the village, you have to commit massacres to influence. We must slaughter women and children, and men.”<sup>191</sup>

The systematic killing of civilians—including women and children—has been confirmed by the 11 military sources interviewed by The Sentry, as well as by victims who survived the attacks.<sup>192</sup> A member of the presidential guard who said he took part in multiple military operations told The Sentry, “The orders, when we passed through the villages, were to sweep, cleanse everything, without a trace. We only kill the villagers.”<sup>193</sup> Military orders were apparently given by Wagner commanders, often using nicknames.<sup>194</sup> Military and civilian sources also confirmed that, in addition to giving orders, Wagner fighters committed atrocities.<sup>195</sup>

The human consequences of these operations, coupled with the increase in attacks and abuses committed by CPC-affiliated armed groups, are dire.<sup>196</sup> The UN Secretary-General indicated in a recent report that “the humanitarian situation continued to deteriorate, as a result of the cumulative impact of conflict, displacement, rising commodity prices and limited access to basic services ... In 2023, 3.4 million Central Africans, or 56% of the population, are projected to need humanitarian assistance ... Violence continued to trigger displacement: one out of five Central Africans is either internally displaced or a refugee.”<sup>197</sup> This observation was confirmed by a recent study that found that 5.6% of the country’s population died in 2022, which is twice as high as estimates for any other country in the world, according to the authors.<sup>198</sup>

### “Cleansing” of civilians based on their ethnicity

In a report published in June 2022, the UN Secretary-General deplored “the continued targeting of ethnic and religious communities on suspicion of alleged collusion with armed groups.”<sup>199</sup> Certain communities—the Gbaya, the Fulani, and Muslims in general—have been particularly targeted by the FACA and Wagner mercenaries.<sup>200, 201</sup> These communities have been perceived as affiliated with the three most powerful CPC armed groups—the UPC, 3R, and the anti-Balaka militias faithful to Bozizé.<sup>202</sup> While the UPC and 3R are predominantly composed of Fulani combatants, the anti-Balaka close to Bozizé are Gbaya.<sup>203</sup> An ex-UPC militiaman hired by Wagner confirmed, “The villages attacked, it was villages of Gbayas, Fulani, and other ethnic groups. The order was to kill everyone.”<sup>204</sup> This was also confirmed by an ex-3R militiaman hired by Wagner, who said, “When they [Wagner] arrive, they do the cleansing, neither seen nor known, without trace, the missions without trace, we even kill children, it’s a lot of herders’ camps, while chasing the rebels, they [Wagner] will say that the Fulani are complicit with the rebels, the Russians massacre people in camps.” UN reports and The Sentry’s findings show that the Fulani community—living in remote rural areas and herders’ camps—is paying the highest price in this campaign of terror, with potentially thousands of people having been killed in the past two years.<sup>205, 206, 207, 208</sup>

#### An ethnic cleansing?

A UN Commission of Experts described ethnic cleansing as “a purposeful policy designed by one ethnic or religious group to remove by violent and terror-inspiring means the civilian population of another ethnic or religious group from certain geographic areas.”<sup>209</sup> These means include murder, torture, rape, destruction of property, and more.<sup>210</sup> The widespread and systematic abuses against and killing of civilians, and the targeting of the Fulani, Gbaya, and Muslims in particular, arguably constitute ethnic cleansing as broadly understood.





## Torture and inhuman and degrading treatment

Photos and videos from 2021 and 2022 reviewed by The Sentry, as well as interviews with survivors and perpetrators of atrocities, reveal the systematic use of torture—including on civilians—by Wagner mercenaries and the FACA as part of the “cleansing” operations.<sup>211, 212, 213, 214, 215</sup> A member of the presidential guard described to The Sentry in detail the types of torture that had been used “to collect information about CPC,” while a soldier deployed in military operations told The Sentry, “The Russian elements are gangsters ... a gang that terrorize the population. The torture they do ... it’s even worse than the rebels ... they torture, they rape, they massacre people.”<sup>216</sup> Interrogation and torture techniques have been taught as part of the military training provided by Wagner at its base in Berengo, according to 11 members of the armed forces interviewed by The Sentry.<sup>217</sup> Two military sources explained that these techniques are used to make people speak.<sup>218</sup> They described how they remove nails, cut fingers, and cut off legs.<sup>219</sup> One of them even explained: “We attack people, we put pipes, we pour water into the mouth and we turn on the tap. Sometimes, the nails are removed ... People’s hands are cut off, even ears.”<sup>220</sup>

## Sexual violence and mass rape

An ex-militiaman recruited by Wagner, speaking of rape, said, “When we are sent to commit a massacre ... it’s like the Russian main mission.”<sup>221</sup> The Sentry’s findings and UN reports have confirmed the systemic and widespread commission of sexual violence and rape by Wagner mercenaries, FACA members, and ex-militiamen, especially during military operations.<sup>222, 223, 224</sup> The large-scale and systematic manner of these abuses suggests that sexual violence is potentially used as a form of psychological warfare to terrify and subdue entire communities. In the dozens of interviews conducted by The Sentry, the use of the word “rape” in relation to abuses committed during pro-government military operations was alarmingly frequent, and multiple victims of sexual abuse told The Sentry that they had been gang raped.<sup>225</sup> Members of the FACA interviewed by The Sentry all confirmed the systematic and widespread commission of rape against men, women, and children as young as 10 years old.<sup>226</sup> Although some of these military sources said that they did not receive orders to rape, they all confirmed that it is a common practice that is encouraged by Wagner commanders and fighters, who also commit such abuses.<sup>227</sup> A military source said, “Sometimes Russians take girls by force and bring them back with them ... then we hear the screams.”<sup>228</sup> One man told The Sentry, “I was a victim several times ... I was raped once by four Russians.” He went on to describe how Russians gang raped his daughters and sisters multiple times, before adding, “We cannot say anything, we are forced to say that the Russians are our allies.”<sup>229</sup>

## Terror in the national military ranks

The use of terror is not limited to the population; it is also used against FACA members and recruited militiamen to force them to execute Wagner’s orders and dissuade them from deserting.<sup>230</sup> This feeling of terror was shared by most military sources interviewed by The Sentry.<sup>231</sup> A military officer even told The Sentry, “If the Central African military refuses to commit the crimes, they will be beaten up and punished. They want to terrorize the ... population, even us, the officers. It is to terrorize us.”<sup>232</sup> While most of the military sources interviewed showed remorse and shame for the abuses they committed, nine of them stated that they had no choice but to execute the orders. If they refused to obey, they exposed themselves to reprisals that, according to them, included being executed, beaten, raped, or tortured or having their families threatened and intimidated.<sup>233</sup> Several military sources confirmed the rape of members of the FACA—both men and



women—by Wagner mercenaries as part of this culture of terror.<sup>234</sup> Illustrating the level of tensions between Wagner mercenaries and members of the FACA, a Central African soldier was allegedly raped by four Wagner mercenaries in the town of Digui in Central CAR in January 2023 after showing resistance in executing an order; this apparently led to an exchange of fire that resulted in the deaths of several Wagner mercenaries and members of the national armed forces.<sup>235, 236</sup>

## Systematic looting and pillaging

Villages and camps targeted by Wagner mercenaries appear to be systematically looted and houses are burnt to the ground, according to UN reports and witnesses interviewed by The Sentry.<sup>237, 238, 239, 240</sup> Six members of pro-government forces said that they received orders to pillage or witnessed scenes of looting initiated by Wagner.<sup>241</sup> “They [Wagner mercenaries] told us to burn the houses, to loot,” recalled a Central African soldier interviewed by The Sentry. Gold, livestock, home goods and appliances, and motorcycles were among the goods regularly looted, according to The Sentry’s interviews.<sup>242</sup> “We tell them: How are we going to feed our families? They say go ask Touadéra,” one victim of looting told The Sentry.<sup>243</sup> Looted proceeds are sometimes sold to the population, which can fuel tensions between communities.<sup>244</sup> “They can take from Christians, they sell to Muslims. They can take from Muslims, and they sell to Christians,” explained a member of the Fulani community. A militiaman recruited by Wagner in the northwest of the country explained to The Sentry how gold and cattle looted by Wagner mercenaries are sold in Cameroon to raise cash.<sup>245</sup>





## Commanders in Chief

### Wagner command and control

A Russian private military company registered in Saint Petersburg, the Wagner Group—or PMC Wagner—is headed by the notorious Yevgeny Prigozhin, the financier, and Dmitriy Valeryevich Utkin, the operational chief.<sup>246, 247</sup> Both men have reportedly travelled to CAR since the group launched the counteroffensive against the CPC.<sup>248, 249</sup> In CAR, Wagner manages its operations and activities via a highly hierarchical system. Even though the group officially operates through several CAR-registered corporate entities—notably Lobaye Invest, Sewa Security Services, Midas Ressources, Diamville, Bois Rouge, Maison Russe, and potentially Logistique Économique Étrangère—they all appear to be controlled and managed by Wagner’s top representatives in the country, who also serve as Touadéra’s special advisors, particularly in the fields of security and defense.<sup>250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255</sup>



Visitors wearing military camouflage stand at the entrance of Wagner’s new office compound, the PMC Wagner Center, in Saint Petersburg during the official opening of the building on November 4, 2022. Photo: OLGA MALTSEVA/AFP via Getty Images.

For the first three years that Wagner operated in CAR, Valery Nikolayevich Zakharov—a former Russian intelligence agent—was Wagner’s strongman and Touadéra’s special security advisor.<sup>256, 257</sup> His extensive powers created confusion about his role, as he could sometimes appear to be acting as the Russian ambassador to the country and sometimes he was seen to be acting on behalf of Touadéra himself.<sup>258, 259</sup> Zakharov



had been the architect in charge of setting up the group's foundations and operations in country, and he succeeded in making the group essential to all military, political, and economic decisions.<sup>260, 261</sup> In December 2021, the EU imposed sanctions on Zakharov, stating, "Given his influential position in CAR and his leading role in the Wagner Group, he is responsible for serious human rights abuses committed by the Wagner Group in CAR, which include extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and killings."<sup>262</sup>

In mid-2021, Zakharov was replaced by two discreet but not less influential individuals, Vitalii Viktorovitch Perfilov and Dmitry Sytii,<sup>263, 264, 265, 266</sup> who was Zakharov's former assistant and the head of two CAR registered companies, Lobaye Invest and Maison Russe.<sup>267, 268, 269, 270, 271</sup> Sytii reportedly worked for the Internet Research Agency, Prigozhin's troll farm that interfered in the 2016 US presidential election, in the translation service as a specialist in the manipulation of public opinion.<sup>272, 273</sup> Although Sytii and Perfilov share responsibility for running Wagner's activities in CAR, particularly in the security, political, economic, financial, informational, and propaganda fields, Perfilov is in charge of all security and defense matters and appears to be Utkin's right-hand man in CAR.<sup>274, 275, 276, 277</sup> Both Perfilov and Sytii were sanctioned by the EU in February 2023 for their influential positions and involvement in serious human rights abuses in CAR.<sup>278</sup>



Photo of Russian Ambassador to CAR Alexander Bikantov (left) with Wagner Group leaders in CAR Vitalii Perfilov (center) and Dmitry Sytii (right), taken in Bangui on May 9, 2023, at a ceremony in memory of those killed in battle. Photo: Facebook.

Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Ivanov, known in Bangui as Alexandre Ivanov, is Wagner's third most significant figure in country and the director of the Officers Union for International Security (OUIS), a front company linked to Wagner that is based in Russia and operates in CAR.<sup>279, 280</sup> OUIS claims to represent Russian "instructors" in CAR.<sup>281</sup> Two sources with firsthand information confirmed that Ivanov not only assists Sytii in his mission but is also in charge of Wagner's logistics in country.<sup>282, 283</sup> For example, in early 2021, Ivanov set up a listening center in Bangui—for which the technology was apparently reinforced in early 2023—that specializes in spying on mobile and satellite lines belonging to political and military figures suspected of collaborating with the CPC, according to three sources with firsthand information.<sup>284</sup> Unlike Sytii and Perfilov, Ivanov is not permanently posted in Bangui but apparently travels among the various countries in which Wagner has established a presence.<sup>285, 286</sup>



Wagner's top leaders—particularly Perfilev, and previously Zakharov—maintain close relationships with Touadéra and his inner circle.<sup>287</sup> “They can interrupt any meeting. Dmitri is influential ... Everything that happens in Bangui, it is Dmitri who manages [it]. Everything that concerns weapons, FACA, it is Vitali who manages [it],” a source close to Wagner's personnel in Bangui told The Sentry.<sup>288</sup> Just like Zakharov before him, “Vitali has the full green light on the army, he does not ask Touadéra for approval,” a former MCU executive with links to Wagner told The Sentry.<sup>289, 290</sup> He also added, “All decisions go through Wagner, the choice of elements are made by the Minister of Defense, but in the end, it is Vitali who decides on the whole strategy.”<sup>291</sup> Jeune Afrique, as well, wrote that Perfilev “speaks at all hours on the telephone with ... Touadéra, who questions him regularly about the military operations coordinated by Wagner in the field.”<sup>292</sup> The Sentry reached out to Sytii, Perfilev, and Ivanov for comment but did not receive any replies.

Perfilev is known to have developed a network of contacts close to Touadéra who have been helping him expand Wagner's influence and footprint in the country.<sup>293, 294</sup> Among his privileged contacts are some of the most influential figures within Touadéra's entourage, including Jean-Claude Rameaux Bireau, the defense minister and Touadéra's nephew; Henri Wanzet-Linguissa, head of intelligence for the presidency and former minister of security; Dhesse Ndet Bienvenu Zokoué, general director of the national police; Colonel Igor Sérégaza, recently appointed general director of the presidential guard; Pascal Bida Koyagbé, minister of investment; and Evariste Ngamana, the vice president of the parliament.<sup>295, 296, 297, 298, 299</sup>

In addition to Touadéra's inner circle, two prominent armed group leaders—Abdoulaye Hissène and Hassan Bouba—have also been supporting Wagner's counteroffensive strategy against the CPC, particularly the recruitment of ex-CPC militiamen (see Annex 1). Both men are subject to legal proceedings for their roles in the ongoing Central African conflict, but they have nevertheless been protected by Wagner in Bangui.<sup>300, 301, 302</sup> Contacted by The Sentry, Bouba did not reply, and Hissène said that “the combatants of the FPRC of which I am the head of the CNDS are Central African citizens in their own right and therefore can validly be part of the candidates for recruitment in the FACA, the political agreement for peace and reconciliation in the CAR ... is the document on which we have all been working since its signature. I don't see Wagner's name in it.”<sup>303</sup>

## Touadéra's role and responsibility

“They put the means at our disposal. Everything we ask for, we are given. We have all the resources we need. The president, the CEMA [army chief of staff], the Minister of Defense, they always think of our battalion.”

- Lieutenant Colonel Théophile Igor Wallot Makpanga, commander of a presidential guard unit<sup>304</sup>

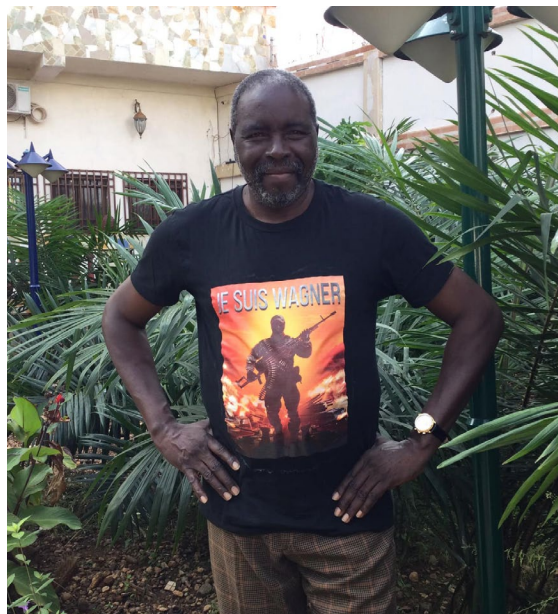
Despite numerous reports that have pointed out the responsibility of national armed forces allied with Wagner mercenaries in the commission of mass atrocities, the Central African government has persistently denied any involvement, rejecting responsibility for this campaign of terror.<sup>305</sup> And according to Touadéra, military operations are carried out against the CPC with the aim of protecting the population and state institutions.<sup>306, 307, 308</sup> To date, the presence of Wagner mercenaries in the country has not even been officially





acknowledged, with government officials referring only to Russian instructors sent under the framework of the defense agreement with Russia.<sup>309, 310</sup>

The official version contrasts, however, with a more brutal reality described by Fidèle Gouandjika, minister special advisor to Touadéra and an influential member of the MCU.<sup>311</sup> Interviewed by a Dutch media outlet in 2022, Gouandjika declared that the Central African government was at war with mercenaries—the CPC—and he described their objective, saying, “With our Russian partners ... it is a surgical strike. That is to say, annihilate them ... So it’s a physical elimination. Completely. ... And as brutal as possible.”<sup>312</sup> The Sentry reached out to Gouandjika, who said, “Like any Central African citizen, I have enormous admiration and gratitude for the tremendous work that the so-called Wagner Russian soldiers have done in record time to save democracy in the Central African Republic.” He added, “These brave Russian soldiers nicknamed Wagner enabled the reconquest of towns and villages once occupied by terrorists who used to rape our women, wives, daughters and massacre defenseless peasants, burn down the houses and granaries of farmers and plundered cattle from herders.”<sup>313</sup>



Fidèle Gouandjika, minister special advisor to the president, wearing a t-shirt that says “I am Wagner.” Photo: Facebook.

Similarly, at the end of 2021, Minister of Justice Arnaud Djoubaye Abazène on his own initiative confirmed in a communiqué the responsibility of national armed forces and Russian mercenaries—as well as the CPC—in the commission of human rights violations.<sup>314</sup> Abazène’s communiqué noted that “based on the various hearings related to the incidents revealed by the UN Human Rights Division, most of the cases are confirmed and attributable in part to the FACA and the internal security forces ... Some are attributable to Russian instructors who are [deployed] in support of the FACA.”<sup>315</sup> Simplicie Matthieu Sarandji, National Assembly president and number two in the Touadéra regime until 2022, summoned Abazène to explain his motivations for communicating publicly, suggesting a reluctance at the highest level of the state to recognize or address the issue.<sup>316</sup> While Sarandji did not reply to The Sentry’s request for comment, Abazène replied that “the court file is covered by the seal of secrecy. You are not empowered by law to read it.”<sup>317</sup>

Military sources and sources with firsthand information on the Touadéra presidency suggest that Touadéra and individuals from his inner circle are both exerting strong influence over the Central African military chain of command and operationalizing the military and its foreign partners for their own ends.<sup>318</sup> Nine sources with firsthand information on the Touadéra system said that Touadéra rarely makes decisions publicly, but he still remains the ultimate decision-maker.<sup>319</sup> A formerly influential political authority told The Sentry, “The power is concentrated in the hands of Touadéra and a few advisors who are listened [to] and who can act ... He showed it several times, he is the one making the decisions.”<sup>320</sup> The Sentry reached out to the Central African presidency for comment but did not receive a reply.



This observation contrasts with the belief common among international actors that Touadéra is hostage to Wagner.<sup>321</sup> A former MCU executive told The Sentry that the Central African president “has developed a system in which he decides everything without being responsible for anything,” essentially leaving no trace.<sup>322</sup> This was corroborated by multiple sources who used similar language to describe Touadéra’s approach.<sup>323</sup> When delivering orders, “Touadéra always goes through intermediaries,” a high-ranking Central African military officer told The Sentry, adding that when an order comes from Arthur Bertrand Piri, Touadéra’s nephew; Sani Yalo, Touadéra’s financier and special advisor; or Alfred Service, the former general director of the presidential guard, “it comes from the president directly, there’s nothing to doubt or discuss.”<sup>324</sup>

All 11 military sources interviewed by The Sentry confirmed that military operations carried out in Bangui, in particular, are supervised by the Central African military chain of command, and several of them confirmed that the president and his entourage are ultimately giving the orders.<sup>325</sup> For example, in 2021, Touadéra told Jeune Afrique that the security forces were “carrying out combing missions in Bangui to unmask all those who illegally possess weapons.”<sup>326</sup> These combing missions were mentioned as early as February 2021, when the Central African outlet Radio Ndéké Luka reported that “for several weeks, unknown persons have been shot dead around the cemetery of Ndrès,” in Bangui.<sup>327</sup> “Every morning, it was an open tomb,” a political authority told The Sentry.<sup>328</sup> A military source who participated in these operations added that, while some “bodies were brought to the military camp ... some bodies were brought to the cemetery in Ndrès.”<sup>329</sup> A political authority with links to Touadéra’s close entourage noted that “all these exactions exist to protect his power,” adding that anyone willing to denounce the exactions and killings received strict instructions from the presidency: “You must keep quiet.”<sup>330</sup>

A Central African military officer involved in these missions said that orders came directly from the presidential entourage—primarily Piri and Yalo—who gave instructions for the “forced disappearance and killings” of former authorities, including Bozizé.<sup>331</sup> This has been corroborated by multiple military and civilian sources with firsthand information.<sup>332</sup> The UN Panel of Experts on CAR also confirmed that “orders were given by a group of presidential advisors, often using the pretext of alleged links to CPC, to conduct violent operations and, at times, advance their own personal interests.”<sup>333</sup> Five other sources well-connected to the presidency confirmed that these missions consisted of targeting Bozizé and other political opponents, kidnapping Gbaya military officers, and organizing the forced disappearances of members of Bozizé’s political party, the Kwa Na Kwa.<sup>334</sup> Orders were primarily given to Jules Wananga and Julien Foulou Rafai, the commanders of two presidential guard units that were operating in Bangui alongside local government-sponsored militias, notably the anti-Balaka militias, all together known as “requins,” or “Sharks.”<sup>335, 336, 337</sup> “The ‘requins’ became infamous in Bangui as a shadowy force involved in extrajudicial operations ... operating primarily at night, and under the cover of a government-imposed curfew ... their most common practice was to kidnap individuals,” the UN Panel of Experts on CAR wrote in its 2021 final report.<sup>338, 339</sup> The Sentry reached out to Wananga and Rafai for comment but did not receive a reply.



## Toward eternal power?

Speaking about Touadéra's inner circle, a political authority told The Sentry, "They say they are [in power] for eternity: 'Kpou na Kpou' [Sango for 'eternal mandate'] ... To advance this objective, it is necessary to sow terror."<sup>340</sup> While the campaign of terror bears Wagner's trademarks, Touadéra and his close circle have potentially been ordering, supporting, hiding, and taking advantage of the violent actions that aim to increase their grip on power and eradicate any opposition.<sup>341</sup>

With the initiative to amend the Constitution and allow Touadéra to remain in power beyond 2026, tensions have risen in presidential circles.<sup>342</sup> Sarandji, Service, and other military commanders have been accused by Touadéra's close circle—in particular members of the Ngbaka Mandja community—of opposing the initiative to change the Constitution or of plotting a coup or being CPC sympathizers.<sup>343, 344, 345, 346</sup> As a result, Touadéra has been progressively building a new circle composed of faithful individuals, including Piri, Bireau, Wananga, Gouandjika, Ngamana, and Yalo.<sup>347, 348, 349, 350, 351</sup> The Sentry reached out to Piri, Bireau, Wananga, Ngamana, and Yalo but did not receive a reply. Gouandjika told The Sentry, "I confirm that I am part of the circle very close to President Touadéra ... He and I are from the same village, same ethnic group, same family, we grew up in the same neighborhood."<sup>352</sup>

While Touadéra's close circle has progressively become more centered on members of the Ngbaka Mandja community and Touadéra's relatives, particularly since he revealed his intention to change the Constitution, this trend has expanded to the military.<sup>353</sup> According to multiple sources with firsthand information on the military and Touadéra's close circle, Touadéra's ethnic community has been the main beneficiary of the military recruitment campaigns that began in 2020 and that have only intensified since the counteroffensive against the CPC began.<sup>354, 355</sup> "It's the outrageous monopolization of the state machine ... They recruit Ngbaka Mandja children to go into the army ... to occupy all the positions," one of The Sentry's sources noted.<sup>356</sup> This was also confirmed by the UN Panel of Experts on CAR, which noted in its 2021 report that "the recruitment of the presidential guard was handled discreetly rather than through an open process, and that it centered on young people from the President's neighbourhood of Boy Rabe, in the fourth district of Bangui, and members of his church (Baptist church of Ngoubagara) and ethnic group (Mbaka-Mandja), and included known anti-Balaka elements."<sup>357</sup>

Although Wagner appears to be fully supportive of the Touadéra regime, including his efforts to change the Constitution, the group also actively protects Firmin Ngrebada, former prime minister and current member of Parliament, deploying a dozen Wagner mercenaries at his two residences and while he travels.<sup>358</sup> According to several credible sources, Ngrebada, who is at the origin of the rapprochement between Russia and CAR, is the element that Wagner is preparing to replace Touadéra, should he show signs that he could end his allegiance to Moscow.<sup>359, 360</sup> The Sentry reached out to Ngrebada, who did not reply.





## Wagner's Mine Control

When Central African authorities and the Kremlin met in Sochi, Russia, in October 2017 to discuss the terms of a potential partnership between the two countries, the mining sector in CAR was reportedly at the top of the list.<sup>361</sup> Discussions included how to create a mining company and obtain a research permit, as well as information about the banking system, moving money, and customs procedures.<sup>362</sup> Since then, Wagner has shown intense interest in Central African minerals, targeting mining sites and using violent military campaigns to drive away civilians and take control.<sup>363, 364</sup>

When Wagner set foot in CAR, 80% of the country was controlled by armed groups, including most of the country's minerals, particularly gold and diamonds.<sup>365, 366, 367</sup> Early on, Zakharov attempted to negotiate bilateral deals with certain armed group leaders, but, when that failed, Wagner took advantage of the CPC counteroffensive to expand Wagner's military operations into mining sites to access the precious minerals.<sup>368</sup> Sources interviewed by The Sentry suggested that Wagner has been using its personnel and some of the FACA units and ex-militiamen to serve its own agenda,<sup>369</sup> and the EEAS wrote that "action by RU/WG [Wagner] personnel leading FACA into combat ... also paved the way for more intrusive and unilateral actions of RU/WG in CAR."<sup>370</sup>

Since the launch of the counteroffensive against the CPC, multiple sources interviewed by The Sentry confirmed the systematic killing and looting of civilians—particularly artisanal miners and collectors—in mining areas.<sup>371, 372, 373</sup>

"Mining sites are priority targets," a member of the presidential guard deployed in military operations under Wagner told The Sentry, "We do the cleansing only, no need to talk, kill only."<sup>374</sup> A Central African political authority with links to Touadéra's inner circle told The Sentry, "If they [Wagner] arrive in a mining area, they commit abuses in order to sow terror and force ... those living in the gold and diamond areas to leave."<sup>375</sup>

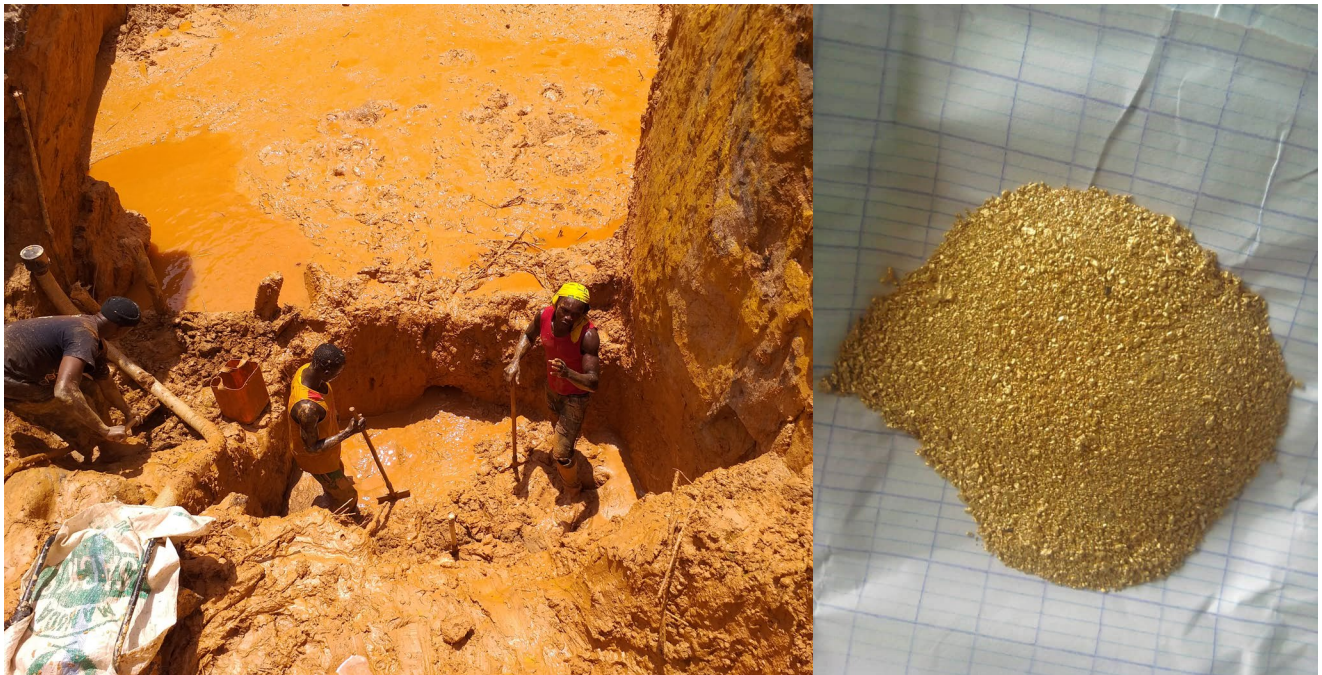
Although the apparent motive behind these operations is to cut off vital CPC financing, civilians, artisanal miners, and members of the FACA interviewed by The Sentry said that Wagner has been using terror to suppress populations living in mining areas and enforce a de facto monopoly in the mining sector.<sup>376, 377</sup> Wagner mercenaries have been targeting local mining actors to steal their money, gold, and diamonds.<sup>378</sup> An ex-UPC combatant sent on a military operation told The Sentry, "We must surround the village, recover the products [gold and diamonds], if we find people with a lot of money, we kill [them] and we hide the body in the bush or in the back-waters."<sup>379</sup> In the past two years, Wagner has thus been expanding its control to an increasing number of rich mining sites in western and eastern CAR, including in Boda, Abba, Bria, Sam Ouandja, and Ndassima.<sup>380, 381, 382</sup>

While Wagner has—with the blessing of Touadéra and his inner circle—essentially been conquering and occupying an unknown number of strategic mining sites to serve its own economic interests, it is unclear to what extent the group has been profiting from these operations.<sup>383, 384, 385, 386</sup> The group's operations include industrial and semi-industrial scale mining production, artisanal exploitation, the purchase of gold and diamonds, and the transformation of gold into ingots.<sup>387, 388, 389, 390</sup> Wagner-affiliated mining companies—primarily Lobaye Invest, Midas Ressources, and Diamville—have been granted mining licenses or export authori-

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Wagner has shown intense interest in Central African minerals, targeting mining sites and using violent military campaigns to drive away civilians and take control.





Caption: (Left) Artisanal miners working in the Ndassima gold mine in 2019, when it was still under the control of the UPC. (Right) Gold powder extracted from the Ndassima gold mine by artisanal miners in 2019. Photos: The Sentry.

zations that appear to be de facto authorizations to exploit and loot CAR’s rich and coveted natural wealth in exchange for protecting Touadéra.<sup>391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397</sup> An internal memo from the Ministry of Mines to Touadéra stated that “the State has the right to be informed of the Russian state investment in the field of national security in order to be able to manage compensation through financial evaluations of other mining, sectors and securities,” which raises questions about the extent of the Central African government’s oversight and control over Wagner’s access to the country’s mineral wealth.<sup>398, 399</sup> The Sentry reached out to representatives of Lobaye Invest, Midas Ressources, and Diamville for comment but did not receive a reply.

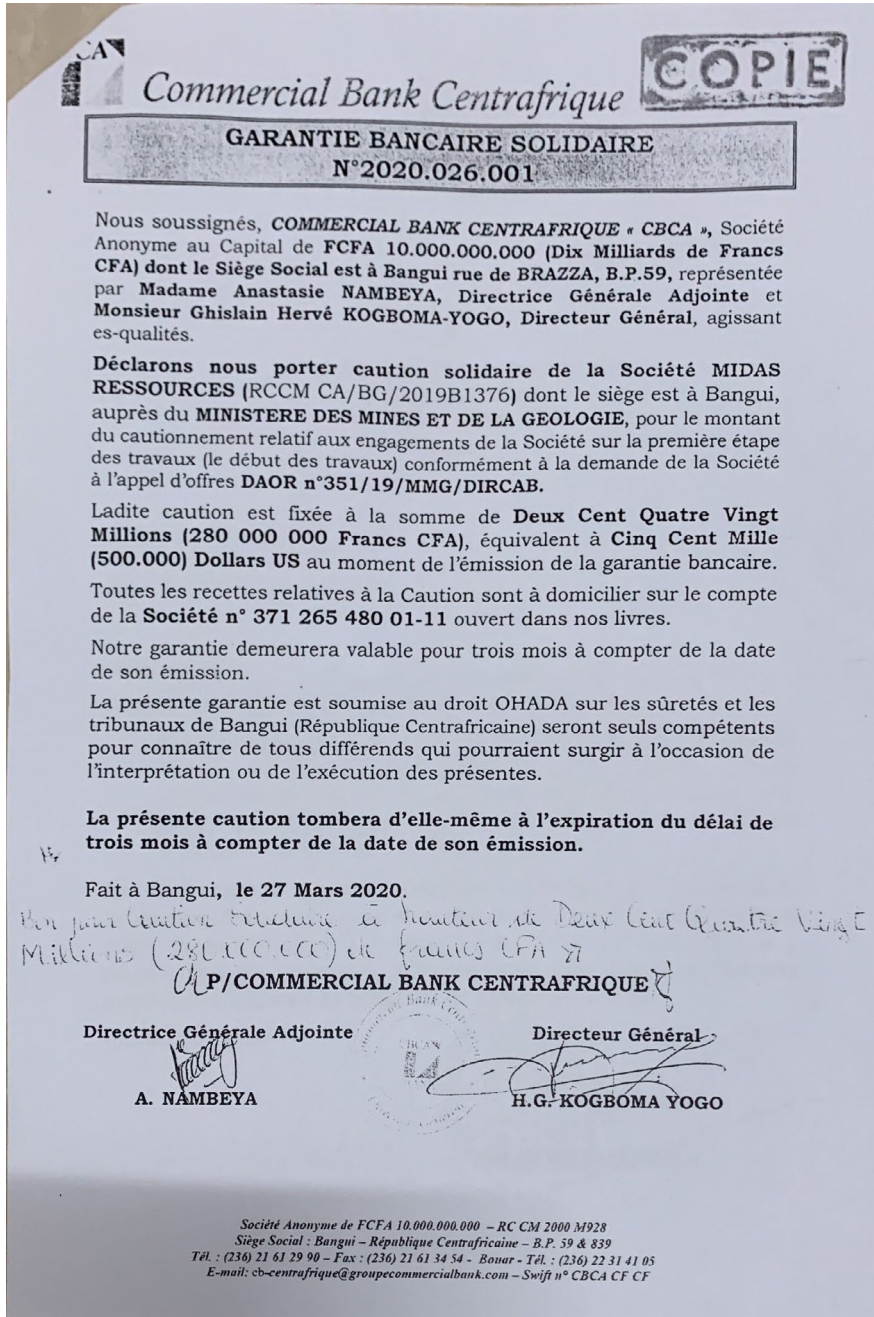
As part of its efforts to organize a monopoly in the mining sector, Wagner has also attempted to influence the revision of mining legislation so that the legal framework would serve its own economic interests, particularly its control over production.<sup>400, 401</sup> In a confidential document reviewed by The Sentry, the alleged Wagner authors recommend that the Central African government “control the activities of artisanal miners and make the state company, GEMINCA, the main buyer of natural resources.”<sup>402</sup> The mining code review is still ongoing, but according to a source with firsthand information on the matter, Wagner has been secretly maneuvering to obtain a public contract to issue QR codes, valid for one year, to every artisanal miner.<sup>403, 404</sup> Midas Ressources has already developed its own QR code system that is used in the Ndassima gold mine, as confirmed by a youth leader interviewed by The Sentry.<sup>405, 406</sup>

Despite Wagner’s growing mining activity in the country, none of its affiliated companies had officially declared any gold or diamond exports as of the end of 2020, according to data from the Bureau d’évaluation et de contrôle de diamant et d’or (BECDOR) reviewed by The Sentry.<sup>407, 408</sup> Sources told The Sentry that Wagner mercenaries sometimes sell gold locally to generate cash, but the majority is exported via illicit networks.<sup>409</sup> The Sentry was unable to establish with certainty these export networks, but information suggests





that the group has, at least in part, been exporting the precious metals by plane to Sudan, where the group owns a gold mining company, Meroe Gold, which was recently renamed Al-Solag.<sup>410, 411, 412, 413</sup> The Sentry identified 15 aircrafts operated by Wagner that have made one or more trips between CAR and Sudan, either Khartoum or Nyala, since 2018.<sup>414, 415</sup> This air fleet demonstrates a significant logistical capacity to transport minerals out of the country without any oversight. The Sentry reached out to Al-Solag for comment but did not receive a reply.



Document dated March 27, 2020, in which Commercial Bank Centrafrique serves as a joint guarantor with Midas Ressources for a loan worth \$500,000. Photo: The Sentry.



## Ndassima, Wagner's gold rush

Located in the Ouaka prefecture in central CAR, Ndassima is home to a major and coveted gold mine.<sup>416</sup> Exploration activities had been conducted between 1996 and 2009, and the estimated gross value of the gold deposit is 1.7 trillion Central African CFA francs (XAF) (\$2.8 billion), according to a memorandum produced by the Ministry of Mines in December 2020.<sup>417</sup> Although the Canada registered company Axmin Inc. had previously had an exploration and exploitation permit, the exploitation permit of Ndassima was transferred to Wagner's Midas Ressources in 2020, apparently without legal basis.<sup>418, 419, 420, 421</sup>

While Midas has a website and has obtained a decree and a mining convention issued by Central African authorities confirming the allocation of a 25-year gold exploitation permit, the company's registration is murky.<sup>422, 423, 424</sup> Although The Sentry obtained information suggesting that the company may have been registered in CAR by a Malagasy individual, Final Leandric Rabenatoandro,<sup>425, 426</sup> Midas is not listed in the Central African commercial registry, whereas other Wagner-linked companies are.<sup>427</sup> A notarized document issued in November 2019 called "Midas status compliance" suggests that a 2019 Madagascar registered company—Investment Corporation in Madagascar (INCOMAD)—is Midas' parent company, with Rabenatoandro being the sole shareholder.<sup>428</sup> While INCOMAD is registered in Madagascar,<sup>429</sup> the company could potentially be a front for Wagner-affiliated company Kraoma Mining, of which Rabenatoandro is a former employee.<sup>430, 431, 432, 433</sup> The Sentry reached out to Rabenatoandro for comment but did not receive a reply.

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In order to build and operate an industrial-scale gold exploitation unit, Midas has potentially been able to use Wagner's transnational networks in CAR, Sudan, Cameroon, Madagascar, and Russia.

Further complicating the situation, in December 2020, the Central African minister of mines addressed an internal note to Touadéra in which he wrote that Midas is a Russian company.<sup>434</sup> Attached to this letter and speaking about Midas, a memorandum noted that, "at the moment, we don't know the content of the company's statutory file."<sup>435</sup> Additionally, while Rabenatoandro appears to be Midas' official manager, the phone number displayed on the company's website belongs to Touadéra's relative, Central African diamond trader William Wabem Ndede.<sup>436, 437, 438</sup> Despite the company's unclear statutory status, Commercial Bank Centrafrique (CBCA)—a bank controlled by the Gabon-headquartered BGFIBank that serves the Touadéra regime's interests, according to multiple sources interviewed by The Sentry—acted as Midas' joint guarantor for a loan amounting to \$500,000.<sup>439, 440, 441, 442</sup> Wabem Ndede, CBCA, and BGFIBank did not reply to The Sentry's request for comment.

Despite the complex paper trail, Wagner has nevertheless been extracting gold and transforming raw material into ingots in Ndassima.<sup>443, 444</sup> Interviews and satellite images captured by Maxar reveal that, as of May and July 2022, the company was operating an industrial production unit in Ndassima.<sup>445, 446</sup> Satellite imagery from May 2022 shows a queue of trucks leaving the mining area, while imagery from July 2022 shows a military helicopter like those used by Wagner in military operations on Midas' production site.<sup>447, 448</sup> Images from May 2023 reveal the rapid expansion of their site.<sup>449</sup>

In order to build and operate an industrial-scale gold exploitation unit, Midas has potentially been able to use Wagner's transnational networks in CAR, Sudan, Cameroon, Madagascar, and Russia. Wagner-linked companies in CAR have been purchasing equipment from the Saint Peterburg registered company LLC Broker







Satellite images of the mining facilities built by Midas Ressources in Ndassima, Central African Republic. Photos: Satellite images ©2022 Maxar Technologies.

Expert, which has been shipping heavy materials from Russia to CAR.<sup>450, 451, 452</sup> Information reviewed by The Sentry shows that the Cameroon registered company Business Global Tour (BGT) SARL imported material, including heavy cement bags, steel structures, and metal tanks, from Broker Expert in early 2021.<sup>453, 454</sup> It is during this period that Midas intensified its mining activities at the Ndassima site,<sup>455</sup> and although there is no certainty that this shipment was sent to Ndassima specifically, a source with firsthand information told The Sentry that the shipment was sent to Wagner’s operations in CAR.<sup>456, 457</sup> Wagner-linked timber company Bois Rouge reportedly imported material from Broker Expert, and the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organize Crime has linked Broker Expert to Wagner’s corporate structure.<sup>458</sup>

Another CAR-registered company, Logistique Économique Étrangère SARLU, has also been importing heavy materials from Russia to CAR, according to trade data reviewed by The Sentry.<sup>459, 460</sup> Based on a review of the material imported by Logistique Économique Étrangère, a mining expert told The Sentry that these materials could “be used to build out something like the Ndassima mine site ... likely developing the site and new processing plant.”<sup>461</sup> Trade data reviewed by The Sentry also shows that Kraoma Mining, registered in Madagascar, ordered equipment from M-Finance, a company registered in Russia, on behalf of Lobaye Invest in CAR.<sup>462</sup> All three companies have reportedly been linked to Wagner’s corporate structure.<sup>463, 464</sup> The Sentry reached out to Midas Ressources, LLC Broker Expert, BGT SARL, Bois Rouge, Logistique Économique Étrangère, Kraoma Mining, M-Finance, and Lobaye Invest for comment but did not receive any replies.

The people of Ndassima—like those living near other mining sites—endured terror and military campaigns of “cleansing” as Wagner sought full control over the site.<sup>465</sup> In 2020, the Ndassima gold mine was controlled by the UPC,<sup>466, 467</sup> and as it began its operations, Midas reportedly paid the militia to ensure the security of the company’s equipment and employees, as documented by the UN Panel of Experts.<sup>468</sup> From mid-2021, as part of the counteroffensive against the CPC, Wagner fighters, the FACA, and militiamen have been committing egregious human rights violations, according to militiamen deployed in the Ndassima area and victims interviewed by The Sentry.<sup>469</sup> One victim said that on April 18, 2022, Wagner came to his village, located 17





kilometers from Ndassima, and killed five people: “They said that these people are diggers ... they forbade [anyone] to go digging in Ndassima. Before that, they had killed four collectors who had over 200 million XAF [around \$329,000] and 50 kilograms of gold. They stole everything. Then they put the fuel on the people who were tied up and they set fire.”<sup>470</sup> Satellite images captured by Maxar show that between November 2020 and May 2022, an artisanal mining village located in the vicinity of Ndassima had been wiped off the map.<sup>471</sup>

Wagner’s Midas recruited approximately 300 miners to work exclusively for its mining operation beginning in September 2021.<sup>472, 473</sup> Individual QR codes that include miners’ personal information and their team leaders were issued and distributed, according to two local sources and a mining card reviewed by The Sentry.<sup>474</sup> A local civil society member commented on this system, telling The Sentry, “Each worker has a card that proves that he works with them [Wagner]. What is surprising is that the administrative and military authorities consider this card more [valuable] than the new national identity card.”<sup>475, 476</sup> According to three artisanal miners recruited by Wagner, two teams take turns on the Midas site—one at night and one during the day—so that the work is not interrupted.<sup>477</sup> In the first few months, workers were allegedly paid 2,500 XAF (\$4) per day, but Midas apparently doubled the salary after many workers fled the site.<sup>478</sup>



Satellite images captured by Maxar show that between November 2020 and May 2022, an artisanal mining village located in the vicinity of Ndassima had been wiped off the map. Photos: Satellite images ©2022 Maxar Technologies.

Although they have been working for Wagner’s Midas and carrying QR codes, workers told The Sentry that they have been targeted by acts of violence.<sup>479</sup> Three workers said that Wagner mercenaries have been committing abuses such as murder and rape.<sup>480</sup> Wagner has also banned the sale of gold in the area under its control and established a de facto monopoly on the purchase of gold, according to three gold collectors.<sup>481, 482</sup> Collectors thus appear to be forced to sell diamonds and gold to Wagner exclusively at a fixed price well below market value—sources mentioned 16,000 XAF (\$24.4) per gram, while average prices range between 24,000 and 29,000 XAF (\$37-\$44) per gram.<sup>483</sup>



## Perfecting the Blueprint

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In just five years and with a limited number of military personnel, Wagner has managed to infiltrate CAR's military chain of command, as well as its political and economic systems.<sup>484, 485, 486, 487</sup> In this former French colony, Wagner has been testing a broad range of tools to project Russian influence. The group has raised a parallel army that has been sowing terror and fear to submit the entire population to Wagner's domination and control. Taking advantage of Touadéra's growing needs for security and protection, the group has increased its grip on the country's valuable economic resources, particularly diamonds and gold. Through Wagner's transnational network of companies stretching from Russia to Madagascar, Cameroon, Sudan, and CAR, the group has been plundering and exporting rich resources, aggravating the humanitarian crisis.

Although money is crucial to financing the group's operations, Wagner does not seem to be purely profit-driven. Wagner has been operating in CAR according to a well-defined political and ideological framework that consists of restoring a Russian sphere of influence on the African continent. In recent years, Wagner's propaganda on social media in CAR has primarily focused on the 2020 elections to ensure the reelection of Touadéra, Russia's ally; praised Russian military and diplomatic power and Touadéra's actions; criticized France's neocolonial system and fueled anti-French sentiment; and targeted anyone considered pro-West with threats and intimidation.<sup>488, 489</sup> As Wagner has grown in power, the group has been engaged in a hybrid warfare that includes very aggressive pro-Russia and anti-West propaganda, with the population of Bangui being the main target.

Reportedly created by the Russian Ministry of Defense, Wagner has been used by Russia as a powerful weapon against Western interests.<sup>490, 491</sup> This was illustrated by defected Wagner commander Marat Gabidullin, who explained that Wagner mercenaries are told that "the West has always wanted to destroy" Russia and that Wagner mercenaries "are at the forefront to thwart the West's aspiration to crush" Russia.<sup>492</sup> In CAR, the group has been injecting significant amounts of money into targeting Western diplomats and economic operators, particularly from France.<sup>493, 494</sup> While Wagner fuels anti-West sentiment, the group offers nothing in CAR beyond maintaining a system in favor of Russia and Wagner's financial interests.

With Wagner evolving aggressively, the US, EU, UN, and other international organizations have been increasingly concerned about the group's role, impact, expansion, and financing on the African continent. While Wagner has been establishing a permanent presence in CAR, it has also been using the country as a staging ground from which it maneuvers into other countries such as Sudan, Cameroon, and Chad, as well as Mali and Burkina Faso in West Africa. Expansion is part of the group's *raison d'être*, and so it is reasonable to expect that Wagner will not stop there. After incubating a successful model in CAR, Wagner will very likely try to export some or all of its tried and tested tools of domination to other countries as it aims to expand Russia's sphere of influence.

As Wagner moves out of the shadows, threatening peace on the African continent and beyond, the international community must act collectively to implement a robust strategy that aims to urgently undermine the group's growth and expansionist agenda. Failure to address this developing threat would result in a world dominated by even more terror, atrocity, and exploitation, with the possibility of an increasing number of private military groups using the same business model.



## Recommendations

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### US, UK, EU, Canada, Australia, Japan, and other jurisdictions

**Establish a coalition of jurisdictions similar to the Global Coalition to Defeat Daesh/ISIS**—critically including African states—to counter the Wagner Group’s malign influence on the African continent and elsewhere by focusing on four pillars:<sup>495</sup>

- Countering the Wagner Group’s financing and access to resources by (i) identifying financing methods, networks, and enablers via the sharing of information among coalition members; (ii) forming public-private partnerships to share financial intelligence, including among financial institutions, civil society, and law enforcement authorities; and (iii) developing targeted measures to create barriers to illicit financial flows
- Countering the Wagner Group’s financing and access to resources through targeted network sanctions and other means of financial pressure, such as advisories
- Preventing the recruitment and movement of Wagner Group fighters and facilitators across borders and conflict zones
- Counteracting the Wagner Group’s propaganda by highlighting that the protection it offers comes at a very steep price<sup>496</sup>

**Use the toughest financial tools of pressure, including counterterrorism authorities, against the Wagner Group**, while mitigating the potential humanitarian consequences of such designations through carve-outs and licenses. In particular:

- The US should designate the Wagner Group as a foreign terrorist organization (FTO), as reporting by The Sentry and others clearly indicates that the group meets the three legal criteria for designation—a foreign organization engaging in terrorist activity that threatens national security.<sup>497</sup> An FTO designation would bring into play one of the US government’s most powerful financial tools: a criminal statute that would make it illegal to provide “material support” to Wagner and easier to prosecute the group’s enablers, wherever they may be located.<sup>498</sup>
- The EU and its member states should add Wagner to the EU terrorist list. Reporting from The Sentry and other has shown that the activities of Wagner also meet the definition of a “terrorist act” as defined in Article 1(3) of the Common Position 2001/931/CFSP.
- The UK should also consider taking steps to proscribe Wagner as a terrorist group under the Terrorism Act 2000.

**Deploy sanctions using existing authorities.** Widen the scope of sanctions against the Wagner Group’s network, including by investigating individuals and entities named within this report, particularly Wagner-affiliated companies such as Midas Ressources and Diamville.

**Target Central African allies and enablers.** The EU, US, and UK should investigate and designate for sanctions the network of individuals and entities in Touadéra’s inner circle who are enabling, supporting,



or profiting from Wagner's presence in the country, as well as those who are implicated in corruption and human rights violations. They should coordinate sanctions actions to enhance their impact and diminish jurisdictional arbitrage.

**Issue advisories.** Issue multi-agency advisories to the private sector highlighting the Wagner Group's growing access to gold, diamonds, and other resources in CAR and across Africa to prevent these conflict resources from entering the commercial supply chain and enabling sanctions evasion by Russia. Advisories should include risk indicators and typologies to help private sector actors understand modes of extraction, transport, and financing.

**Tighten export restrictions.** Impose export controls on the Wagner Group's network to constrain its ability to access dual-use items, thereby limiting Wagner's use of such technologies to further its malign activity.<sup>499</sup> Consideration should be given to using authorities similar to the US Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) Entity List, which identifies parties "that have been involved, are involved, or pose a significant risk of being or becoming involved in activities contrary to the national security or foreign policy" interests and prohibits them from receiving certain goods unless a license is secured by the exporter.<sup>500</sup>

## The G7

**Fight money laundering linked to war crimes and atrocities.** G7 countries should encourage the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to explore a typologies report on money laundering linked to war crimes and atrocities, with a particular focus on the Wagner Group. Such a typology report would serve to protect the integrity of the global financial system and ensure robust implementation of FATF standards.

## The African Union

**Continue to call for the withdrawal of private mercenaries.** Follow up on the calls made at the 2022 AU Extraordinary Summit for the "immediate and unconditional withdrawal of foreign terrorist fighters and mercenaries from the Continent" and for the AU Commission to accelerate revising the OAU Convention for the Elimination of Mercenarism in Africa, adopted in 1977 and in force in 1985.<sup>501</sup>

## The UN

**Designate individuals and entities, as appropriate.** The 2127 Central African Republic Sanctions Committee should seek designations, particularly under the listing criteria of providing support for armed groups or criminal networks through the illicit exploitation or trade of natural resources and of planning, directing, or committing acts in CAR that violate international human rights law or international humanitarian law.

**Consider a follow-up mission to CAR.** The Working Group on the use of mercenaries should consider a follow-up on its October 2016 mission in CAR (A/HRC/36/47/Add.1), particularly due to the greatly increased significance of mercenary activities and the associated implications for human rights and self-determination.





## The International Criminal Court and national courts with universal jurisdiction

**Investigate human rights violations in CAR** dating back to the counteroffensive against the CPC initiated in January 2021 to establish the chain of responsibility and prosecute as appropriate those individuals and entities most responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

## International financial institutions and donors

**Suspend funding.** The International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and bilateral donor funding should be suspended until the Central African government can credibly guarantee that international development assistance is not being diverted for military purposes.

## Financial institutions

**Identify customers, accounts, and transactions to ascertain links to Wagner or persons responsible for carrying out human rights violations in CAR.** Financial institutions should conduct enhanced due diligence of new customers, including beneficial owners of companies incorporated in countries in which Wagner operates, particularly CAR, to identify links to the Wagner Group or military groups and their commercial networks.

**Use threat intelligence and carry out investigations to identify and report suspicious activity linked to the Wagner Group.** Financial institutions should use threat intelligence to proactively identify illicit financial flows linked to the Wagner Group and file reports with local financial intelligence units and other relevant authorities.

**Enhance ongoing due diligence of CAR-related transactions and customers linked to natural resource activities in CAR.** Financial institutions should undertake enhanced screening, ongoing monitoring, and transaction reviews to identify, investigate, and report potentially suspicious financial activity related to CAR, especially with respect to international networks profiting from natural resources. Financial institutions should make a deliberate effort to avoid wholesale de-risking that could prevent legitimate economic resources and humanitarian funding from continuing to flow into the country.



## Annex 1: Who's Who? Mapping the Central African Armed Units Potentially Linked to Mass Atrocities

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During the course of its investigation, The Sentry obtained evidence confirming the involvement of Wagner mercenaries with specific Central African armed units and Wagner- or state-sponsored militias in perpetrating the campaign of terror documented in this report. This section is an attempt to map the various Central African armed actors controlled by Wagner and Touadéra's inner circle who have arguably been involved in the commission of what could qualify as war crimes and crimes against humanity during the course of the counteroffensive against the CPC from January 2021 until today.

### The Special Group of the Republican Guard, or presidential guard

Known as the presidential guard, the Special Group of the Republican Guard (Groupement spécial chargé de la protection républicaine, or GSPR) is an elite corps that can be considered an army within the army.<sup>502, 503, 504</sup> According to the EEAS, the GSPR “has been reinforced and currently consists of approximately 2,600 personnel. It is under the direct control of the President and does not answer to the FACA General Staff or Parliament.”<sup>505</sup> These units were officially under the command of General Alfred Service, also known as “Lapajo,” the GSPR's general director from April 2020 until early 2023.<sup>506, 507, 508, 509</sup> Lapajo received his orders directly from Touadéra and Perfilev, according to four sources with firsthand information on the political and security apparatus.<sup>510</sup> He was apparently assisted by a middle-rank Wagner officer nicknamed “Mourat.”<sup>511</sup> Even though Lapajo was officially the military commander of these units, sources with firsthand information suggested that some of these units received their orders directly from Touadéra; his inner circle, primarily Piri, Sarandji, Yalo, and Wananga; and Wagner's top leaders, primarily Perfilev.<sup>512</sup>

Over the course of 2022, tensions emerged between Lapajo and Touadéra's clan—led by Wananga, a member of the Ngbaka Mandja community and a GSPR hardliner—with Lapajo being accused of wanting to overthrow the president, according to two sources with firsthand information.<sup>513, 514</sup> Wananga then initiated a process to strengthen the Ngbaka Mandja ethnic group's influence on the presidential guards.<sup>515, 516</sup> This situation led to the removal of Lapajo as head of the GSPR; he was replaced by his deputy, Colonel Ralph Igor Sérégaza, a member of the Ngbaka Mandja ethnic group.<sup>517, 518</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Martiano Édouard Yélengué, the former military commander of BIT7—a unit reportedly controlled by Wagner—was appointed as Sérégaza's deputy.<sup>519, 520</sup> Both men currently appear to be under the direct order and influence of Wananga and Perfilev.<sup>521, 522</sup> The Sentry reached out to Lapajo and Sérégaza for comment but did not receive a reply. Yélengué told The Sentry, “I would be happy to respond favorably to your report in the context of an official investigation duly signed by a natural and legal person. But informally, as is the case (The Sentry), I am not able to answer you.”<sup>523</sup>

### Presidential guard at Touadéra's residence, led by Colonel Jules Wananga

This unit is in charge of special security and protection for Touadéra and his residence. Thus, Wananga's unit mostly operates in Bangui and the surrounding area, including Touadéra's native town, Damara, but it can sometimes be sent on special operations outside the capital, according to sources interviewed by The Sentry.<sup>524</sup> The unit also seems to take on the role of Touadéra's private police and is referred to as the “Gestapo of the regime,” according to a former MCU executive and a source with firsthand information on the security apparatus.<sup>525, 526, 527, 528</sup> This unit appears to be the most tribalized of all the presidential guard units,



as its members are primarily Ngbaka Mandja.<sup>529, 530, 531</sup> Two sources with firsthand information told The Sentry that Wananga is instrumental in ensuring the recruitment of new Ngbaka Mandja members into the army to create Touadéra's private and faithful force.<sup>532</sup>

Wananga's unit was theoretically under Lapajo's orders, but multiple sources told The Sentry that the relationship between the two men was not good and that Wananga is influential enough that he only receives orders from Touadéra and Perfilev.<sup>533</sup> Meanwhile, Piri and Bireau—both of whom are Touadéra's relatives and members of the Ngbaka Mandja community—also exert a strong influence on the unit.<sup>534, 535</sup> Although Sérégaza is the new GSRP general director, sources with firsthand information told The Sentry that Wananga is really in charge.<sup>536</sup>

In leading Touadéra's private militia, Wananga appears to have played a crucial role in the combing missions to target and eliminate members of the Gbaya community in Bangui as part of the counteroffensive against the CPC, according to three sources with firsthand information.<sup>537, 538</sup> He allegedly also distributed weapons to local militias in Bangui that were seen acting alongside the presidential guard.<sup>539</sup> At that time, notorious anti-Balaka militias led by Thierry Lébéné, known as “Douze Puissance;” Marius Dimba, known as “Chef de Terre;” Aka Ozaguin; and “Yarkopa” were deployed alongside Wananga's unit.<sup>540</sup> This mix of GSPR elements and militiamen—sometimes dressed in GSPR uniforms—were commonly known as “les requins,” or “the Sharks.”<sup>541, 542, 543, 544</sup> The Sentry reached out to Thierry Lébéné and Marius Dimba for comment but did not receive a reply.

### **Special forces and reconnaissance team, led by Lieutenant Julien Foulou Rafai**

Responsible for securing Touadéra in all of his movements, this unit was known as “Alpha One.”<sup>545, 546, 547, 548</sup> Rafai's unit also specialized in reconnaissance and commando missions.<sup>549</sup> Trained and equipped by Wagner, the unit was headquartered at Camp de Roux in the same building that houses Perfilev's office.<sup>550</sup> Lapajo was Rafai's commander-in-chief, but several sources indicated that Rafai also received orders directly from Touadéra, Piri, and Perfilev.<sup>551</sup> Yalo and Piri allegedly used Rafai's unit to defend their private financial interests in exchange for a commission, according to two sources with firsthand information.<sup>552, 553</sup> Although most of the unit's missions were conducted in Bangui and its surrounding areas, the unit also deployed in towns outside Bangui, including Damara, Boali, Bossangoa, and Bossambe.<sup>554, 555</sup> Following Lapajo's removal, Rafai was also removed from the GSPR at the end of 2022, and he is now deployed in Bouar as part of the FACA.<sup>556</sup>

### **Special forces and reconnaissance team, led by Lieutenant “Yarkopa”**

Rafai's unit has been replaced by a unit referred to as “Unité 124,” “Unité éclair,” or “Force rouge,” led by a former anti-Balaka militia member, a Ngbaka Mandja from Touadéra's native area nicknamed “Yarkopa,” “Nyarkopa,” or “Gnarcokpa” by several sources.<sup>557</sup> Although this unit has not been acknowledged publicly, several military and civilian sources confirmed that Yarkopa and his unit have been incorporated into the army and that Yarkopa was recently appointed the head of Unité 124 thanks to Wananga's maneuvering.<sup>558</sup> A source with firsthand information told The Sentry that the members of Unit 124 “are the ones who secure, inspect ... 48 hours before the president arrival. Then they call the experts ... Wananga takes over.”<sup>559</sup> Sources also confirmed to The Sentry that Wananga exerts a strong influence over this unit, which has been involved in combing missions in Bangui and the surrounding area.<sup>560</sup>



## **Territorial Infantry Battalion 6 (BIT6), led by Lieutenant Colonel Théophile Igor Wallot Makpanga**

BIT6 is a special forces unit within the GSPR that has been led since 2020 by Wallot, about whom very little information exists.<sup>561, 562</sup> Although Wallot received his orders from Lapajo, it also appears that he has been largely controlled by Perfilev and Touadéra.<sup>563</sup> In December 2021, Wallot even declared his allegiance to Touadéra in a speech, saying, “FACA, gendarmes and police, wherever you are, ... never again release one meter of our territory to the enemies of peace. Let’s drive them out of our border ... Let us now show our loyalty to our supreme leader.”<sup>564</sup> While some missions carried out by the BIT6 occur in the capital, most have taken place outside Bangui.<sup>565</sup> Two BIT6 members told The Sentry that, while the missions in Bangui were controlled by the Central African chain of command—Lapajo, at the time—as soon as they left town, the Russians always made the decisions.<sup>566</sup> Members of BIT6 said that the orders given to Wallot by middle-rank Wagner commanders in the field were primarily to cleanse Gbaya and Fulani villages. One of them said, “They asked to burn the houses, rape, loot, torture ... the order was to kill everyone,” and he admitted that BIT6 was involved in the massacre in Boyo in December 2021.<sup>567</sup> The Sentry reached out to Wallot for comment but did not receive a reply.

## **Support unit, led by General Freddy Johnson Sakama**

Sakama was promoted to the rank of general in August 2021,<sup>568</sup> and he is officially the deputy chief of staff in charge of FACA operations, which suggests that he receives his orders from General Zéphirin Mamadou, the FACA chief of staff.<sup>569</sup> However, four sources with firsthand information on the military told The Sentry that Sakama leads a GSPR unit that is under the influence of Bireau and Perfilev.<sup>570, 571</sup> Four sources told The Sentry that this GSPR unit—the existence of which has not been mentioned in any public document—has potentially been involved in the commission of mass atrocities in Bangui and outside the capital.<sup>572</sup> Two of the sources, including a member of Sakama’s unit, confirmed that the unit took part in military operations carried out by the Sharks.<sup>573</sup> Sakama did not reply to The Sentry’s request for comment.

## **The Central African Armed Forces (FACA)**

Mamadou was appointed army chief of staff in July 2018, when he was a colonel, and he was promoted to the rank of general in 2020.<sup>574, 575</sup> Mamadou, along with Sakama and Eugène Omokozoyen, the FACA head of military intelligence, appear to be the three most influential officers within the FACA military chain of command.<sup>576</sup> Although the exact number of FACA soldiers is not known, various sources estimate between 9,500 and 15,000 soldiers.<sup>577, 578</sup> While the GSPR units have benefited from significant financial and logistical support, the FACA have been largely neglected and underfunded, which appears to be creating significant tension.<sup>579, 580</sup> According to a source with firsthand information on the security apparatus, “The Russians were not so interested in the FACA because they were mostly trained by the French and EUTM [European Union Training Mission in CAR], and so they mostly avoided the FACA.”<sup>581</sup>

However, since the launch of the counteroffensive against the CPC, at least six new FACA units have been created, including BIT7, BIT8, BIT9, BIT10, BIT11, and BIT12, with all their members being trained by Wagner.<sup>582, 583</sup> Mamadou declared in a public communiqué in May 2022 that “the FACA have not been taken hostage as it has been evoked in some local radio stations and social networks ... Military and police operations continue both in Bangui and in the provinces to hunt down all bandits wherever they are.”<sup>584</sup> Although all these units should be under Mamadou’s direct orders, military sources and sources with firsthand information on the military suggested that these units have been largely controlled by Wagner.<sup>585</sup> According





to the EEAS, “Command and control relations between deployed units and the FACA General Staff are extremely weak. This is regularly exploited by RU/WG [Wagner] mercenaries, who are able unhindered to take over command on the spot and thus use FACA for their own operations.”<sup>586</sup> Mamadou did not reply to The Sentry’s request for comment.

### **FACA support unit (artillery), led by Lieutenant Colonel Gabriel Ngakoutou Patassé**

This unit oversees FACA military intelligence and is apparently headquartered in Sapeur Pompier in Bangui.<sup>587, 588, 589</sup> The unit’s purported roles are to gather information about individuals believed to be loyal to the CPC or who are considered Russia and Touadéra’s enemies; identify financial transactions made between Bangui and the provinces; and identify potential infiltrations of CPC combatants in Bangui.<sup>590</sup> Although Patassé is under the direct orders of Omokozoyen, Wagner appears to exert a strong influence over this unit and its elements.<sup>591</sup> Among those under Patassé’s command are members who were initially recruited as part of BIT7, including members led by Mohamed Rahama, or “LT,” and Douze Puissance.<sup>592, 593</sup> A blurred line exists between the GSPR, the BIT7, and Patassé’s support unit, which creates confusion about the exact role played by these respective units, their members, and their chains of command.<sup>594, 595</sup> A member of this unit, who had formerly been a member of the group led by LT, spoke to The Sentry about this ambiguity, confirming their deployment in military operations.<sup>596</sup> The Sentry reached out to Patassé for comment but did not receive a reply.

### **Territorial Infantry Battalion 7 (BIT7), led by Lieutenant Colonel Wilfrid Mahelengamo**

Previously led by Lieutenant Edouard Martiano Yelengué and now led by Mahelengamo, the BIT7 was officially created on January 30, 2021.<sup>597, 598, 599</sup> Zakharov was the first to announce the creation of the unit, posting on Twitter that “the FACA’s 7<sup>th</sup> BIT ... will be composed of members of the PK5 self-defense groups.”<sup>600, 601, 602</sup> The creation of the BIT7 has been controversial, and it presaged a phenomenon of greater magnitude—the increasing integration of militiamen and civilians in arms into the FACA and the GSPR.<sup>603, 604, 605</sup> Initially trained by the EUTM at the request of Touadéra, the BIT7 has effectively been a pure Wagner product, according to two sources with firsthand information on the military apparatus.<sup>606, 607</sup> One of the sources even described the BIT7 as “a Wagner’s subsidiary,”<sup>608</sup> while a BIT7 member confirmed taking his orders from Wagner commanders in the field.<sup>609</sup> This was confirmed by the EEAS which wrote that the BIT7 is “controlled by WG [Wagner] personnel who are providing additional training, against the agreement between EUTM and the CAR government on transparent employment.”<sup>610</sup> This observation led to the suspension of the EU military training mission.<sup>611, 612</sup>

Among the BIT7 recruits were leaders of PK5 self-defense groups, which operated in an area called Km5 or PK5 in Bangui, and anti-Balaka groups.<sup>613, 614</sup> These included LT, the leader of a PK5 self-defense group previously led by Nimery Matar Jamous, known as “Force,” and Douze Puissance, an anti-Balaka leader whose group has been active in Bangui since 2014.<sup>615, 616, 617</sup> Douze Puissance was seen on social media in February 2021 wearing a FACA uniform that had the Wagner emblem on it.<sup>618</sup> As part of the counteroffensive against the CPC, elements of this unit were sent to combat zones in western CAR, including Boali, Mbaïki, Boda, Bossangoa, and Bossembélé, alongside Wagner mercenaries who were allegedly from Syria and Libya.<sup>619, 620</sup>



## BIT8, BIT9, BIT10, BIT11, and BIT12

Very little information exists on the role, chain of command, or deployment of these units, which started to emerge with the launch of the counteroffensive against the CPC. The EEAS wrote in its internal working document that, for Wagner, “the newly EUTM trained formed Bataillon d’Infanterie Territoriale 7 (BIT 7), in addition to the creation of BIT 8/BIT 9, admitted by the Chief of Staff of FACA, is the last but critical example of their ability to act according to their needs and in impunity.”<sup>621, 622</sup> Based on information collected by The Sentry and interviews conducted with sources with firsthand information on the security apparatus, these newly created FACA units have been incorporating an increasing number of members of various pro-government and pro-Wagner armed groups who are then used in military operations against the CPC or to secure certain towns or strategic sites throughout the country.<sup>623</sup>

### Pro-Wagner and pro-government armed groups

In 2020, The Sentry wrote that, “as part of an attempt to eliminate an armed faction threatening Touadéra’s reelection plans, the [Central African] regime and its Russian ally the Wagner Group ... supported armed groups accused of abuses against civilians.”<sup>624</sup> With the CPC threat, this trend became more pronounced. Certain pro-Wagner and pro-Touadéra armed groups have been used as a pool of men quickly deployable in battlefields, although some of the men have been incorporated into the army and others have not.<sup>625</sup> However, all these men—whether they hold a military rank or not—have been trained and equipped by Wagner.<sup>626</sup> While Touadéra and Wagner depict CPC militias as the enemies of the Central African people, their alliances with other armed group leaders potentially responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity in the CAR conflict reveal a dangerous double standard.

### UPC branch led by Hassan Bouba

This group is composed of former UPC militiamen who have been recruited on behalf of the Central African presidency and Wagner by former UPC political coordinator Bouba, a man charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity by CAR’s Special Criminal Court.<sup>627, 628</sup> Thanks to Bouba’s actions, ex-UPC fighters have been deployed in Wagner-controlled military operations, particularly to combat the UPC branch led by CPC strongman Ali Darassa.<sup>629</sup> Appointed CAR’s livestock minister, Bouba has played a leading role in chasing down Darassa and providing critical information to counter the UPC threat,<sup>630</sup> and he has been acting as a Wagner proxy.<sup>631</sup>

Within the FACA, the BIT11 appears to include most of the former UPC combatants, according to military sources interviewed by The Sentry.<sup>632</sup> Supervised, trained, and equipped by Wagner, the BIT11 appears to be mostly active in the Ouaka prefecture, where the UPC has had its stronghold since 2014.<sup>633, 634</sup> While an unknown number of ex-UPC militiamen have been incorporated into the army, others have been deployed as proxies.<sup>635</sup> One of the ex-UPC recruits interviewed by The Sentry said that, in order to convince him and others to fight, Bouba promised 15 millions XAF (\$25,000), military training in Berengo by Wagner, and incorporation into the army with the military rank of colonel.<sup>636</sup> The source added that he and other ex-UPC officers “worked for almost 8 months with the Russians, but it didn’t work out, so we fled with arms and returned to the bush to join CPC. ... We only received 500,000 (\$835). We didn’t go to Berengo, [we were] just sent to the gendarmerie where we were given equipment and outfits: RPKM, 12.7mm, grenades, land cruiser vehicles, outfits, bulletproof vests, masks. We had FACA outfits. We were under Russian control.”<sup>637</sup>



## National Defense and Security Committee (CNDS)

Led by Abdoulaye Hissène, a UNSC-sanctioned individual with a CAR arrest warrant issued in 2016, CNDS is the former military branch of the Front Populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique (Popular Front for the Rebirth of the Central African Republic, or FPRC), composed mostly of combatants from the Runga community.<sup>638, 639, 640, 641</sup> Until Hissène decided to rally to Touadéra and Wagner, CNDS was one of the most powerful armed groups in the country, next to the UPC.<sup>642</sup> Sources told The Sentry that Hissène negotiated a deal with Wagner to integrate some of his combatants into the FACA; several hundred militiamen have potentially now joined the FACA and received training from Wagner.<sup>643</sup> Several sources even claimed that Hissène boasts of being in direct contact with Wagner's big boss, Prigozhin.<sup>644</sup>

## Movement of Central African Liberators for Justice (MLCJ)

Mostly composed of members of the Kara community, MLCJ was founded by Abakar Sabone and is today led by Hamza Gilbert Toumou Deya.<sup>645, 646</sup> The MLCJ stronghold is in Birao, a town in northeastern CAR.<sup>647</sup> The Sentry reported in 2020 that the MLCJ was potentially involved in mass atrocities to counter the threat that the FPRC posed to Touadéra's reelection.<sup>648</sup> The MLCJ acted as a pro-government armed group sponsored and equipped by both the Central African government and Wagner.<sup>649</sup> More recently, local media and two sources with firsthand information suggested that members linked to the MLCJ have been deployed in western CAR by Wagner and have also been sent to Ouanda Djallé, where Wagner exploits a diamond mine, and Birao, to ensure the protection of certain strategic sites, including an airport.<sup>650, 651</sup> Deya was awarded the position of delegated minister in charge of disarmament for working in the interest of Touadéra and Wagner, and some MLCJ combatants appear to have been incorporated into the FACA, according to sources with firsthand information on the military.<sup>652, 653</sup>

## Patriotic Rally for the Renewal of the Central African Republic (RPRC)

Founded in 2015 by Michel Djotodia, Herbert Djono Gontran Ahaba, and Arnaud Djoubaye Abazène, the RPRC is mostly composed of members of the Gula community.<sup>654</sup> RPRC leaders rallied to Touadéra in 2020 and joined forces with the MLCJ to combat the FPRC.<sup>655</sup> Ahaba and Abazène have since been rewarded with ministerial positions, with Ahaba becoming minister of transport and aviation and Abazène becoming minister of justice.<sup>656</sup> Contacted by The Sentry, Ahaba confirmed being linked to the RPRC, which is a signatory group of the political accord concluded in Khartoum in 2019. He said, "[The] RPRC has not collaborated with Wagner."<sup>657</sup> In response to The Sentry's questions, Abazène replied, "I have never founded any armed group. I never will."<sup>658</sup>

## Anti-Balaka groups

To serve their respective interests, both the Central African presidency and Wagner have been responsible for the recruitment of local militia groups, including anti-Balaka, throughout the country.<sup>659</sup> In its 2022 report, the UN Secretary-General wrote that in central CAR, "national defence forces and other security personnel [Wagner] recruited approximately 600 former anti-balaka and Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique combatants in Basse-Kotto and Ouaka Prefectures to fight against armed groups, from September 2021 to February 2022. Anti-balaka elements used as proxies there committed abuses, mainly against Muslim communities."<sup>660</sup> Other groups, particularly Ngbaka Mandja anti-Balaka groups such as the ones led by Chef de Terre and Ozaguin, have been recruited by Wananga to the Sharks to protect the Touadéra regime and support the counteroffensive against the CPC.<sup>661, 662</sup>



## Annex 2: Named Wagner-Linked Individuals and Entities

| Individuals and Entities                         | Origin     | Description                  | International Sanctions       |                |                |
|--|------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
|  |            |                              | United States                 | European Union | United Kingdom |
| Yevgeny Viktorovich Prigozhin                    | Russia     | Wagner's financier           | 20/12/2016<br>(first package) | 21/04/2022     | 31/12/2020     |
| Dmitriy Valeryevich Utkin                        | Russia     | Wagner's head of operations  | 20/6/2017                     | 13/12/2021     | 23/5/2023      |
| Valery Nikolayevich Zakharov                     | Russia     | Former head of Wagner in CAR | 26/01/2023                    | 13/12/2021     | -              |
| Dmitry Sytii                                     | Russia     | Head of Wagner in CAR        | 23/09/2020                    | 25/02/2023     | -              |
| Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Ivanov                  | Russia     | Head of OUIS                 | 26/01/2023                    | 25/02/2023     | -              |
| Vitalii Viktorovitch Perfilev                    | Russia     | Head of Wagner in CAR        | -                             | 25/02/2023     | -              |
| Final Leandric Rabenatoandro                     | Madagascar | Manager of Midas Ressources  | -                             | -              | -              |
| Sewa Security Services                           | CAR        | Security company             | 26/01/2023                    | 25/02/2023     | -              |
| OUIS (Officers Union for International Security) | CAR        | Security company             | 26/01/2023                    | -              | -              |
| Maison Russe                                     | CAR        | Cultural center              | -                             | -              | -              |
| Lobaye Invest                                    | CAR        | Mining company               | 23/09/2020                    | 25/02/2023     | -              |
| Midas Ressources                                 | CAR        | Mining company               | -                             | -              | -              |
| Diamville  | CAR        | Mining company               | -                             | 25/02/2023     | -              |
| Meroe Gold/Al-Solag                              | Sudan      | Mining Company               | 15/07/2020                    | 25/02/2023     | -              |
| Kraoma Mining                                    | Madagascar | Mining Company               | -                             | -              | -              |
| Bois Rouge                                       | CAR        | Timber company               | -                             | -              | -              |
| LLC Broker Expert                                | Russia     | Supplier                     | -                             | -              | -              |
| Logistique Économique Étrangère                  | CAR        | Supplier                     | -                             | -              | -              |
| Business Global Tour SARL                        | Cameroon   | Supplier                     | -                             | -              | -              |
| Commercial Bank Centrafrique (CBCA)              | CAR        | Bank                         | -                             | -              | -              |
| Investment Corporation in Madagascar (INCOMAD)   | Madagascar | Investment company           | -                             | -              | -              |





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