



US Waged Years-Long Shadow War Against Wagner Mercenaries In Africa

Description

US special forces and intelligence are **running a proxy war aimed at disrupting Russia's Wagner Group mercenaries in the Middle East and North Africa**, recently unveiled Pentagon leaks show.

The Biden administration has long expressed concern over Wagner's role not just in Ukraine, where it has been spearheading efforts to gain Russian victory over Bakhmut, but especially its expanding presence in Africa as well.



Wagner mercenaries, via Wiki Commons

This shadow war appears to have been going for years even before the Ukraine war, with the classified documents which first showed up on Discord confirming that the US military is actively targeting

Wagner fighters in secret operations.

The Washington Post was the first to highlight the US intelligence related to Wagner, and reports the following:

One document in the trove lists nearly a dozen “kinetic” and other options that could be pursued as part of “coordinated U.S. and allied disruption efforts.” The files propose providing targeting information to help Ukraine forces kill Wagner commanders , and cite other allies’ willingness to take similar lethal measures against Wagner nodes in Africa.

But, the *Post* underscores, these operations have done little to degrade Wagner’s presence and operations. Interestingly there’s even mention of a major incident in Libya:

*And yet, there is little in the trove to suggest that the CIA, Pentagon or other agencies have caused more than minor setbacks for Wagner over a six-year stretch during which the mercenary group, controlled by Putin ally Prigozhin, gained **strategic footholds in at least eight African countries**, among 13 nations where Prigozhin has operated in some capacity, according to one document.*

*The only direct military strike mentioned in the files refers to “**a successful unattributed attack in Libya**” that “**destroyed a Wagner logistics aircraft.**” The document provides no further detail about the operation or why that single plane — part of a far larger Wagner fleet — was targeted.*

It remains unclear whether the Libya operation was accomplished using US proxy forces on the ground (such as US-trained Libyan militias), or if it was a direct special forces or CIA attack. Likely it was the former scenario, given the extreme risk for American commandos in Libya.

Russian state media has meanwhile also taken note of the story, with RT writing this week that “A second leaks-based story published by the Post on Monday cites a document alleging that Ukraine’s military intelligence service, the GUR, and its head, Kirill Budanov, **planned an attack on Wagner officers in Mali.**” Russia is alleging this shows a deliberate campaign to assassination Wagner PMC commanders.

Wagner Group surges in Africa w/strategic footholds in +8 nations as US influence fades

...moving aggressively to establish a “confederation” of anti-Western African states

LEAKED INTEL: US proposed providing assistance to Ukraine & African nodes to assassinate Wagner commanders <https://t.co/HyjNoWEsLG> pic.twitter.com/mvTinVREui

— Prodigal (@ProdigalThe3rd) [April 23, 2023](#)

The US sees Wagner in Africa as part of broader efforts to expand Russia’s influence on the continent. Wagner has long been active inside Syria following President Assad inviting Russian allied forces into

the conflict in 2015. Lately, the West has even blamed the unfolding Sudan crisis on Russia and its mercenaries.

by Tyler Durden

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