

# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

## Treasury Targets Malian Officials Facilitating Wagner Group

July 24, 2023

WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned three Malian transition government and military officials for facilitating the deployment and expansion of the Private Military Company ‘Wagner’ (Wagner Group) activities in Mali. The United States took this step based on evidence showing that these Malian officials have contributed to the Wagner Group’s malicious activities in Mali.

Today’s sanctions respond to the actions of three specific individuals and are not directed against the people of Mali. As the largest bilateral donor of development and humanitarian assistance to Mali, the United States continues to support the Malian people in their pursuit of peace, prosperity, and democracy.

“Today’s action exposes the principal Malian officials who have been instrumental in facilitating the Wagner Group’s entrenchment in Mali over the past two years,” said Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Brian E. Nelson. “These officials have made their people vulnerable to the Wagner Group’s destabilizing activities and human rights abuses while paving the way for the exploitation of their country’s sovereign resources to the benefit of the Wagner Group’s operations in Ukraine.”

### **WAGNER GROUP FACILITATORS IN MALI**

Colonel **Sadio Camara** (Camara), a Malian national, is Mali’s Minister of Defense. Colonel Camara planned and organized the deployment of the Wagner Group in Mali. In 2021, Camara made several trips to Russia to solidify the agreement between the Wagner Group and the Malian transition government to deploy the Wagner Group to Mali.

Colonel **Alou Boi Diarra** (Diarra), a Malian national, is Mali’s Chief of Staff of the Air Force. In his previous role as Air Logistics Chief, Diarra significantly contributed to the logistical movement of Russian entities in Mali. Together, Camara and Diarra formulated and executed the plan that ultimately ushered the Wagner Group into Mali. On several occasions, Diarra accompanied Camara on trips to Russia to cement the deployment agreement between the Wagner Group and the Malian transition government. Diarra is a promoter of the Wagner Group within the Malian Armed Forces, and he has collaborated with Ivan Aleksandrovich Maslov (Maslov), the U.S.-sanctioned head of the

Wagner Group in Mali. In consultation with Diarra, Maslov continues to manage the Wagner Group contingents in Mali.

Lieutenant Colonel **Adama Bagayoko** (Bagayoko), a Malian national, is the Malian Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff. Bagayoko serves as an advocate for the Wagner Group to the Burkinabe transition government, working to secure the Wagner Group's deployment to Burkina Faso. Additionally, Bagayoko is also reportedly seeking to facilitate the Wagner Group's access to gold mining in Mali.

OFAC designated Camara, Diarra, and Bagayoko pursuant to E.O. 14024 for having materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, the Wagner Group.

## THE WAGNER GROUP

The United States has sanctioned the Wagner Group and numerous entities and individuals globally that support its destabilizing activities. The Wagner Group has committed widespread human rights abuses and has exploited and appropriated natural resources across multiple countries in Africa. While acting as a proxy military force of the Kremlin, the Wagner Group has carried out combat operations around the world, including in Russia's brutal war against Ukraine. The Wagner Group has reportedly sought to transit material acquisitions to aid Russia's war against Ukraine through Mali, and was willing to use false paperwork for these transactions.

On June 20, 2017, OFAC designated the Wagner Group pursuant to E.O. 13660 for being responsible for or complicit in, or for having engaged in, directly or indirectly, actions or policies that threaten the peace, security, stability, sovereignty, or territorial integrity of Ukraine, and on November 15, 2022, the Department of State redesignated the Wagner Group pursuant to E.O. 14024 for operating or having operated in the defense and related materiel sector of the Russian Federation economy. The Wagner Group also has been sanctioned by Australia, Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the European Union.

On January 26, 2023, OFAC [redesignated](#) the Wagner Group pursuant to E.O. 13581, as amended by E.O. 13863, for being a foreign person that constitutes a significant transnational criminal organization. Wagner Group personnel have engaged in an ongoing pattern of serious criminal activity, including mass executions, rape, child abductions, and other brutalities in the Central African Republic (CAR) and Mali. On the same day, OFAC designated the Wagner Group pursuant to E.O. 13667 for being responsible for or complicit in, or for having engaged in, the targeting of women, children, or any civilians through the commission of acts of violence, or abduction, forced displacement, or attacks on schools, hospitals, religious sites, or locations where civilians are

seeking refuge, or through conduct that would constitute a serious abuse or violation of human rights or a violation of international humanitarian law in relation to the CAR.

Since the arrival of the Wagner Group in Mali in December 2021, the number of civilian casualties in that country have surged by 278 percent. Many of those civilian deaths were the result of operations conducted by Malian Armed Forces alongside members of the Wagner Group.

On June 27, six agencies of the U.S. government issued a [business risk advisory](#) related to the sub-Saharan African gold sector, which discussed, among other things, concerns related to the Wagner Group's exploitation and profiteering from gold in Mali and other countries.

## **SANCTIONS IMPLICATIONS**

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of the designated persons described above that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons are blocked and must be reported to OFAC. In addition, any entities that are owned, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, 50 percent or more by one or more blocked persons are also blocked. Unless authorized by a general or specific license issued by OFAC, or exempt, OFAC's regulations generally prohibit all transactions by U.S. persons or within (or transiting) the United States that involve any property or interests in property of designated or otherwise blocked persons.

The power and integrity of OFAC sanctions derive not only from OFAC's ability to designate and add persons to the Specially Designated Nationals List, but also from its willingness to remove persons from the SDN List consistent with the law. The ultimate goal of sanctions is not to punish, but to bring about a positive change in behavior. For information concerning the process for seeking removal from an OFAC list, including the SDN List, please refer to [OFAC's Frequently Asked Question 897](#). For detailed information on the process to [submit a request for removal from an OFAC sanctions list](#).

[Click here for more information on the individuals designated today.](#)

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