

Malian government and the Wagner Group: Minister for Africa's statement

News story

The UK is deeply concerned by the Malian government's discussions with Russian private military company Wagner Group.



Minister for Africa Vicky Ford's statement:

The UK is deeply concerned by consultations between the Malian government and the organisation known as the Wagner Group, in which Yevgeniy Viktorovich Prigozhin holds a position of responsibility. Prigozhin is subject to UK sanctions for significant foreign mercenary activity in Libya and multiple breaches of the UN arms embargo.

The Wagner Group is a driver of conflict and capitalises on instability for its own interests, as we have seen in other countries affected by conflict such as Libya and the Central African Republic.

Wagner has committed human rights abuses, undermined the work of international peacekeepers, and sought control of mineral resources, to the detriment of local citizens and their economy. Wagner does not offer long-term security answers in Africa.

We support ECOWAS in urging the Malian government to reconsider their engagement with Wagner in light of the implications that any deal would have on stability within its own borders and the wider region. The UK also reiterates the importance of the political transition in Mali and of elections being held within the agreed time frame.

The UK contributes to security in Mali, in particular through our MINUSMA deployment and contribution to the French-led counter terrorism approach. With our allies and partners we will keep this

situation under close review.

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