

# Russian Mercenaries Deployed to Eastern Ukraine – UK

By [AFP](#)

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**Aris Messinis / AFP**

Russia's Wagner Group has deployed its mercenaries to eastern Ukraine, the U.K. ministry of defense said Monday, adding that over 1,000 would likely take part in fighting following Russian setbacks.

"Russian Private Military Company the Wagner Group has deployed to eastern Ukraine," the MoD tweeted.

"They are expected to deploy more than 1,000 mercenaries, including senior leaders of the organization, to undertake combat operations," the ministry said.

Reputed to be close to President Vladimir Putin, the Wagner Group and its mercenaries are suspected of abuses in Mali, Libya and Syria.

"Due to heavy losses and a largely stalled invasion, Russia has highly likely been forced to

reprioritize Wagner personnel for Ukraine at the expense of operations in Africa and Syria," the UK defense ministry said.

Britain last week slapped more sanctions on Russian individuals and entities, including the Wagner Group, over the February 24 invasion of Ukraine.

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