

Russia's Wagner Group Says Sending Blood-Stained Sledgehammer to EU Parliament

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Yevgeny Prigozhin **Mikhail Metzel / TASS**

The Kremlin-linked leader of the notorious Wagner mercenary group [said](#) Wednesday that he sent a sledgehammer to be delivered to the European Parliament in a dark reminder of one fighter's gruesome killing.

Yevgeny Prigozhin's threatening gesture came as the EU Parliament prepared to condemn Wagner in a non-binding resolution after branding Russia a "[state sponsor of terrorism](#)."

Prigozhin's Concord firm [said](#) he had discussed the anticipated EU Parliament vote with Wagner commanders and decided to respond with what he described as a "case of information."

Video [emerged](#) later Wednesday showing a Prigozhin associate brandishing a violin case containing a sledgehammer with the inscription "PMC Wagner" on its head and artificial

blood stains on its handle.

Embed:

Евгений Пригожин передал в Европарламент «окровавленную» кувалду с гравировкой логотипа ЧВК «Вагнер»

«Подарок» в скрипичном футляре привез юрист Пригожина Игорь Елисеев из Петербурга и передал ее блогерам, которые якобы должны отправить инструмент в Европу. pic.twitter.com/AeHG0HqSYz

— SOTA (@Sota_Vision) [November 24, 2022](#)

The weapon is a nod to another video that appeared this month in which a self-described Wagner deserter was [bludgeoned to death](#) with a sledgehammer after being recaptured.

Prigozhin initially praised the fighter's apparent killing but later [denied](#) Wagner's involvement, instead blaming U.S. secret services without providing evidence.

The sledgehammer was given to a pro-war military blogging outfit that Russian media previously [linked](#) to Prigozhin's so-called "troll farm."

"The information case to be sent to the European Parliament was handed over to a representative of Cyber Front Z," Concord said in a short social media statement.

Cyber Front Z appeared on the Telegram messaging app in the early days of Russia's invasion of Ukraine with a recruitment pitch for IT specialists and designers, as well as "social media commentators" and "spammers." It currently boasts more than 100,000 subscribers on its pro-war channel.

The Gulagu.net prisoners' rights project [identified](#) the person who was filmed delivering the case as St. Petersburg-based Wagner lawyer Igor Yeliseyev.

The EU Parliament will [vote](#) Thursday on a resolution condemning the "heinous crimes" committed by Wagner and urging Russia to withdraw its members from eastern Ukraine and annexed Crimea.

The European Parliament website was hit by a cyberattack claimed by pro-Russian hackers on Wednesday shortly after "state sponsor of terrorism" resolution.

Russia's human rights commissioner has said that investigative authorities were verifying the authenticity of the video showing the Wagner deserter — who had been a convict before his recruitment — being killed.

Prigozhin was filmed personally recruiting prisoners across Russia to join Wagner's ranks to fight in Ukraine this summer.

He admitted to having founded Wagner in 2014 in September after years of denying connections to the shadowy mercenary organization whose fighters have been seen in conflict zones around the world.

Original url:

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