

**Question for written answer E-005038/2021**

**to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy**

Rule 138

**Gianna Gancia (ID), Fulvio Martusciello (PPE)**

**Subject:** Stability in the Sahel region threatened by the activities of the Wagner Group in the Central African Republic

Since 2018, the Wagner Group, a Russian-based military company, has been increasing its activity in the Central African Republic (CAR). Officially, Russia has always denied the existence of relations between the Kremlin and the Wagner Group. However, Russia declared the presence of 1 100 unarmed Russian military trainers in the CAR, as part of a deal signed with the local government in 2018. The CAR Government denies having signed a contract with private companies.

A 2021 report by a UN panel of experts<sup>1</sup> accused Russian trainers working for the CAR armed forces of indiscriminate killings and looting. In addition, the UN working group on the use of mercenaries identified these trainers as Wagner Group affiliates<sup>2</sup>.

1. How does the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) believe this will affect stability in the Sahel area?
2. How does the VP/HR think increased instability in the Sahel region will influence the security of the EU's southern sea borders?
3. Is the VP/HR considering strengthening the mandate of the Takuba Special Task Force and encouraging other Member States to take part in it?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://undocs.org/S/2021/569>

<sup>2</sup> <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gld=26305>