



### MAIN STORIES

A Referendum

Wagner

Rwanda

Security

## HIGHLIGHTS

- On 23 June, Wagner’s financier and founder Yevgeny Prigozhin launched an insurrection in Russia, leading his fighters to within 330km of Moscow before clinching a peace deal with President Vladimir Putin. On 26 June, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said that Wagner would continue to operate in the Central African Republic (CAR) and Mali.
- Fidele Gouandjika, special adviser to President Faustin-Archange Touadéra said that Russia would continue to operate in the country, with or without Wagner.
- Hours after Prigozhin and Wagner ended their rebellion on 24 June, officials with the Russian Foreign Ministry reportedly phoned Touadéra to assure him that the thousands of Wagner fighters deployed in his country would stay.
- The Sentry on 27 June published a report, in which it details how Wagner captured the Central African Republic (CAR) and is conducting a campaign of terror to keep Touadéra in power. In reaction to the report, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sylvie Baïpo-Temon announced the decision of the government to sue The Sentry for defamation.
- The UK on 20 July imposed sanctions on 13 individuals and companies accused of involvement in abuses by Wagner in Mali, the CAR, and Sudan. This includes Russians presented as Wagner's managers in the CAR, Vitali Perfilev and Konstantin Pikalov.
- On 27 June, the United States (US) Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned four companies and one individual connected to Wagner and Prigozhin. The targeted entities in the CAR, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Russia engaged in illicit gold dealings to fund the Wagner Group.

# CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)



- The government expressed confidence that an incident-free referendum on a new constitution will take place on 30 July, with the help of hundreds of fighters from Wagner, who arrived back in the country on 16 July after a rotation of personnel.
- The campaign for the constitutional referendum commenced on 15 July. Two opposition parties, namely Joseph Bendounga's Democratic Movement for Central African Renewal (MDREC) and Michel Amine's National Union for Democracy and Progress (UNDP), who usually support Touadéra, launched a “no” campaign.
- The Republican Bloc for the Defence of the Constitution (BRDC) is boycotting the referendum. The Kwa Na Kwa (KNK), previously led by former president François Bozizé also announced its boycott of the referendum.
- People defied a protest ban on 14 July and rallied against the referendum and new draft constitution in Bangui.
- On 10 July, the text of the new draft constitution was made public. According to the proposals, the President is elected by direct universal suffrage and by secret ballot, in two rounds for a renewable term of seven years and the presidential two-term limit is removed. Dual nationals are not eligible for election as president.
- The latest presidential decree, dated July 7, 2023, lifted the curfew in Bangui but the same does not apply to provincial towns.
- On 3 July, the Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC) opened fire on a pickup truck escorting Chinese miners in Ndiba-Molle, Nana-Mambere Prefecture. The attack left six people dead.
- On 10 July, a Rwandan peacekeeper was killed when his unit was attacked by members of an unidentified armed group during a patrol to protect the town of Sam-Ouandja, Haute -Kotto Prefecture.
- The World Bank on 27 June issued a special edition of the Central African Economic Update. It states that after two consecutive years of near stagnation, CAR's economy experienced a complete standstill in 2022. Real GDP growth is projected at 3.6% over the period 2023-25.



## CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)



- The World Bank announced financing of nearly 500 billion CFA francs for 19 projects in the fields of health, education, energy and transport.
- On 20 July, the European Union (EU) imposed restrictive measures against 18 individuals and five entities under the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime, because of their responsibility for serious human rights violations. The EU sanctioned Popular Front for the Rebirth of Central African Republic (FPRC) General Mahamat Salleh Adoum Kette.
- The International Crisis Group (ICG) in a new report pointed out that Rwanda has become a major player in the CAR, helping the government fight insurgents, supporting state reforms and investing in numerous businesses.
- The French Embassy in the CAR organised a ceremony on 14 July to celebrate the French National Day. The event was honoured by Prime Minister Félix Moloua and a dozen ministers.
- Presenting updated information on the human rights situation in the CAR to the Human Rights Council on 12 July, the United Nations (UN's) independent expert on the human rights situation in the CAR, Yao Agetse, noted continued attacks since April by the CPC and also reported testimonies of harassment and physical violence "against people who express opposing opinions in relation to the constitutional referendum."
- Truck drivers from Chad, Cameroon and the CAR using the Garoua-Boulai-Bangui corridor ceased operations between 15 and 19 July in protest against exorbitant fees imposed by CAR and insecurity.

