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Mali

Wagner's atrocities in Mali

- IV Online magazine - 2025 - IVP611 - December 2025 -

Publication date: Sunday 28 December 2025

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In Mali, the violence exerted by Russian mercenaries against the civilian population is taking place in a climate of total impunity, without condemnation or reaction from the Malian authorities. This strategy of terror worsens an already catastrophic security and social situation.

The country's president, Assimi Goïta, who came to power in a putsch, justified his coup by the previous regime's inability to defeat the jihadists. Nearly five years later, his record is catastrophic, both economically and security-wise.

Inhumanity

If the religious dimension of the conflict in Mali exists, it should not overshadow social and community issues. Peaceful solutions can only be political and developed by the people themselves. They are urgent, because the more the conflict drags on, the more acts of violence against civilians increase in quantity and horror.

Numerous reports detail the abuses committed by Wagner mercenaries. In Tinzaouaten, drones bombed the town in retaliation. In Moura, hundreds of people were executed for three days. The stories of Malian refugees in Mauritania evoke mass rapes. Journalists from *Jeune Afrique* have infiltrated a Telegram network called "White Uncles in Africa 18+", where videos of executions and torture are sold in centres set up in Malian army barracks. Other videos, collected by investigators from the International Criminal Court, show scenes of corpses being butchered and even acts akin to cannibalism.

Testimonies collected by human rights organizations describe the burning of villages, looting and theft of the inhabitants' meagre possessions. They also report kidnappings for ransom. The main victims are Malians from the Fulani or Tuareg communities, wrongly accused of being accomplices of the jihadists.

Deleterious effects

From the beginning of Wagner's intervention, in December 2021, evidence of crimes against humanity has multiplied. The mercenaries seemed to act with impunity. The replacement of Wagner in 2024 by the Africa Corps, a structure directly dependent on the Russian Ministry of Defence, has unfortunately not changed this dramatic situation, and for good reason: more than 80% of the members of the company founded by Yevgeny Prigozhin have been integrated into the new entity.

The despicable behaviour of these mercenaries encourages the Malian military to more violence against civilians and accentuates divisions, even community hatred. Villagers forced to cooperate with the jihadists are considered accomplices by the Malian authorities.

The members of the Africa Corps obviously have no interest in seeing the situation in the country improve, because chaos remains a lucrative source of income for them.

In fact, Assimi Goïta guarantees total impunity to a foreign private military company that massacres its own compatriots, thus contradicting his claims to defend Mali's sovereignty.

24 December 2025

*Translated by **International Viewpoint** from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).*

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