

# Russia Investigating if Western Spy Agencies Were Involved in Wagner Mutiny: Lavrov

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Global Research, June 27, 2023

[Al Arabiya English](#) 26 June 2023

Region: [Russia and FSU](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#)

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*[Russia's](#) Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, said on Monday that Moscow's intelligence services were investigating whether Western spy agencies played a role in the [short-lived insurrection by Wagner chief Yevgeny Prigozhin](#).*

Lavrov said in an interview with state broadcaster RT:

"I work in a government ministry that is not engaged in gathering evidence of unlawful acts being committed, but we do have such agencies and, I assure you, they are already looking into it."

Moreover, he said that when the US ambassador to Russia Lynne Tracy spoke with Russian officials she tried to send "signals" conveying that Washington was not involved in the uprising.

"When US ambassador Tracy spoke with Russian representatives [regarding the situation with Prigozhin] yesterday, she conveyed signals. These signals were, first of all, that the US had nothing to do with it, that the US very much hopes that nuclear weapons will be fine, that American diplomats will not suffer, and it was especially emphasized: the US proceeds from the fact that everything that happened is an internal affair of Russia," Lavrov said.

Lavrov went on to accuse American intelligence agencies of hoping that the aborted uprising would succeed. He specifically pointed to CNN reports which stated that US intelligence officials saw signs of Prigozhin's planned rebellion ahead of time but chose not to weigh in.

"This was probably wishful thinking," Lavrov said, accusing the US of being an enthusiastic supporter of regime change when it can benefit from the process and claimed there had

been numerous attempts at regime change around the world in recent years that were “met with a different response on the part of the US, depending on who was in power and who was trying to carry out the coup.”

He added:

“Where the West is happy with the current government, in such situations no protest can be legitimate. But where the government doesn’t reflect the interests of the hegemon and is pursuing the national interests, in those cases we see various unlawful forces are being stimulated [to attack the authorities].”

This comes two days after top mercenary Yevgeny Prigozhin started a brief but impactful insurrection over the weekend. The rebellion ended by him calling off his Wagner forces’ march on Moscow after agreeing to a deal, mediated by [Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko](#), which would see him exiled in Belarus without any legal action taken against him in Russia.

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Annex: Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov’s interview with RT television, Moscow, June 26, 2023

Source: [The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation](#)

Question: What is the international reaction to the failed mutiny?

Sergey Lavrov: It makes no sense to go over everything that has filled the media in the last few days. Everyone can see and hear the international reaction. Every adult can assess it.

Question: Did Russia’s allies express support?

Sergey Lavrov: In their numerous phone calls to President Vladimir Putin, our colleagues voiced solidarity, support and confidence that the situation would be under control and return to the constitutional framework. And it did.

I also held several telephone conversations initiated by our foreign partners. Many of them expressed the same ideas: solidarity, confidence that we would not allow any attempt to undermine the unity of our state, and [certainty] with the success of the special military operation. But they asked [me] not to mention their calls in public. We comply with their requests.

Question: How do you assess Minsk’s role in defusing the crisis?

Sergey Lavrov: The assessments of Minsk’s role were given to President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko in person. President Vladimir Putin’s press secretary, Dmitry Peskov, has repeatedly explained in detail that during the two leaders’ telephone conversation on the morning on Saturday, June 24, Alexander Lukashenko called for a peaceful solution to the crisis to avoid the bloodshed that would have inevitably taken place if the mutineer units had continued their advance towards Moscow.

President of Russia Vladimir Putin supported this proposal. You know the result. A Kremlin spokesman announced it yesterday.

Question: There were reports that the United States suddenly thought better of introducing sanctions against PMC Wagner lest it found itself “on Putin’s side.” Is this a change in the US’ approach? Earlier, after all, there were loud calls to declare Wagner a terrorist organisation.

Sergey Lavrov: This is not a change of approach. It is further confirmation that this approach depends on what Washington wants of this or that outside player at a certain specific juncture, be it on the international stage as a whole or in a certain country. The United States has repeatedly displayed an absolute bias and vested interest in connection with the Ukrainian crisis. It is waging a war against the Russian Federation using the Ukrainians as proxies.

A few years ago, before the signing of the Minsk agreements, the US Congress marked the Azov regiment and similar units as terrorist organisations. It was written in black and white that US aid to Ukraine should not extend to them. Now all of that is forgotten, with Azov having been rehabilitated a long time ago. Following Big Brother’s suit, the Japanese National Diet passed the decision to remove Azov from its list of extremist organisations.

Everything succumbs to the “rules” that the West obeys itself and wants others to do the same. These rules have nothing to do either with international law or the laws of any country, the Western countries included.

Question: Can a failed mutiny create difficulties in relations with our foreign partners?

Sergey Lavrov: Not with our partners and friends. It may with everyone else, but it does not bother us. Relations with the collective West were destroyed by them. They are no more. One incident more, one incident less, it does not really matter.

President Putin has said more than once: when and if they come to their senses and come up with proposals to restore relations in a particular form, then we will look into what they are asking for and what each of their roles was in unleashing a hybrid war against the Russian Federation.

Question: Is there any evidence that neither Ukrainian nor Western intelligence services were implicated in the so-called rebellion?

Sergey Lavrov: I work at a place that does not collect evidence of wrongdoing. We do have agencies that engage in this kind of work, and I can assure you they are already looking into this.

Question: American websites have posted reports saying that the leaders of some African countries, including the CAR, were panic stricken after Saturday’s events since the Wagner PMC’s activities in Africa could be terminated. How realistic is the termination of the private military company’s activities in Africa? Could this weaken Russia’s image as a stabilising force in Africa?

Sergey Lavrov: If reports of “panic” in the Central African Republic and the rest of Africa were posted on American websites, I strongly encourage you to think about who they are working for and how little they care about being bearers of true facts as opposed to their being keen on gaining favour with their bosses and the forces that are behind the collective West’s ideology and practical actions.

We discussed Russia’s role in Africa earlier. The CAR and Mali are the countries whose respective governments officially requested the private military company to offer its services. This was at a time

when the CAR and Mali had been abandoned by the French and other Europeans who withdrew their anti-terrorist contingents and closed down military bases that were supposed to sustain the fight against terrorism.

At a time when they were left face to face with thugs, Bangui and Bamako asked Wagner PMC to provide security for their authorities. In addition to relations with this PMC, the governments of the CAR and Mali have official contacts with our leadership. At their request, several hundred military personnel are working in the CAR as instructors. This work will continue.

There is an important aspect to this situation. The CAR, Mali and other countries from the Sahara-Sahel region found themselves under direct attack by terrorist units after the “fighters for democracy and freedom” represented by France and other NATO members, in their bid to eliminate Muammar Qaddafi (he knew too much about how the presidential campaign in the French Republic was funded), unleashed an open aggression against Libya. They violated the UN Security Council resolution which prohibits such actions. They broke up the Libyan state, of which the entire international community is still picking up the pieces and has so far been unable to finish this job.

Libya was turned into a huge black hole. Thugs carrying smuggled weapons, terrorists of all kinds, extremists and drug traffickers flowed southward into the Sahara-Sahel region across Libya. They continue to terrorise certain African countries to this day. Let’s not forget the fact that those who destroyed Libya and gained fame for similar aggressive actions against other countries in the region (including Iraq and Syria), turned that country into a black hole in the opposite direction as well, with countless numbers of illegal migrants pouring into Europe. Now Europe is seriously impacted by them and, as they say, does not know how to get rid of them.

Now, regarding who is “panicking” and the causes of panic. I did not see any panic or any change in relations between the African countries and the Russian Federation. On the contrary, I received several solidarity phone calls, many of them coming from my African friends. We believe no opportunistic considerations can exist in Russia’s strategic relations with our African partners.

Question: I take it from your answer that preparations for the Russia-Africa summit are still underway?

Sergey Lavrov: Not “still,” they are in full swing. The summit’s agenda is being supplemented by new and engaging items which will be announced soon. I am sure everyone stands to learn something from these events.

Question: How do you assess the landslide of statements from Western analysts that the Wagner-related crisis revealed the fact that the Russian authorities were losing control over the situation and a civil war would break out?

Sergey Lavrov: This is their wishful thinking. It is something that our Western colleagues were overwhelmed with yesterday and on Saturday evening. I looked at how the events in Russia were being covered. In particular, CNN (if memory serves) reported that US intelligence knew about the impending mutiny several days before, but chose not to tell anyone, clearly hoping that the mutiny would succeed. Another piece of news reported by CNN just yesterday with reference to US intelligence analysts corroborates this theory. It said Prigozhin’s march on Moscow was expected to be met with much more resistance and be much bloodier than it actually was. This indirectly answers your question about what they expected and why they commented exactly as you said. Representatives of the Ukrainian regime, including Vladimir Zelensky and his henchmen Mikhail Podolyak and Alexey Danilov, expressed quite openly, in a Freudian manner, these kinds of “expectations,” that is, the disintegration of Russia as a state. They all lamented that they had not been able to use this situation to “break up the regime.”

A representative of European democracy – President of France Emmanuel Macron – who defends Europe’s “strategic autonomy” from the United States and everyone else, also had something to say. But he did not stray far from US rhetoric. Emmanuel Macron said they were contemplating the situation with caution. Allegedly, it is unfolding quickly, but, most importantly, they saw a split and a frail and weak regime and the army, which fully justifies their actions to continue to provide military support to Ukraine. Even an eighth grader will know what kind of position Emmanuel Macron is advocating, who clearly saw the current developments as a chance to follow through on the threat (which is being repeated by NATO leaders like a mantra) of Ukraine inflicting a strategic defeat on Russia. I am talking not so much about Ukraine, but the entire Western camp, as President Putin said in his speech on Saturday: “The entire military, economic and informational machine of the West is directed against us.” Clearly, CNN, the Ukrainian regime leaders and politicians such as Emmanuel Macron are part of this machine.

Yesterday, US Ambassador Lynne Tracy spoke with Russian representatives to pass on signals (they are not secret) that the United States had nothing to do with it and hoped that things would be good with the nuclear weapons and that American diplomats would not be impacted. She emphasised that the United States saw the developments as the domestic affair of the Russian Federation.

Here, it is also possible to cite some recent and not-so-recent examples where attempts were made to stage a mutiny or a coup d’état in various countries. Each time, the United States reacted differently, depending on who was in power and who attempted to stage the coup. Take, for instance the sadly memorable 2014 – the Kiev Maidan, bloody provocations against defenceless law enforcement officers, and a government coup against the legitimate President. Meanwhile, an EU-backed agreement was signed just several hours before these events. Neither the US, nor its European allies protested against that mutiny. They admitted in a way that this zigzag was produced by a democratic process, as one German leader put it at that time.

A coup also took place in Yemen in 2014 and the country’s President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi fled to Saudi Arabia. During all these long years that we tried to steer the situation with regard to Ukraine back into a political vein, we were told that Viktor Yanukovych had left Kiev. As for the fugitive leader Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, the entire West told us in chorus that no, he was the lawful President and ought to be returned to Yemen – only after he had returned could the process of settlement start.

Also in 2014, there was an attempt to stage a coup in The Gambia. When the first reports about the putschists taking up arms appeared, the US Department of State instantly announced that the US would never recognise forces that came to power by non-constitutional means.

A couple of recent examples. The US adamantly refused to urge dialogue with the puppet government of Moldova, when President of Moldova Maia Sandu went so far in her Russophobia that thousands of people staged peaceful protests. Recall how the West responded – it described this as an attempted coup – that it would never support. At the same time, some processes were taking place in Georgia where the West disliked the government. Supporters of Mikhail Saakashvili (who was brought to power in a West-backed coup and suited the West completely) protested against that government, organising a Georgian Maidan.

These examples show that any protests are ruled out by definition when the West is interested in keeping a corrupt government. But where the authorities are trying to proceed from the national interests of their country and people rather than the hegemon, all kinds of hoodlums are incited to act against them. These are American “rules” – pax americana. This is what they want to see and strengthen.

Question: For the past month, Ukrainian and American officials have been warning almost every day that Russia is obviously going to blow up the Zaporozhye Nuclear Power Plant. Doesn't this insistence mean that there is probably a plan for an attack that would be blamed on Russia? Could this give NATO an excuse to get directly involved in the hostilities?

Sergey Lavrov: This is nonsense. We have commented on this many times. Describing this, we usually refer to a certain animal, calling it an old mares' tale. This is what it is.

The fact that this trite threat and warning have already appeared in the media many times (primarily voiced by representatives of the Kiev regime) points only to one thing. All these people have been trained, including in information warfare, primarily by the Anglo-Saxons, the Poles and even by the Balts (who have become senior comrades of the Ukrainians). If the results of these "training sessions" are so deplorable and unconvincing, I feel sorry about the money that Western taxpayers are spending to pay the "teachers" of such incapable and irresponsible "pupils."

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