

"I helped keep my country **in chaos**. Today, I want to denounce everything, to make amends, **to free myself from my shame and my regrets.**"

The journalist **Ephrem Yalike Ngonzo**, a former collaborator of Wagner in the Central African Republic, reveals to *Le Monde* and its international partners the disinformation operations he carried out with the Russian private military company.

AFRICA • WAGNER GROUP

Confessions of a repentant Wagner disinformation agent from the Central African Republic

By Morgane Le Cam

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INVESTIGATION | **For eight months, Le Monde and nine international media partners, coordinated by Forbidden Stories, investigated the story of journalist Ephrem Ngonzo and the disinformation strategy implemented by Russia in the Central African Republic and later reproduced in West Africa.**

When he arrived at *Le Monde's* offices on September 30, Ephrem Yalike Ngonzo seemed consumed by anxiety – his eyes darting about as he searched for the right words. For months, the 29-year-old Central African journalist had been waiting to clear his conscience. "I helped keep my country in chaos," he murmured. "Today, I want to denounce everything, to make amends, to free myself from my shame and my regrets."

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To come to Paris, he had to flee the Central African Republic (CAR) and death threats from the Russian private military company Wagner, now omnipotent in the country's capital, Bangui. Ngonzo is well placed to assess its power. For two and a half years, between 2019 and 2022, he was in charge of relations between the mercenary group and the local press. In other words, by his own admission, he was Wagner's man of "disinformation."

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