

Abstract

Following a period of disengagement after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian engagement in Africa has resumed in earnest. In the almost-decade since Russia annexed Ukrainian Crimea, Russia has endured criticism and hostility from the international community. Some African nations have, however, continued to express support for Russia in diplomatic fora and continue to engage with Russia through both formal and informal means. Russian engagement in Africa has come into acute focus for its unconventional nature. Particular concern is shown for the use of disinformation and the deployment of Private Military Companies. A distinct pattern of Russian engagement is presenting itself in Africa whereby these services are traded in exchange for access to natural resources, specifically precious minerals. This transaction between Russia and African nations is allowing embattled leaders to hold onto power. This research report seeks to explain and understand this phenomenon.

Keywords:

Russia; Africa; Russia in Africa; Russia-Africa relations; state capture; corruption; extraversion; neopatrimonialism; extra-state capture; Sudan; Central African Republic.

