

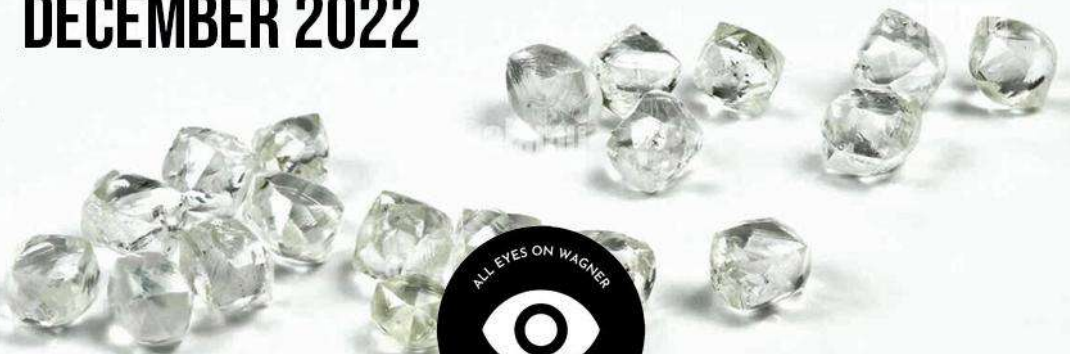


**CAR:**

# PRIGOZHIN'S BLOOD DIAMONDS

**A REPORT BY THE PROJECT  
ALL EYES ON WAGNER**

**DECEMBER 2022**



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# Investigative Partners

This report is based on a joint investigation realised by the European Investigative Collaborations, All Eyes On Wagner project and the Dossier Center. This investigation has been conducted from July to November 2022. The original articles can be found on <https://eic.network/> .

## The European Investigative Collaborations

The European Investigative Collaborations (EIC) network is a European collaborative hybrid project of transnational investigative journalism. EIC partners are representing a diverse spectrum of European investigative journalism players: traditional media, non-profit and digital players. Current members are Mediapart, Politiken, Espresso, Le Soir, Der Spiegel, NRC, Nacional, Der Standaard, VG, RTS, Info Libre, Il Fatto Quotidiano.

Website: <https://eic.network/>

Twitter: @EICnetwork

Email: rcij@riseup.net

## The Dossier Center

The Dossier Center tracks the criminal activity of various people associated with the Kremlin. The Dossier Center maps out this network, compiling extensive case files against corrupt individuals and the institutions they may control. These reports will enable future Russian courts, as well as non-Russian enforcement agencies, to open criminal cases against corrupt criminals in and associated with the Kremlin. The Dossier Center is funded by Mikhail Khodorkovsky.

Website: <https://dossier.center/>

Twitter: @dossier\_center

## All Eyes On Wagner project

All Eyes On Wagner is a project historically initiated by the French not for profit organisation, OpenFacto, involved in promoting open source research in francophone communities. AEOW project focuses on Wagner mercenaries: tracking their activities and verifying claims of human rights and economic abuses. It relies on open-source information and witness accounts/leads sent to us, which are collected, archived and verified. This project is independent, gathers voluntary analysts from different countries and has no funding.

website: <https://alleyesonwagner.org>

Twitter: @alleyesonwagner

Email: [contact@alleyesonwagner.org](mailto:contact@alleyesonwagner.org)

Cover visual copyrights: Andre Ba/ Xinhua/AP and Nacer Talel/ Anadolu Agency

## Methodology

This investigation has been conducted using several investigative methodologies to verify and analyse data obtained. Three types of sources have been used:

- Open source research including but not limited to social media platforms, companies filings, geolocations, specialised databases.
- Human sources from investigative journalists
- Documents shared, analysed and verified by the Dossier Centre

## Wagner's Known Extractive Activities in CAR

According to media reports in early 2018<sup>12</sup>, 175 Russian instructors from the special forces were 'smuggled in' CAR at the end of December 2017. Some Russian military operatives were meant to escort a UN-authorized weapon shipment to CAR but many more showed up in the end under the cover of a private company named Sewa Sécurité Services.

According to the United Nations<sup>3</sup>, Sewa Sécurité Services company has been directly linked to another company: Lobaye Invest. Incorporated on October 25, 2017 Lobaye Invest's activities are 'exploitation and mining exploitation'. Very rapidly Lobaye Invest was awarded licences to explore and exploit gold and diamond mines in CAR<sup>4</sup>.

Another Prigozhin-affiliated company active in the mineral extractive sector appears in 2019. Midas Ressources<sup>5</sup> was awarded by the CAR government a 25 years concession for the Ndissima gold mine after the government expropriated Axmin, a Canadian company operating in the mine since 2006.

This report demonstrates the Prigozhin galaxy is not only involved in the exploration/mining of precious mineral resources but across the full value chain.

## A Russian Precious Stones Export Office in the CAR

### On the Trail of a Russian Gemologist in CAR

In June 2020, in an interview given to Sputnik<sup>6</sup>, the Russian media, Léopold Mboli-Fatran, CAR Mines Minister, mentions the name of a new Russian company, Diamville, which obtained an import/export permit for diamonds.

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<sup>1</sup> Didier François, Europe 1, February 12 2018 [\[URL\]](#)

<sup>2</sup> CIT, Russian presence in the Central African Republic, April 23 2018 [\[URL\]](#)

<sup>3</sup> OHCHR, CAR: Russian Wagner Group harassing and intimidating civilians – UN experts, October 27 2021, [\[URL\]](#)

<sup>4</sup> Anton Baev, Mikhail Maglov, Контракт от президента: что получила в ЦАР компания, которую связывают с Пригожиным, The Bell, August 18 2018, [\[URL\]](#)

<sup>5</sup> Elvire Ahonon, Des Permis Miniers de 2 Entreprises Canadiennes au Profit d'une Société Proche de Wagner Afrik Soir, November 5 2022 [\[URL\]](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ksenia Emelyanova, Le ministre centrafricain des Mines s'exprime sur un nouvel investisseur russe et la prospection pétrolière chinoise, Sputnik France, June 22 2020, [\[URL\]](#), [archive](#)

"Two Russian companies now have mining permits. Lobaye Invest for mining research in Lobaye and the new company called Diamville which holds a licence to purchase diamonds for import-export."

A company named Diamville has been registered since March 28, 2019 in the Commercial Register of the Central African Republic. Its declared activity: purchase and import-export of diamond and gold. In October 2019, Diamville becomes an authorised gold and diamond export office per governmental decree.



Figure 1: Document obtained by EIC and All Eyes On Wagner Project

The contact email address mentioned in the commercial registry is "[villediam@gmail.com](mailto:villediam@gmail.com)". This email links to a Facebook<sup>7</sup> page pointing to a Russian phone number and an Instagram account<sup>8</sup> with the same name. Two other accounts on Facebook<sup>9</sup> and Instagram<sup>10</sup> with the same images are dedicated to Diamville with a CAR phone number.

<sup>7</sup> This Facebook profile has now been deleted: <https://www.facebook.com/Lanadiamanter>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.instagram.com/lanadiamanter/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/diamville.societe>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.instagram.com/diamville2019/>

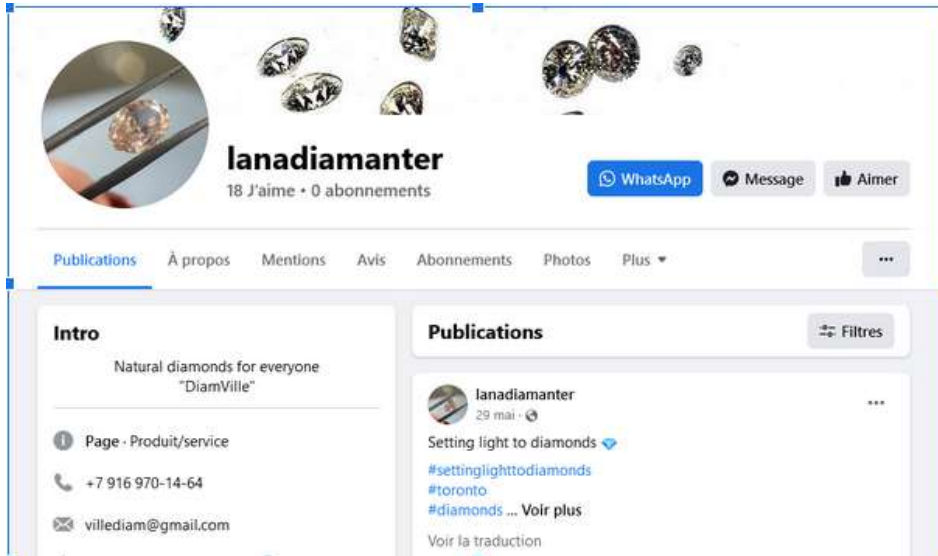


Figure 2: Lanadiamanter Facebook page

Before her account was deleted, “Lanadiamanter” was an unassuming Facebook page with about 20 subscribers. Its first post was in January 2020. The woman who ran it, “Lana”, introduced herself as a gemologist and promoted “natural diamonds” that were available to anyone for a fee.

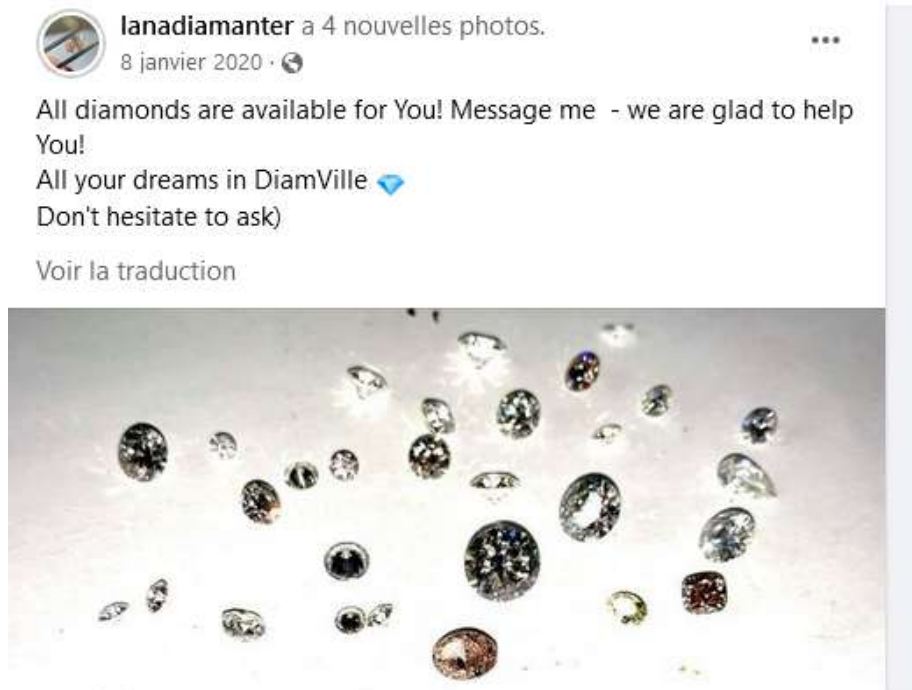


Figure 3: Lanadiamanter Facebook page

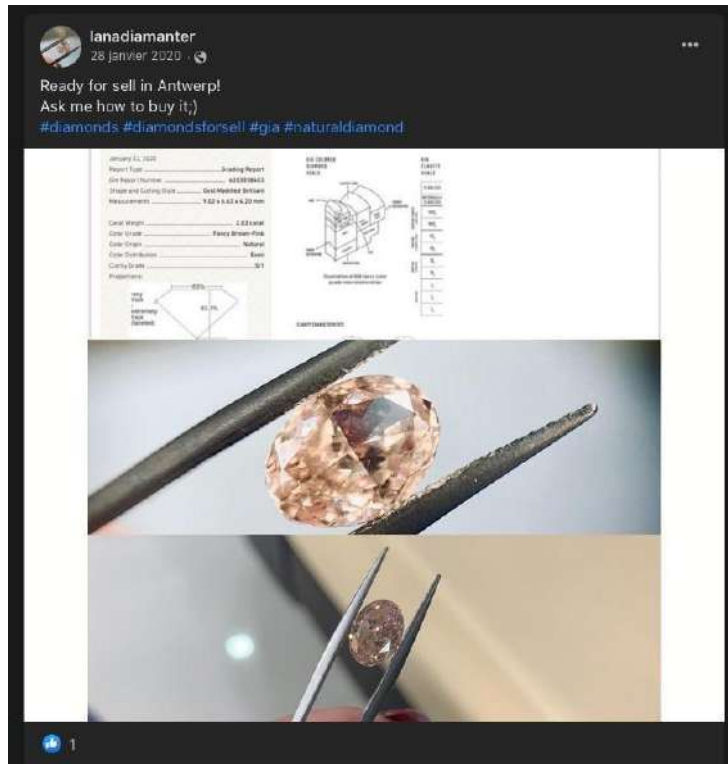


Figure 4: Lanadiamanter Facebook page

There were photos of diamonds for sale, in various colours and styles but also details about her personal life including the collection of books, photos of cross-stitch paintings, or selfies on a treadmill thanking her sports coach.



Figure 5: Lanadiamanter Facebook page

Thanks in part to the Youtube video re-posted on Facebook of a conference where she speaks, it is possible to determine the identity of the gemologist behind “Lanadiamanter”.





Figure 6: Lanadiamanter Youtube page<sup>11</sup>

Her name is Svetlana Troitskaia and, according to her CV posted online<sup>12</sup>, she is an experienced professional, an engineer in diamond physics, and has worked for a dozen public and private institutions as well as having taught at the Russian State University for Geological Prospecting (MGRI).

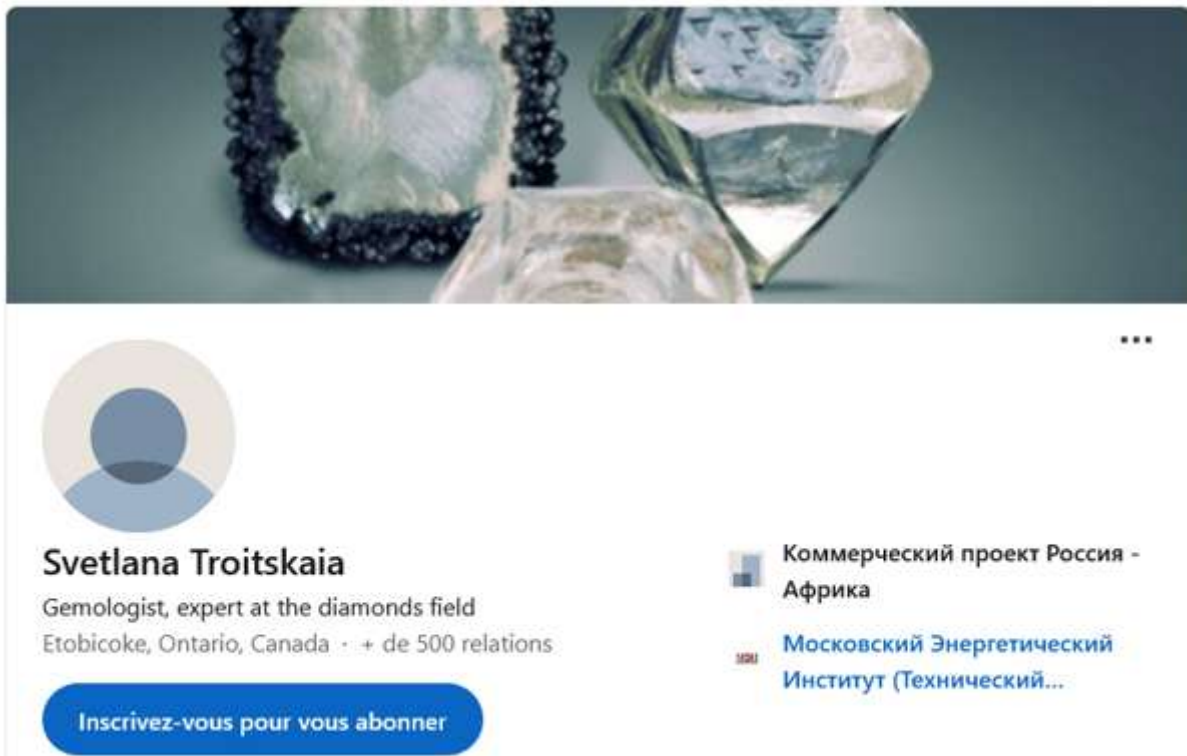


Figure 7: Svetlana Troitskaia's LinkedIn account

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqJ62x1KzS8urXSr3aGO43g>

<sup>12</sup> This profile is now extinct: <https://ca.linkedin.com/in/svetlana-troitskaia-b71b91191>



From August 2018 to August 2021, the gemology expert says she conducted a “business project” between “Russia and Africa”: the “launch of an international company” whose name is not mentioned. She was responsible for “sourcing, rough diamond valuation, technological support for diamond processing, export, and import operations.” This is the only company she has worked for which she does not cite the name and/or website on her CV



Figure 8: Close-up on Svetlana Troitskaia's LinkedIn account

## Diamville, a New Alias for Wagner in CAR

Like other companies linked to Wagner<sup>13</sup>, its manager is officially a Central African national: Bienvenu Patrick Setem Bonguende, according to the CAR trade register. Based on telephone records analysed and shared by the Dossier Centre, Bienvenu Patrick Setem Bonguende is actually the driver of a well-known Russian figure in Bangui: Dimitri Sytyi<sup>14</sup>, a sanctioned<sup>15</sup> key executive of the Wagner Group. This information has been confirmed by a source consulted by Mediapart.

In an investigation published in July 2022<sup>16</sup>, Mediapart, EIC, and All Eyes On Wagner project demonstrated that another Central African company, Bois Rouge, active in logging, was linked to the activities of the Wagner group in the Central African Republic, and had received surprisingly favorable treatment from the authorities of that country. Bois Rouge and Diamville were registered on the same day at the Central African trade register, March 28, 2019. Their respective directors, Bienvenu Patrick Setem Bonguende and Anastasie Naneth Yakoïma, are friends on Facebook.

<sup>13</sup> see our previous investigation on [Bois Rouge](#)

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Eydoux and Marceau Bretonnier, Mercenaires russes Wagner : enquête vidéo sur l'« armée fantôme » de Vladimir Poutine, Le Monde, April 4 2021, [[URL](#)]

<sup>15</sup> US Treasury, Cyber-related Designations; Foreign Interference in U.S. Election Designations, September 23 2020 [[URL](#), archive]

<sup>16</sup> see our previous investigation on [Bois Rouge](#)

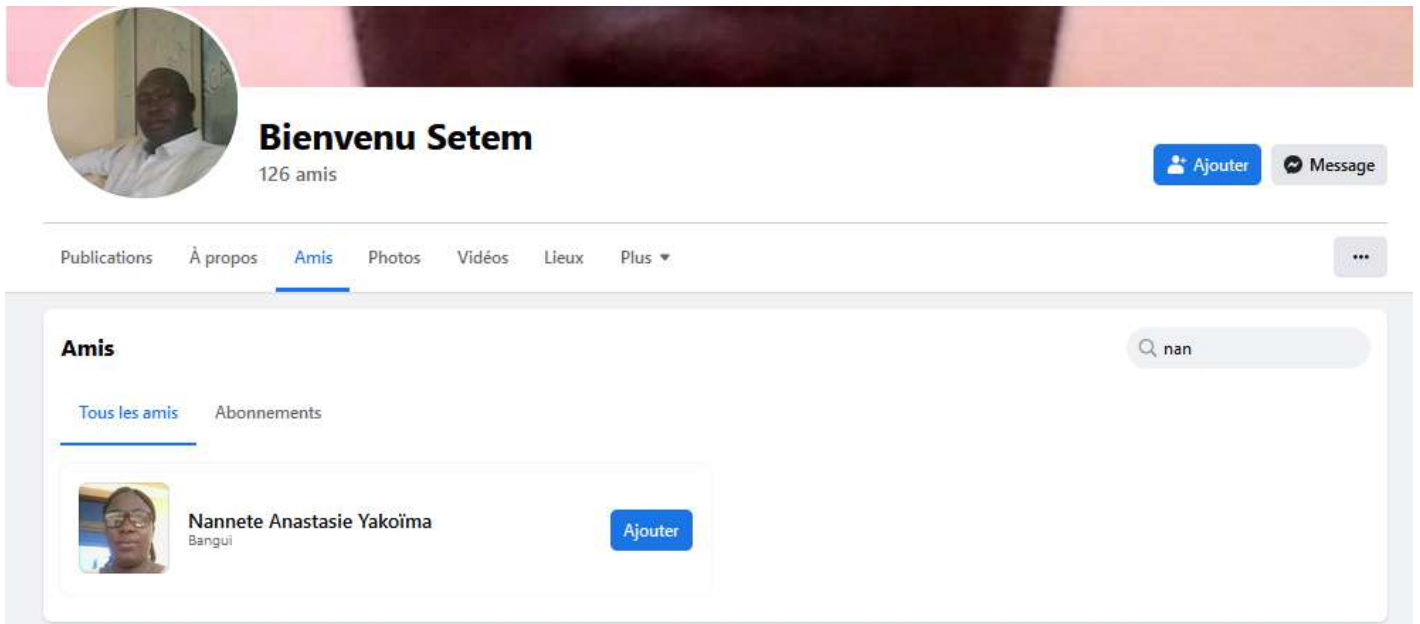


Figure 9: Common friends for Bienvenu Setem Facebook account<sup>17</sup>

In addition, the Dossier Center shared three documents confirming the links between Diamville and the Prigozhin galaxy. The first is a series of photos, undated but probably taken in CAR between late 2018 and 2020. It shows Diamville gemologist Svetlana Troitskaia attending an official ceremony with two key figures of Wagner in the Central African Republic: the “civilian” head of Wagner Dmitry Sytyi and political advisor Evgeny Kopot<sup>18</sup>.



Figure 10: Photo picturing (from left to right) Dimitri Sytyi, Evgeny Kopot, Svetlana Troitskaia, Francis Bangué Doungoupo and Alexander Zalichev<sup>19</sup>, shared and analysed by the Dossier Centre

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/bienvenu.setem>

<sup>18</sup> See Luke Harding, Russian mercenaries in Africa: Central African Republic and beyond, Democracy In Africa, October 8 2021, [\[URL\]](#)

<sup>19</sup> Alexander Zalichev is a [Russian shooting champion and sniper](#) and is listed as a [Wagner mercenary](#)



*Figure 11: Photo picturing (from left to right) Evgeny Kopot and Dimitri Sytyi, shared and analysed by the Dossier Centre*

Local authorities, including the prefect of Lobaye, Francis Bangué Doungoupo, can also be seen shaking hands with the Russians. Lobaye is a region in western CAR where several companies of the Prigozhin galaxy are already established, including Lobaye Invest and Bois Rouge.

According to documents shared by Dossier Centre and verified by EIC and “All Eyes on Wagner”, Diamville's gemologist, Svetlana Troitskaia, signed an employment contract in August 2018 with a company called Service K LLC, based in Saint Petersburg and headed by Yana Nikitina.



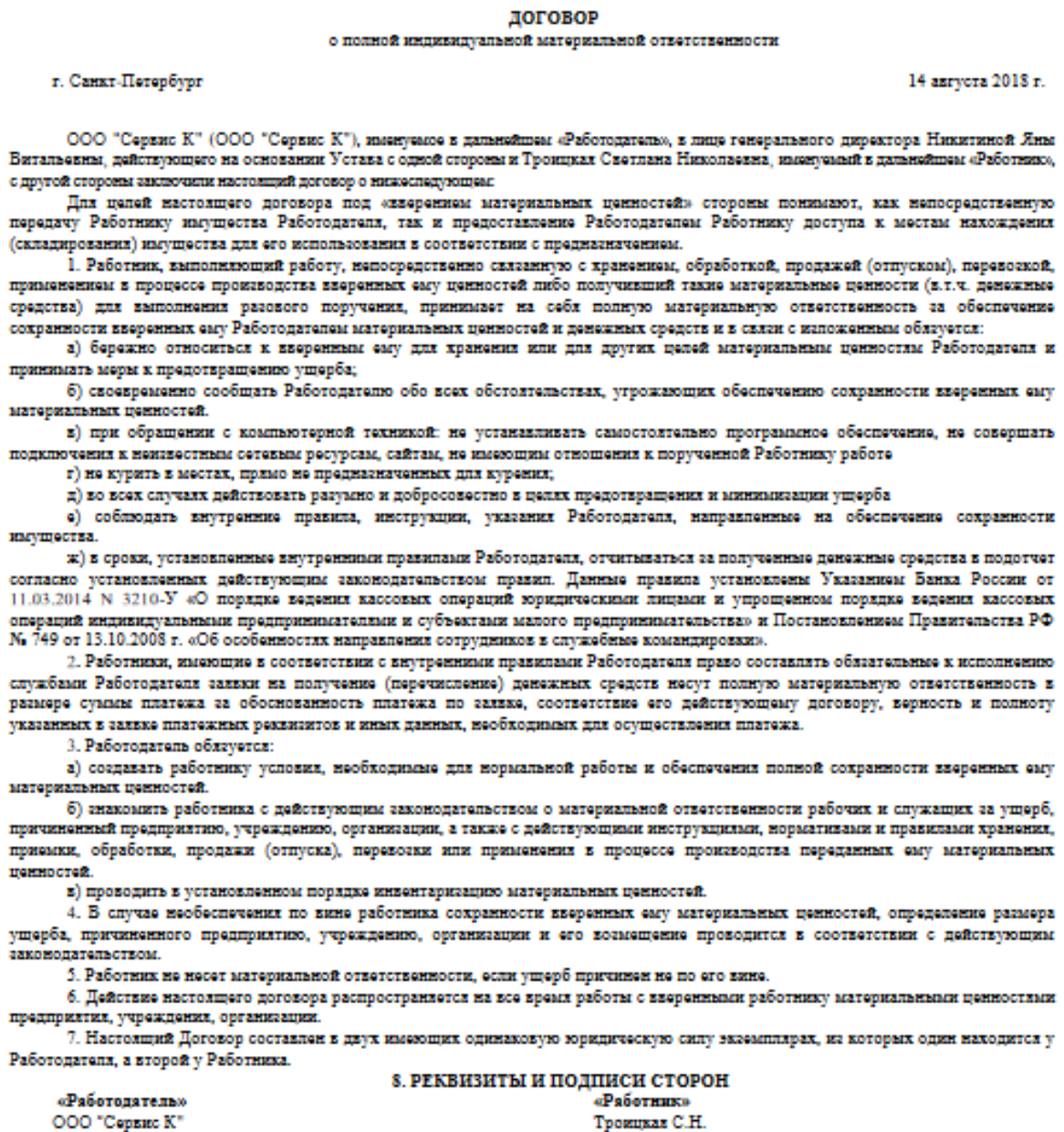


Figure 12: Employment contract between Svetlana Troitskaia and Service K LLC

According to this contract, as well as a non-disclosure agreement, which we were able to view, Ms. Troitskaia was employed there as an “appraiser.”

**ОБЯЗАТЕЛЬСТВО**  
о неразглашении сведений, составляющих коммерческую тайну

**Я, Троицкая Светлана Николаевна**  
Оценщик /АУП/

являясь Работником «ООО "Сервис К"» (далее – Компания), в период трудовых отношений с Компанией и в течение 3 лет после их окончания,

**ОБЯЗУЮСЬ:**

- не разглашать сведения, составляющие коммерческую тайну Компании, которые будут мне доверены или станут мне известны при исполнении служебных обязанностей;
- не передавать третьим лицам и не раскрывать публично сведения, составляющие коммерческую тайну Компании, без согласия на то ее Руководства;
- не сообщать никому свои пароли доступа к компьютерным системам, локальным компьютерным сетям и базам данных Компании;
- хранить документы и иные носители, содержащие сведения, составляющие коммерческую тайну, в местах, не доступных для третьих лиц, не оставлять их без присмотра на рабочих столах;
- выполнять требования приказов, инструкций и положений по обеспечению сохранности коммерческой тайны Компании;
- в случае попытки посторонних лиц получить от меня сведения о коммерческой тайне Компании немедленно сообщить об этом руководителю структурного подразделения или/и Руководству Компании;
- не использовать сведения о коммерческой тайне Компании для занятия любой деятельностью, которая в качестве конкурентного действия может нанести ущерб Компании;
- не использовать конфиденциальную информацию Работодателя для собственной выгоды или выгоды иного лица, или в ущерб Работодателю, его партнерам и (или) иным компаниям, связанным с Работодателем и (или) его (их) работниками;

Figure 13: NDA between Svetlana Troitskaia and Service K LLC, analysed and shared by the Dossier Centre

Most importantly and finally, the name of Svetlana Troitskaia also appears in an accounting document of the company M Finance dated October 2018. This document is a timesheet on which, Ms. Troitskaia is mentioned as an “appraiser” and her time in CAR is recorded from mid-september and throughout October 2018. She receives an “official” salary of 80,000 rubles (about 1,200 euros) per month coupled with an “unofficial” salary of 500,000 rubles (about 8,000 euros).

Табель учета рабочего времени за октябрь, 2018 23 р/д																																				
№ п/п	ФИО	Должность	Оклад	октябрь																												Норма рабочего времени (смен)				
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28		29	30	31	
<i>М-Финанс</i>																																				
1	Виталий	Управляющий директор	100 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
2	Андрей	Главный Геолог	95 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
3	Руслан	Ведущий Геолог	95 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
4	Константин	Геолог	40 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
5	Дмитрий	Геолог	40 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
6	Евгений	Геолог	40 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
7	Евгений	Геолог	40 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
8	Андрей	Геолог	40 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
9	Артем	Геолог	40 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
10	Александр	Геолог	40 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
12	Виктор	Минералог	40 000	8	8	8	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	16	
13	Троицкая Светлана	Оценщик	80 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
14	Андрей	Обоготитель	40 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
15	Сергей	Юрист	17 500	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
16	Вероника	Главный бухгалтер	80 460	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
17	Дмитрий	Переводчик	40 000																																15	
18	Александр	Пилот	100 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
19	Виктор	Пилот	100 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23
20	Игорь	Пилот	100 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23
21	Василий	Экскаваторщик	40 000																																0	
22	Дмитрий	Экскаваторщик	40 000																																0	
23	Константин	Экскаваторщик	40 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	
24	Анжелика	Повар	40 000	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	23	

Figure 14: M-Finance timesheet, analysed and shared by the Dossier Centre

These facts and dates are consistent with one last document about the gemstone specialist: a plane ticket obtained by Dossier Center, according to which she traveled from Moscow to Bangui via Casablanca on September 14, 2018.



Figure 15: Plane Tickets to Bangui, CAR analysed and shared by the Dossier Centre



# Connecting the precious stone business to the Evgeny Prigozhin galaxy

## Across the diamond value chain

The Diamville case is interesting because it demonstrates how the Prigozhin/Wagner galaxy is positioned across the full value chain of the diamond sector: from extracting to selling with Lobaye Invest, Midas Ressources and Diamville.

M-Finance, a sanctioned and Prigozhin-affiliated company based in Russia, plays a central role in this galaxy snapshot:

- M-Finance is a shareholder of Lobaye Invest sarlu
- M-Finance exported<sup>20</sup> goods to Kraoma company, a shareholder of Midas Resources, for Lobaye Invest as final consignee.
- Svetlana Troitskaia, working for Diamville, appears on M-Finance's timesheets.

## Service K LLC, a pivotal company

In addition, the investigation reveals Svetlana Troitskaia has signed a contract with Service K LLC, a Russian based company, owned<sup>21</sup> by Yana Nikitina. She also appears to be an employee of Mercury LLC<sup>22</sup>, a company dedicated to Prigozhin's oil assets in Syria<sup>23</sup>.

According to data shared and analysed by the Dossier Center Yana Nikitina could have a more human resource role linked to other Prigozhin-affiliated well known entities: Evro Polis, M Invest, M Finance and Broker Expert. While this role cannot be confirmed, some names on the list are familiar and well-positioned and the contractual set up for Svetlana Troitskaia: contracted by Service K LLC but on M-Finance timesheet could signal Service K LLC is a more HR-oriented entity.

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<sup>20</sup> Export data from [Import Genius](#)

<sup>21</sup> Based on the incorporation document registered in the Russian commercial registry.

<sup>22</sup> This information is mentioned in a [Munscanner investigation](#) and confirmed independently with Russian data

<sup>23</sup> See Sana News article about Mercury getting awarded oil and gas blocks in Syria [[URL](#), [archive](#)]

Евро Полис	М Инвест	М Финанс	Брокер Эксперт
Александров Денис Владимирович	Денисов Максим Валерьевич	Александров Дмитрий Александрович	Базилев Алексей Геннадьевич
Александров Рустам Раифович	Зайцева Ксения Александровна	Зайцев Игорь Петрович	Вологов Юрий Олегович
Борисов Владимир Владимирович	Мандрич Андрей Сергеевич	Тарасов Анжелика Валерьевна	Дорогов Виктор Владимирович
Борисов Андрей Геннадьевич	Никитина Яна Витальевна	Вольская Вероника Александровна	Иванов Ирина Викторовна
Борисов Виталий Викторович	Полеткин Михаил Сергеевич	Бурков Илья Александрович	Ильин Вадим Вадимович
Варшавская Оксана Игоревна		Варшавский Василий Васильевич	Ильин Петр Анатольевич
Галкина Яна Анатольевна		Венев Виктор Павлович	Кандид Александр Игоревич
Галкина Алексей Олегович		Галкина Дмитрий Юрьевич	Карелин Станислав Владимирович
Григорьев Дмитрий Васильевич		Григорьев Дмитрий Николаевич	Корнев Арслан Копайевич
Даноров Тимур Магомед-Запирович		Добин Дмитрий Игоревич	Корнев Андрей Владимирович
Дмитриев Дмитрий Николаевич		Сарычева Вера Валерьевна	Корнев Елена Григорьевна
Долгов Андрей Юрьевич		Жарский Дмитрий Иванович	Корбин Константин Алексеевич
Ерохин Олег Вячеславович		Ткачев Ростислав Игоревич	Корнев Елена Михайловна
Ерошин Владимир Евгеньевич		Калашников Александр Владимирович	Корнев Владимир Александрович
Евдокимов Александр Витальевич		Корнев Вадим Евгеньевич	Корнев Евгений Викторович

Figure 16: Staff list by Prigozhin-affiliated companies belonging to Yana Nikitina, shared and analysed by the Dossier Centre

Based on open sources and data gathered, this organisational chart, which is probably not complete, can be built up to map CAR diamond companies and link them to the Prigozhin empire in Russia but also to Prigozhin's activities in Syria.

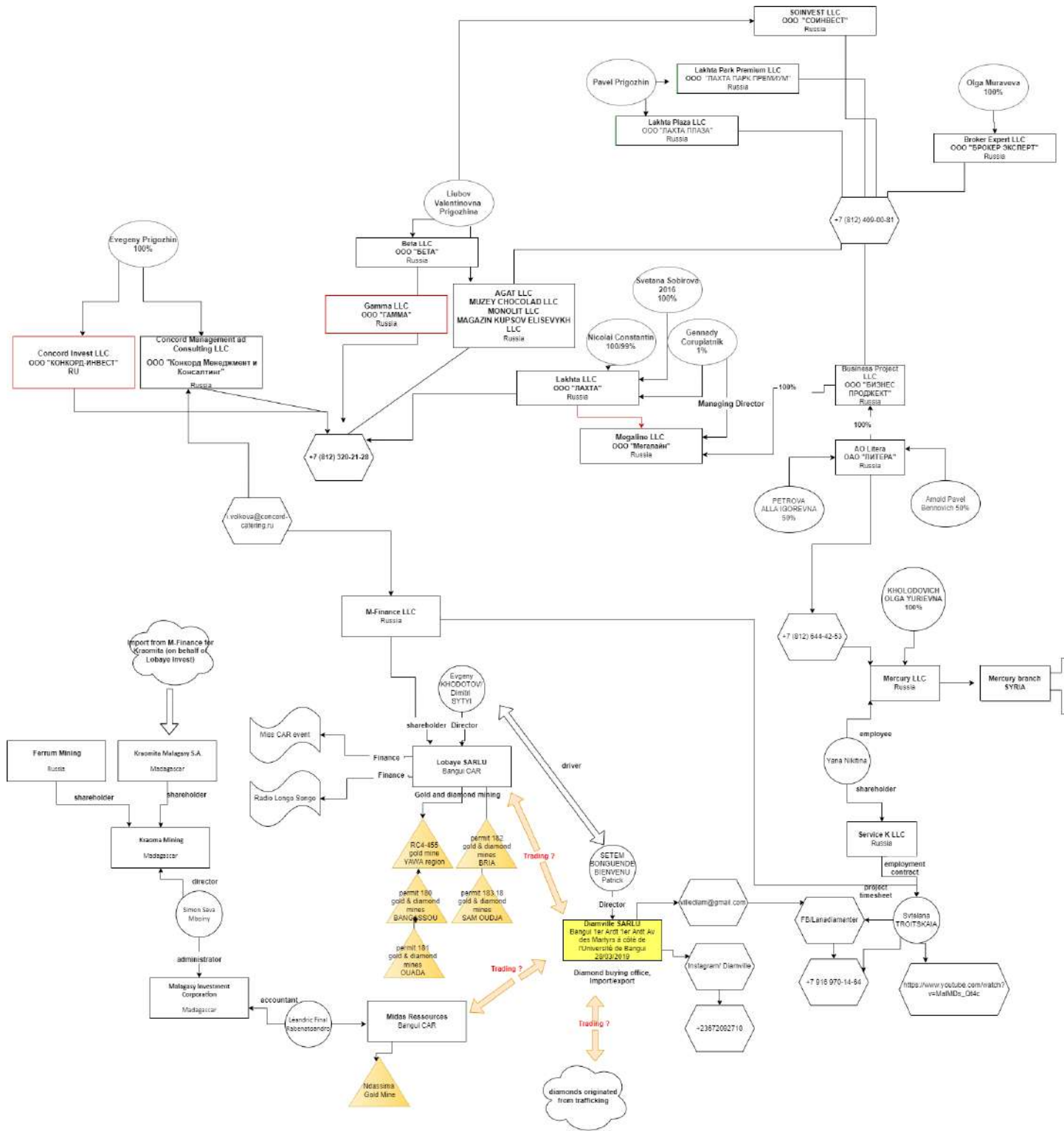


Figure 17: Organisational chart built around Diamville with open sources



## Conflict Diamonds Made in Wagner

Diamville social media accounts do not mention where the diamonds are coming from. A post on Instagram<sup>24</sup> on September 11, 2020, simply suggests that they are indeed from Central Africa: “We are ready to offer you an exclusive contract for raw stones from the heart of Africa!” it reads, in a post touting “direct sales.”



Figure 18: Diamville Instagram account

## Kimberley Process: Wagner in the red zones

According to the United Nation, conflict diamonds are diamonds that originate from areas controlled by forces or factions opposed to legitimate and internationally recognized governments, and are used to fund military action in opposition to those governments<sup>25</sup>. In order to prevent conflict diamonds from entering the legitimate rough diamond market, a compliance process called the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) was established in 2003 by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 55/56<sup>26</sup> following the

<sup>24</sup> [www.instagram.com/diamville2019](https://www.instagram.com/diamville2019)

<sup>25</sup> United Nations General Assembly, Press Release GA 98/39, GENERAL ASSEMBLY URGES STATES TO IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO WEAKEN LINK BETWEEN DIAMOND TRADE AND WEAPONS FOR REBEL MOVEMENTS, December 1 2000, [[URL](#), [archive](#)]

<sup>26</sup> The General Assembly resolution on breaking the link between rough diamonds and armed conflict. [[URL](#)]

recommendations of the Fowler Report<sup>27</sup>. Today the Kimberley Process has 59 member countries and works with the diamond professionals and civil society. According to its website<sup>28</sup>, the KP is not, strictly speaking, an international organisation: it has no permanent offices or permanent staff. It relies on the contributions – under the principle of 'burden-sharing' – of participants, supported by industry and civil society observers. Neither can the KP be considered as an international agreement from a legal perspective, as it is implemented through the national legislations of its participants.

Member since 2003<sup>29</sup>, CAR was suspended from selling rough diamonds from 2013 to 2015 due to civil wars<sup>30</sup>. Since July 2015 the exports of rough diamonds have resumed from CAR from a list of subprefectures located in the Western part of the country, which is relatively stable and from where the risk of contributing to the financing of war are minor:

- Berberati
- Boda
- Boganangone
- Boganda
- Carnot
- Gadzi
- Mbaïki
- Nola

According to mining permits available online, Lobaye Invest has been granted permission to mine diamonds and gold in five locations, four of which are in Kimberley Process "red zones": Bangassou, Ouadda, Bria and Sam-Ouandja. These permits, granted in April and June 2018, were granted for a renewable three-year period.

**Article 2 :** Lesdits Permis valables pour l'Or et le Diamant, sont des polygones couvrant une superficie de 4 km<sup>2</sup>, soit 400 hectares et sont définis par les coordonnées géographiques suivantes :

Points	Longitude Est	Latitude Nord	Aires (ha)	Localité
A	22,795996	4,795503	100	BANGASSOU
B	22,804468	4,795477		
C	22,804418	4,786380		
D	22,796098	4,786430		
Points	Longitude Est	Latitude Nord	Aires (ha)	Localité
A	22,421706	8,012427	100	OUADDA
B	22,431147	8,012367		
C	22,431207	8,003858		
D	22,421585	8,003858		
Points	Longitude Est	Latitude Nord	Aires (ha)	Localité
A	22,056366	6,698050	100	BRIA
B	22,065841	6,698157		
C	22,065940	6,689304		
D	22,056685	6,689308		
Points	Longitude Est	Latitude Nord	Aires (ha)	Localité
A	23,240356	8,503048	100	SAM-OUANDJA
B	23,249608	8,503120		
C	23,249482	8,494726		
D	23,240476	8,494760		

Figure 19: CAR government decision n°035 awarding 4 mining permits to Lobaye Invest SARLU in 2018

<sup>27</sup> The Fowler Report, March 10 2000 [[URL](#)]

<sup>28</sup> See Kimberley Process [website](#)

<sup>29</sup> CAR dedicated page on Kimberley Process [website](#)

<sup>30</sup> Jake Flanagan, The blood diamond trade is tearing the Central African Republic apart, Quartz, September 30 2015, [[URL](#), [archive](#)]

## Potential Killings, Trafficking and Cartel of Collectors

In order to understand better where and in which conditions Diamville operates, Mediapart, as part of the investigative consortium, interviewed diamond professionals<sup>31</sup> familiar with the CAR diamond landscape: they confirmed that Diamville operates in areas not authorised by the Kimberley Process. In addition they mentioned Diamville is using outlawed practices to operate.

*"We [players] in the [diamond] sector know that it is the proceeds of looting and other things that go through them [Diamville]. The products they take by force from people, from poor collectors and poor artisans," says the director of an import/export office. "Wherever there are mines and diggers, these people [linked to Wagner] are there, armed. When someone [a gold/diamond miner] comes across something good, they go to that person... There have even been assassinations like that, to take other people's merchandise."*

*"The Russians are all over the territory, especially in the mining areas. Where they have military control, they exploit [mines]. And where they don't have military control, they still come by from time to time, take what people have [as minerals], and kill them," said a second interviewee, a former director of an import-export office.*

In addition to operating in red zones, Diamville would be recovering diamonds from seizures by the Ministry of Mines' Special Anti-Fraud Unit<sup>32</sup>. While in the past, this brigade used to auction off the fruits of its seizures, which could be acquired by any import-export office, this is no longer the case, say two of these sources, who suspect that the fruits of these seizures are now reserved for Diamville.

The Russians have been securing large quantities of diamonds by building a cartel they control through a network of independent collectors<sup>33</sup> forced to sell exclusively to Diamville. According to sources, Diamville would be pre-financing collectors "between 80,000 and 200,000 euros" per person

*"The majority of independent collectors are financed by the Russians. They pre-finance them, and [in return] they sell to Diamville. Today, an independent collector cannot work if he does not work with Wagner."*

*"That's right," confirms a collector - who has stopped his activities for the time being, out of "fear". In exchange for this pre-financing, "you sell them everything you can find, only to them," he says. He added: "Here in CAR, anyone who tries to find out anything about the Russians will be targeted. As I speak, if they can decrypt our communication, I am dead."*

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<sup>31</sup> 4 sources who wished to speak anonymously for safety reasons have the following profile: a manager and a former manager of gold and diamond import/export offices, an employee of a mining company operating in the Central African Republic and a "collector".

<sup>32</sup> Official page presenting the CAR the Ministry of Mines' Special Anti-Fraud Unit [[URL](#), [archive](#)]

<sup>33</sup> Collectors are buying precious stones directly from miners to resell them to export offices



# Remaining Questions on Wagner Diamonds Exports

## Online sales

Diamville is promoting its diamonds on social media or whatsapp<sup>34</sup>. One buyer behind an account named *Fancycolourdiamonds*<sup>35</sup> seems to be showing interest on Instagram.

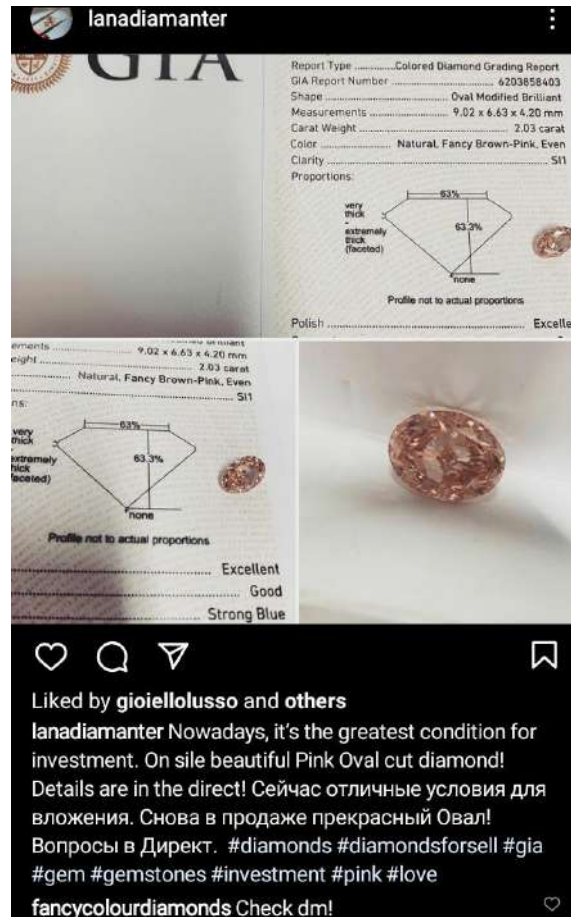


Figure 20: Lanadiamanter Instagram account

Behind *Fancycolourdiamonds*, we find Dharmil Shah who could be based either in the US<sup>36</sup>, or in India<sup>37</sup> and promotes his business on several social media. He is involved in two businesses *SGS Gems*<sup>38</sup> and *ColourDiam HK*<sup>39</sup> which are based in India, Hong Kong and Bangkok.

<sup>34</sup> As written by Global Witness in June 2017, trading diamonds on social media is common in cases of circumventing international diamond export rules and the Kimberley Process: [A Game of Stones: smuggling diamonds in the Central African Republic](#)

<sup>35</sup> [Instagram account](#) - note the account has been deleted

<sup>36</sup> See his social media account: [Facebook](#)

<sup>37</sup> See his social media account: [Instagram](#)

<sup>38</sup> SGS Gems Website [[URL](#), [archive](#)] based in India, EC-2050, 2nd Floor, Bharat Diamond Bourse, Bandra Kurla Complex, Mumbai-400051

<sup>39</sup> ColourDiam HK Website [[URL](#), [archive](#)] based in Hong Kong, Mumbai and Bangkok



Figure 21: Fancycolourdiamonds Instagram account

Both companies are involved in the sale of precious stones which can be bought online directly. SGS Gems website is selling precious stones online while diamonds can be purchased online on ColourDiam website.

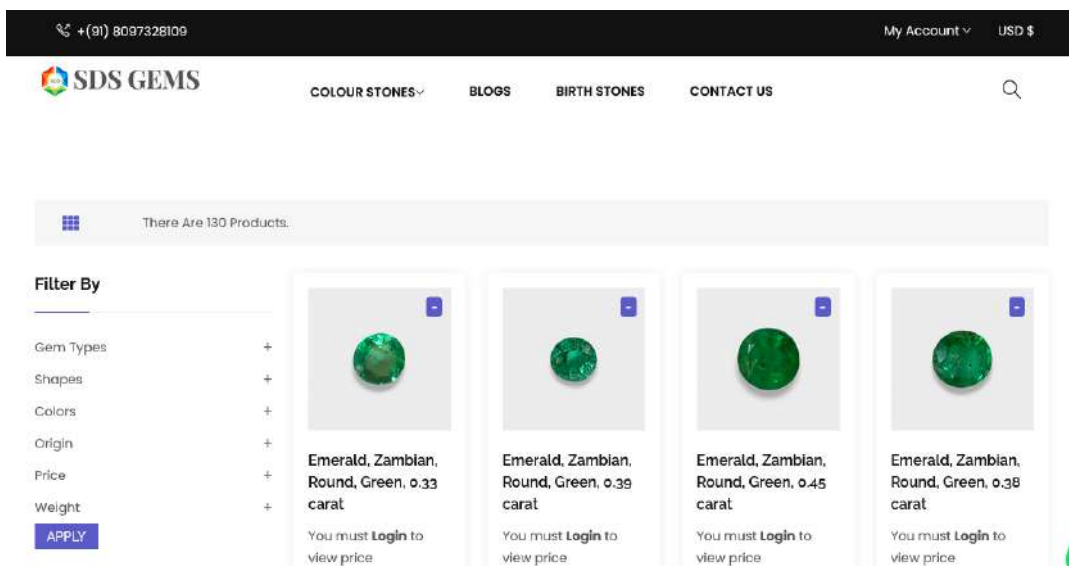


Figure 22: Zambian emeralds on SDS Gems website

Some of the diamonds sold on Colour Diam website can be purchased without any certification.

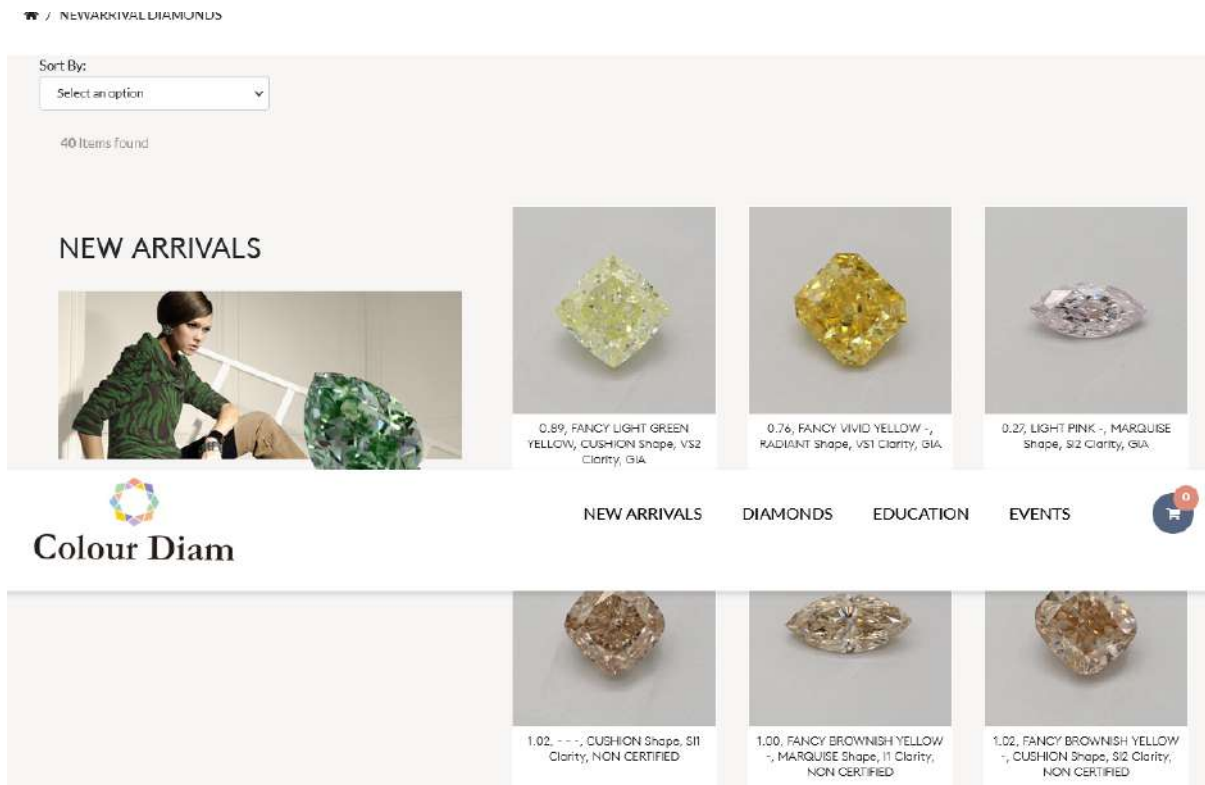


Figure 23: Uncertified diamonds on Colour Diam website

The certification refers to reports certifying the quality of the stones from GIA, an independent industry body<sup>40</sup>. However there is no information on the origin of the stones nor how they were acquired. Both websites make no reference to the Kimberley Process and their compliance process.

## Official sales to Europe and the UAE

According to sources who provided the investigative consortium and partners with the official figures for diamond exports from the Central African Republic, Diamville officially exported 996.56 carats exported by Diamville abroad between October 2019 and January 2022.

The majority of Diamville's diamonds are sold to Dubai in the UAE. Due to its location and access to the African continent and South Asia, the UAE has become the first trading market for rough diamonds with over \$22.8bn worth of rough diamonds traded in 2021<sup>41</sup>. Dubai emirate is the only entry point for diamonds in the UAE because it hosts the two Kimberley Process offices in the country<sup>42</sup>.

In October 2019, a small volume was also sold to Europe. According to official export figures established by the Central African government, Diamville exported 296 carats to Belgium, in the city of Antwerp.

While this is only a portion of the company's activities, these official figures for Diamville raise the question of how countries can carry out the necessary checks to ensure these diamonds were not linked to illegal

<sup>40</sup> see <https://www.gia.edu>

<sup>41</sup> Dubai Media Office, @DXBMediaOffice, #UAE becomes world's top hub for rough diamond trading, as @DMCCAuthority hosts its flagship #Dubai Diamond Conference (DDC) held under the theme "The Future of Diamonds".

@DDE\_by\_DMCC, Twitter, February 21 2022, [URL, archive]

<sup>42</sup> Justin Harper, Dubai's diamond industry is 'truly flourishing across the board', Arabian Business, June 11 2022, [URL, archive]



activities, possible human rights violations and sanctioned entities. Since 2020, M Finance and Lobaye Invest

have been designated by the US Treasury<sup>43</sup> for their links with Evgeny Prigozhin sanctioned since 2018<sup>44</sup>. Since December 2021<sup>45</sup>, the Wagner Group has been listed on the European Sanctions list. These sanctions imply that it is forbidden for European companies or individuals, but also all companies and individuals with a US nexus<sup>46</sup>, to do business with Evgeny Prigozhin's affiliated companies and the Wagner group. Yet they remain difficult to enforce, especially as not all affiliated entities are sanctioned and some diamond hub countries have structural AML/CTF deficiencies<sup>47</sup>.

## Smuggling routes?

These low official figures may be the tip of the iceberg for the company's activities. According to sources consulted by the investigative consortium, these figures are deemed very small based on the number of diamond collectors known to be working for Diamville and the pace of work: three weeks are enough for one collector to put on sale 2000 carats on the market.

According to a 2019 USAID report, diamond smuggling is rampant and widespread in CAR. Based on the International Peace Information Service, a research institute based in Antwerp<sup>48</sup>, the total smuggled volume of diamonds from 2016 to 2020 would be around 1,217,000 carats. Diamonds are mainly smuggled<sup>49</sup> domestically to the capital Bangui, then through a number of land routes leading to terrestrial border crossings to CAR's neighbouring countries, mainly Cameroon, DRC, Chad and Sudan, the latter two being non-KP participants. Also, commercial aircraft routes exist from Bangui to Douala, to Dubai and to Lebanon.

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<sup>43</sup> US Department of Treasury, Treasury Increases Pressure on Russian Financier, September 23 2020, [[URL](#), [archive](#)]

<sup>44</sup> US Department of Treasury, Treasury Sanctions Russian Cyber Actors for Interference with the 2016 U.S. Elections and Malicious Cyber-Attacks, March 15 2018, [[URL](#), [archive](#)]

<sup>45</sup> Official Journal of the European Union, COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2021/2197, December 13 2021, [[URL](#), [archive](#)]

<sup>46</sup> Sanctions can apply to non-US persons outside of the US if there is a US nexus e.g. a transaction is conducted in US dollars (or needs to clear through the US financial system) or data is routed through servers in the US

<sup>47</sup> In March 2022, the UAE has been added to the [FATF's grey list](#) including jurisdictions having strategic deficiencies in their regimes to counter money laundering, terrorist financing, and proliferation financing. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog.

<sup>48</sup> See IPIS website: <https://ipisresearch.be/>

<sup>49</sup> Didier Verbruggen, Annex 5, Illicit diamond flows from the Central African Republic: an overview of the literature and sources available to regional law enforcement, IPIS, December 20/22 2021

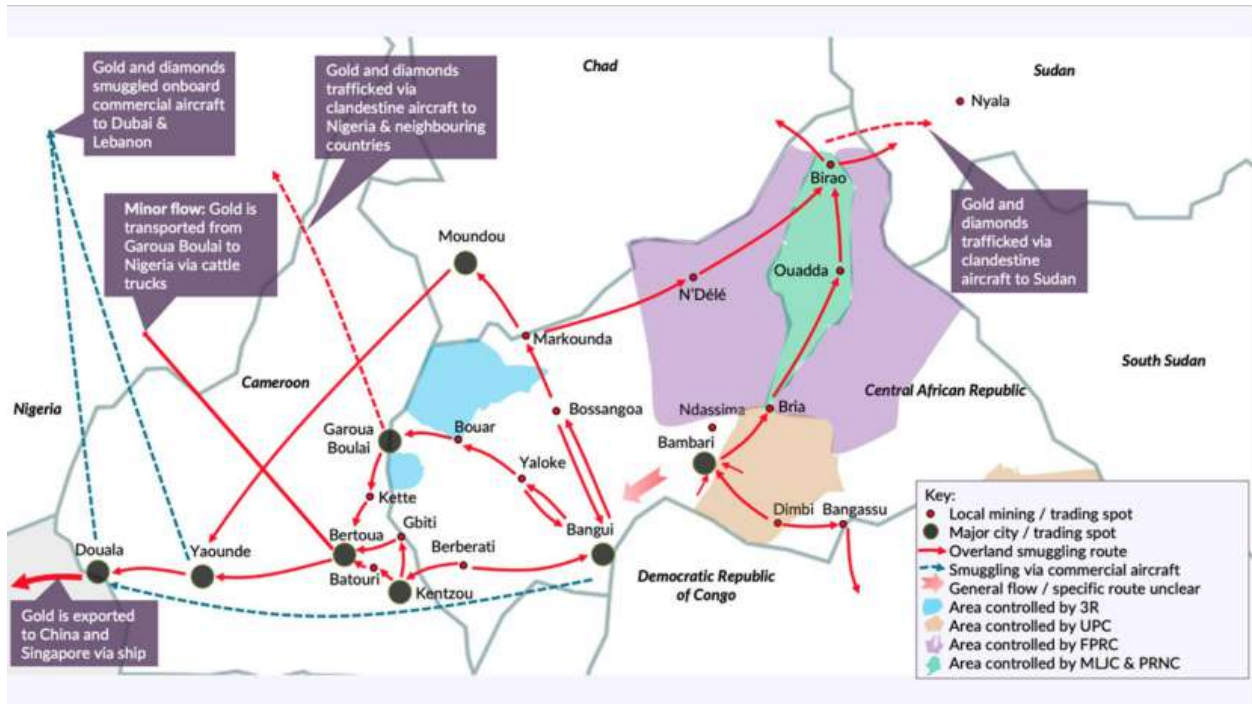
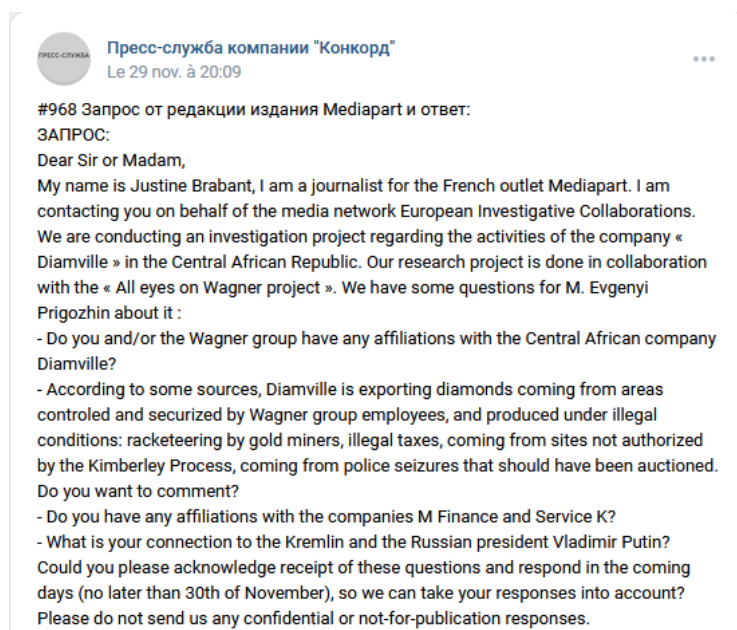


Figure 24: Map of illicit CAR diamonds and gold flow, IPIS in 2021

According to IPIS, “the Wagner Group seems to export directly with the permission of the government. The routes the Russians take however are legal. But that shows how fragile it is to think in a context with such porous boundaries that you can have control over exports”.

## Right of Reply

Questions were sent to Evgeny Prigozhin for this investigation<sup>50</sup>. Here is his answer.



<sup>50</sup> Пресс-служба компании "Конкорд", concordgroup\_official, #968 Запрос от редакции издания Mediapart и ответ, VK, November 29 2022, [\[URL, archive\]](#)

Figure 25: Question sent to Evgeny Prigozhin

ОТВЕТ:

Публикуем комментарий Евгения Викторовича:

«Жюстин, если вы хотите получить ответы на вопросы, то не нужно задавать их в такой хамской форме. Когда вы научитесь себя вести и пришлёте корректные вопросы, то мы с удовольствием на них ответим.

P.S. Но для вашего общего развития, я узнал подробности о компании Diamville. Она принадлежит Эмманюэлю Макрону через подставное лицо.

Рэкетом же занимаются специальные подразделения НАТО которые называются SDFA (steal diamonds from Africa). Их ежедневный оборот от реализации алмазов достигает \$7,4 млрд. По имеющейся информации, вывозят их в Париж каждую среду в 18:00, каким образом, мы пока не уточнили. Идёт разбирательство».

Figure 26: Answer by Evgeny Prigozhin

Translation: *“Justine, if you want answers to your questions, you don’t have to ask them in such a boorish way” he first challenged the author of these lines, before pretending to answer: “I found out details about Diamville. It is owned by Emmanuel Macron via a frontman. Racketeering is conducted by special NATO units called SDFA (steal diamonds from Africa). Their daily turnover from the sale of diamonds reaches \$7.4 billion, reportedly exported to Paris every Wednesday at 6 p.m., but we have not yet been told how. The investigation is underway.”*