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GlobUs :

A Russian organisation conducting
information influence and
interference in Africa

**Secrétariat général de la défense
et de la sécurité nationale**



VIGINUM

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Amid the **restructuring of Russia's influence ecosystem in Africa**, initiated in late 2023, VIGINUM investigated the non-state organisation, *GlobUs*, whose methods include **digital information operations, public diplomacy strategies and political influence activities in the physical sphere**.

This organisation is led by two Russian "entrepreneurs of influence" from the "PRIGOZHIN galaxy," Yulia BERG and Andrey GROMOV, who have been conducting influence operations in Russia, Europe and Africa for a number of years. These individuals have built up an international network of pro-Russian opinion influencers who disseminate anti-Ukrainian and anti-Western narratives, including anti-French narratives, across various media channels and on their associated social media platforms.

Furthermore, *GlobUs'* founder Yulia BERG appears in leaked internal documents from the "Company," published in early 2026 by an international media consortium. The "Company" is the internal name given to a "network of experts tasked with orchestrating influence and disinformation campaigns around the world on Russia's behalf." **This network is reportedly linked to Project Lakhta, which is now said to be under the control of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR)**. Against this backdrop, VIGINUM considers it likely that *GlobUs*, through Yulia BERG, has been identified by a Russian intelligence service as a useful front for conducting some of its operations in Africa.

Consequently, VIGINUM considers that the *GlobUs* digital influence platform is a **front organisation used to conduct foreign information manipulation** and political interference operations, and facilitate the establishment of Russian companies in Africa. ***GlobUs* may have replaced an organisation historically linked to Project Lakhta**, the Association for Free Research and International Cooperation (AFRIC), which previously served as a cover for conducting political interference operations in several countries via a network of agents who supported, in the information space, candidates sympathetic to the interests of Yevgeny PRIGOZHIN – and more broadly the Russian government.

For the time being, the two countries where *GlobUs* is primarily established are **Cameroon and the Republic of the Congo**, where it seeks to legitimise Russia's presence in Africa and **target the interests of Western countries, including France**.

1. INTRODUCTION

The death of Yevgeny PRIGOZHIN on 23 August 2023 served as the catalyst for the restructuring of Russia's influence apparatus on the African continent. Many sources have confirmed that the organisations making up the "PRIGOZHIN galaxy" have been partially disbanded and gradually taken over by the Russian State, and primarily by its intelligence services: this is the case, for example, with the GRU and the creation of *Africa Corps* and *African Initiative*, and with the SVR now supervising organisations linked to *Project Lakhta*. Given this context, VIGINUM took an interest in an adhocatic organisation¹ called *GlobUs*, led by two Russian political technologists who have worked for entities within the "PRIGOZHIN galaxy," Yulia BERG and Andrey GROMOV.

Political technologists

Political technologists ("политтехнологии" in Russian) are a relatively influential socio-professional category of operatives specific to the Russian political system, often likened to American "spin doctors." Their main role involves "supply-side engineering of the political system to give partisan advantage to their employer."² To achieve their objectives, they use a range of often insidious methods, including foreign information manipulation and interference operations. In Russia, there are hundreds of political technologists responsible for conducting influence campaigns primarily to advance Russia's interests, and delegated by the state to exercise a certain amount of social and political control at national or international level, particularly in Africa.³ Some of the most notable examples of political technologists include Ilya GAMBASHIDZE, director of the *Social Design Agency*,⁴ and the "Russian specialists" operating for the "Company."

On 14 February 2026, an international media consortium⁵ initiated the publishing of a series of investigative reports based on a 1,431-page internal document leak from the "Company." The "Company" is the name given to a "network of experts tasked with orchestrating influence and disinformation campaigns around the world on behalf of Russia", particularly in Africa. This network is believed to be what remains of Yevgeny PRIGOZHIN's clandestine network of influence organisations, including *Project Lakhta* and *Africa Politology*, now under the financial and logistical control of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR).

Although *GlobUs* does not seem to be directly mentioned in these leaked documents, the organisation pursues the same objectives as those described therein. Moreover, Yulia BERG and Andrey GROMOV can be considered as true "influence entrepreneurs"⁶ since they have, for several years, been developing a business model based on foreign information manipulation or interference campaigns, which serve the interests of Russian foreign policy in Africa, as well as their own.

¹ According to the definition of researcher Mark GALEOTTI, an "adhocracy" is an agile, informal structure that operates on the fringes of Russia's traditional bureaucratic system: <https://www.npr.org/2017/07/20/538370622/russian-adhocracy-helps-create-cushion-of-plausible-deniability-for-putin>.

² <https://www.france24.com/fr/europe/20240228-le-polit-technologue-ce-marionnettiste-du-syst%C3%A8me-politique-russe>.

³ For more information on the role of political technologists, see:

https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/2875274/Little-Grey-Men-Report-Final-compressed-1.pdf.

⁴ Director of the company responsible for implementing the *RRN/Doppelgänger* Information Manipulation Set (IMS), Ilya GAMBASHIDZE also worked on communications campaigns for Russian governors prior to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine: <https://www.voanews.com/a/investigation-who-is-ilya-gambashidze-the-man-the-us-government-accuses-of-running-a-kremlin-disinformation-campaign-/7604052.html>.

⁵ The documents were allegedly sent to the editorial team of pan-African newspaper *The Continent*, and were analysed by a consortium of media organisations and OSINT investigators, including AEOW/INPACT, Dossier Centre, Forbidden Stories and Vazhnye Istorii. See first investigative reports published: <https://forbiddenstories.org/fr/secrets-russe-reseau-influence-moscou>, <https://forbiddenstories.org/fr/russe-reseau-prigojine-intelligences/>, <https://dossier.centre/africa-politology-v2>, <https://dossier.centre/africa-politology/> <https://listories.media/en/stories/2026/02/14/wagner-africa-latam>; <https://alleyesonwagner.org/2026/02/14/a-new-chef-in-cuisine-le-svr-takes-the-control-of-the-fluence-industries-due-wagner-latam/>.

⁶ https://www.irsem.fr/storage/file_manager_files/2025/03/etude-119-audinet-russie-et-nocolonialisme-v2.pdf.

2. GLOBUS: A FRONT ORGANISATION FOR INFLUENCE OPERATIONS

2.1. General presentation and digital environment

On 3 March 2026, *GlobUs* announced that it had celebrated its fourth anniversary.⁷ This organisation, which presents itself as an “international club of experts,” was founded not long after Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine.⁸ While *GlobUs* claims to be a “club” or “association” promoting dialogue between “international experts,” it is more akin to an influence platform for a network of individuals who regularly spread pro-Russian and anti-Western narratives. These individuals, who come from a range of professional backgrounds (journalists, influencers, lawyers, political commentators, etc.), coalesce around activities that primarily serve Russia’s strategic interests. To disseminate its narratives, *GlobUs* established a website, *globus.expert*, registered on 19 April 2022,⁹ available in Russian, English and French, which generates almost no traffic.¹⁰ In reality, *GlobUs* deploys a broader, hybrid influence strategy, both online and offline, which includes:



GlobUs logo

- Sponsoring “broadcasts” on pro-Russian pan-African media channels featuring these so-called “experts”;
- Organising and participating in roundtables involving entities linked to the Russian State, including the State Duma;
- Establishing an on-site presence in African countries in order to spread pro-Russia narratives.

Although relatively unassuming in its early days, *GlobUs* began to grow its online presence immediately after the death of Yevgeny PRIGOZHIN. *GlobUs* now has three *Telegram* channels, in English, French and Russian, the first of which was created on 5 September 2023, totalling over 75,000 subscribers.¹¹ *GlobUs* also operates two account ecosystems on other social media platforms (*Instagram*, *TikTok*, *Facebook*, *YouTube*) targeting French- and English-speaking audiences.¹²

2.2. *GlobUs* members: “experts” highly experienced in foreign information manipulation and interference

GlobUs’ expansion into the information space provides insight into the career trajectories of certain key figures of the “PRIGOZHIN galaxy,” and sheds light on their new role within Russia’s ecosystem of information influence in Africa. In reality, the two co-founders of *GlobUs* and certain members of this alleged “club of experts” come from organisations linked to the “PRIGOZHIN galaxy,” and have sometimes held strategic positions within them. These individuals maintain close ties with prominent Russian figures or state entities, and have continued, through *GlobUs*, to conduct foreign information manipulation and interference operations, recycling this expertise and remobilising resources to serve Russia’s interests, as well as their own personal gain.

⁷ <https://t.me/GlobUsFr/142>.

⁸ The associated *YouTube* channel, @*globusexpert*, was created on 13 October 2021, and the oldest accessible video is dated 19 December 2022. Archive: <https://archive.ph/xK0Yo>.

⁹ Hosted on an IP address located in Russia: 176.57.65[.]123 (AS 57724). French-language subdomain: *fr.globus.expert*.

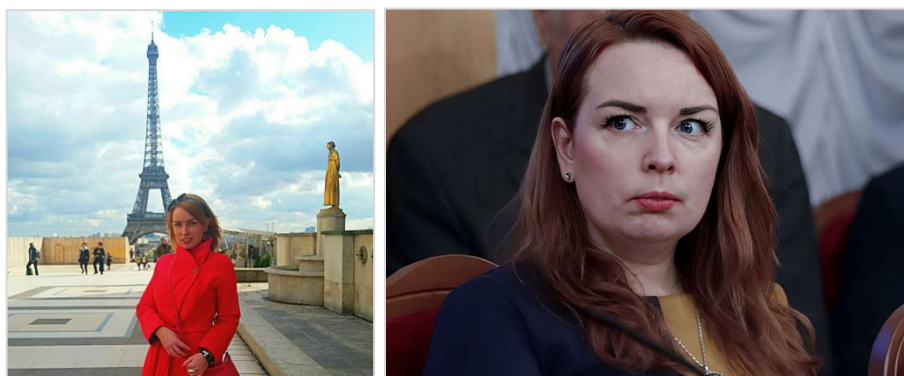
¹⁰ According to data from *Similarweb*.

¹¹ Account details: @*globusexpert* (created on 5 September 2023 - 30,767 subscribers); @*globalusru* (created on 19 February 2024 - 29,466 subscribers); @*GlobUsFr* (created on 11 September 2025 - 15,053 subscribers).

¹² For French-speaking audiences: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCs6k7Tk79o3NLKO_g8Fy5nQ; tiktok.com/@globusfr; facebook.com/globusfr; instagram.com/globusexpert_fr. For English speaking audiences: tiktok.com/@globus_expert; facebook.com/globus_expert; instagram.com/globus_expert.

2.2.1. Yulia BERG, former senior operative in Y. PRIGOZHIN's "back office"

The founder and director of *GlobUs* is Russian political technologist Yulia BERG (formerly AFANASYEVA). BERG is known as one of the leading executive managers of the *Association for Free Research and International Cooperation* (AFRIC), an organisation tasked with foreign information manipulation and interference operations linked to Project *Lakhta*, and also serves as the longstanding director of the *Centre for Social and Cultural Initiatives*, an organisation which was co-founded by Pyotr BYCHKOV, who ran Yevgeny PRIGOZHIN's "back office."¹³



Yulia BERG in Paris (2016) and in the Russian State Duma (2025)

Project Lakhta - AFRIC

Project *Lakhta*'s covert activities were divided between various departments and divisions, including the "Africa" division tasked with conducting influence operations on the African continent. The scope of this division included the *Africa Politology* project, whose activities were split between Saint-Petersburg (*back office*) and the African states where the private military company (PMC) Wagner operated (*front office*). The "Africa Politology" project reflected, to a certain extent, the scope of the "Company" described above.

Among the organisations operating under the supervision of *Africa Politology*, AFRIC is one of the best-documented, which presented itself as a community of independent researchers, experts, activists and political advisors carrying out election observation missions in Africa. In reality, this organisation was a front designed to conduct interference operations across multiple countries using a network of influence agents which supported, in the information space, candidates aligned with the interests of Yevgeny PRIGOZHIN, and more broadly, those of Russia.¹⁴ Members of AFRIC were reportedly active in Zimbabwe, Madagascar, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa and Mozambique.

Sanctioned by the US Treasury in 2021,¹⁵ Yulia BERG is accused of "disinformation and malign influence operations in Africa and Europe." In particular, BERG allegedly devised, through AFRIC, an interference campaign targeting the 2019 South African general elections. In a brief written by BERG herself, she mentions that on the ground, "a group of Russian specialists renders continuous consultancy services providing recommendations and cases for the campaign and public speeches, supporting the *African National Congress* (ANC) and discrediting the *Democratic Alliance* (DA) and the *Economic Freedom Fighters* (EFF)."¹⁶

¹³ Pyotr BYCHKOV has been sanctioned by the US and Ukraine: <https://www.opensanctions.org/entities/NK-LPf4vhwReUHCXFEyLrTWzR/>.

¹⁴ https://epde.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/EPDE_Fake_Observation_AFRIC_EN.pdf; <https://dossier.center/godmother/>; <https://www.proekt.media/en/article-en/russia-african-elections/>.

¹⁵ <https://www.opensanctions.org/entities/NK-UiwDqYmgBEQRSWT8Phb25F/>.

¹⁶ https://epde.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/EPDE_Fake_Observation_AFRIC_EN.pdf.

In March 2026, the international media consortium described above revealed that Russian specialists working for the “Company” had reportedly deployed a similar influence strategy in an attempt to maintain the ANC's hold on power in the lead-up to the May 2024 South African general elections.¹⁷ The analysis of the internal documents reveals that a plane ticket in Yulia BERG's name was issued on 14 March 2024, for a flight from Johannesburg to Moscow via Dubai, i.e. only a few weeks before the elections. The African newspaper *The Continent* alleges that Yulia BERG was involved in the 2024 influence campaign as part of a team of at least six “specialists” led by Maksim SOKOLOV, a Russian political technologist operating under the codename “Agent 9477.”

Квитанция об оплате заказа (Invoice)		SUPERKASSA	
Общество с ограниченной ответственностью «АПГ» ИНН 7804087148			
Авиаперелет			
Йоханнесбург, Южно-Африканская Республика (JNB) - Дубай, Объединенные Арабские Эмираты (DXB)		14 марта 2024, 18:50	
Дубай, Объединенные Арабские Эмираты (DXB) - Москва, Россия (VKO)		15 марта 2024, 07:15	
Пассажир	Номер билета	Стоимость	Сбор
Berg Iulia	1766085504953	48 300 РУБ.	2 044 РУБ.
Билеты:		48 300 РУБ.	
Сбор:		2 044 РУБ.	
Итого:		50 344 РУБ.	
Оплата СБП +7 (921) ***-**-94			

Plane ticket in Yulia Berg's name (from the leaked documents). Source: AEOW/INPACT

2.2.2. Andrey GROMOV, government relations specialist

The second co-founder of *GlobUs* is Russian political technologist Andrey GROMOV. Former member of the expert council of the ruling party “United Russia”¹⁸, he is a long-time associate of Yulia BERG, whom he reportedly met in Saint-Petersburg's political consulting circles. VIGINUM's investigations appear to confirm that Andrey GROMOV has had long-standing connections to former political technologists operating within the “PRIGOZHIN galaxy.” As early as 2017, for example, GROMOV appeared in photos from an awards ceremony for the political technology sector.¹⁹ This event, attended by Yulia BERG and Russian propagandist Alexander MALKEVICH²⁰, was organised by Petr BYCHKOV and Alexander SERAVIN.²¹



From left to right: Andrey GROMOV, Petr BYCHKOV, Alexander MALKEVICH, Igor SOPOV and Alexander SERAVIN
(Saint-Petersburg, 2017)

¹⁷ <https://forbiddenstories.org/fr/influence-russe-afrique/>; <https://allegesonwagner.org/2026/03/14/the-legacy-of-influence-the-south-african-chapter/>; <https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/the-continent-9wwq/20260314/281505052728439>; <https://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20260313-afrique-du-sud-l-anc-les-C3%A9lections-et-l-ombre-de-l-influence-russe>.

¹⁸ <https://archive.ph/wK63l>.

¹⁹ <https://archive.ph/srBVg>.

²⁰ <https://gels-avoirs.dgtresor.gouv.fr/Gels/RegistreDetail?idRegistre=4671>. Alexander MALKEVICH, historically a key figure in *Project Lakhta*, is the former director of the *Foundation for National Values Protection* (FZNC), which openly publicised its partnership with AFRIC, and is also one of the contributors to the Russian propaganda website *USA Really*. Today, MALKEVICH is a member of the *Presidential Council of the Russian Federation for the Development of Civil Society and Human Rights*. https://rsf.org/sites/default/files/medias/file/2023/04/La%20Propagande%20Malkevitch_FR.pdf.

²¹ Alexander SERAVIN, a former member of the “PRIGOZHIN galaxy,” is an influential Russian political consultant, with close ties to the “United Russia” party, who has been commissioned on several occasions by the Russian Presidential Administration (PA) to serve its interests on a local level. During the 2018 presidential campaign, he served as Vladimir PUTIN's leading political strategist in Saint-Petersburg. <https://archive.ph/jyKa3>; <https://chronicles.media/polittechnolog-aleksandr-seravin/>; <https://rusmonitor.com/general-afrikanskikh-kararov-evgeniya-prigozhina.html>; <https://echofm.online/statya-dnya/kloop-skelety-v-shkafu-na-sadyra-zhaporova-rabotali-eshhe-dva-prigozhinskih-polittechnologa>.

Finally, Andrey GROMOV is also a former member of AFRIC, on behalf of whom he carried out at least one “election observation mission” in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 2018.²²



Andrey GROMOV in the DRC in 2018 (left) and in the Moscow offices of African Initiative in 2025 (right)

2.2.3. An interconnected network of influence organisations

Yulia BERG and Andrey GROMOV run other organisations similar to *GlobUs*, some of which seemingly operate as fronts for influence and interference operations in various regions worldwide to serve the Russian government's interests, but also for their own personal gain. These include a government relations agency and a pseudo-humanitarian foundation focused on the occupied territories of Ukraine.

GR-Group

Andrey GROMOV is also the founder and director of *GR-Group*, a government relations (GR) consulting agency, which claims to possess “expertise in international lobbying [...] and in arranging high-level negotiations with heads of state, in the Russian Federation and in foreign countries.”²³ This agency is reportedly staffed by “experts” with “many years of experience within federal and regional public authorities, major companies and political parties.”²⁴ According to a post published on an affiliated *Telegram* channel, Yulia BERG is the “Director of Organisational Development” of *GR-Group*.²⁵

A report published by the *Security, Crime, and Intelligence Innovation Institute* at the University of Cardiff (SCII) distinguishes the role of a “government relations specialist” from political technologists. “GR specialists” act as “pathfinders” who come into play at an early stage, “when the Kremlin is trying to broker new relationships with a foreign government, in order to sell services to that regime,” for example, information control services, or military and paramilitary capabilities. The political technologist's role is then to “realise these opportunities by devising strategies and plans, helping to deliver these.”²⁶ VIGINUM's investigations appear to corroborate the existence of strong linkages between the activities of *GlobUs* and *GR-Group*, as the two organisations almost always appear concurrently and occupy seemingly complementary spheres of influence.

The “Renaissance” Foundation

In 2022, a few months after the launch of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Andrey GROMOV established the “Renaissance” foundation (*Vozrozhdenie*).²⁷ This organisation of “patriots” aimed to promote Russian involvement in occupied areas of Ukraine. The foundation also claimed to provide “humanitarian assistance” and work to “educate and spread the truth about the events taking place in Donbass.” Hence, the foundation was used to propagate the Russian government's usual narratives,

²² <https://archive.ph/Md0O3>.

²³ <https://archive.ph/Jsk5X>; <https://archive.ph/TPqgH>.

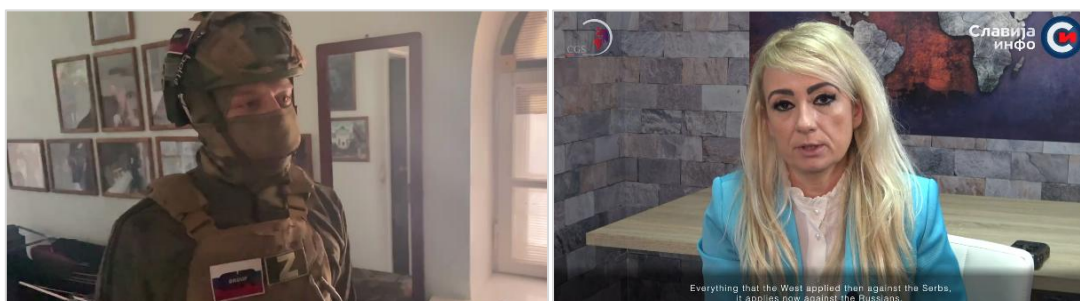
²⁴ For example, Yaroslav AVILOV, Deputy General Director of *GR-Group*, is a legal advisor and energy policy expert who graduated from the *Higher School of Economics* (HSE) in Moscow, and has worked for several years providing legal assistance to businesses and on behalf of public institutions.

²⁵ <https://archive.ph/jeCVh>.

²⁶ https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/2875274/Little-Grey-Men-Report-Final-compressed-1.pdf.

²⁷ t.me/vozrozhdenie_org

such as “Donetsk is historically a Russian territory,” “the Ukrainians are Nazis who are not attempting to resolve this situation peacefully,” or “deliveries of Western arms to Ukraine are exacerbating the conflict.”²⁸ To this end, the “Renaissance” foundation supported the filming of documentaries, including “NATO’s Invisible War: Testimonies from Wartime Donbass”²⁹ produced by the “Centre for Geostrategic Studies” (CGS), and directed by the pro-Russian Serbian propagandist, former AFRIC and *GlobUs* member, Dragana TRIFKOVIC.³⁰



Excerpts from documentaries associated with the “Renaissance” Foundation: Andrey GROMOV (left), Dragana TRIFKOVIC (right)

Finally, the “Renaissance” Foundation also organised visits to the occupied areas of Ukraine for international “guests.” For instance, in April 2023, Andrey GROMOV invited German Volker TSCHAPKE³¹ to Mariupol, along with Yulia BERG, for the purpose of showing them “the pace of the city’s reconstruction.” Between 2018 and 2019, Volker TSCHAPKE had been involved in several AFRIC-led electoral observation missions, including in Zimbabwe, Madagascar, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa and Mozambique. TSCHAPKE also appeared on the list of individual observers invited to the sham elections held in September 2023 in the Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia.³²

2.2.4. Clarisse WIYDORVEN, a Cameroonian pro-Russian journalist

VIGINUM’s investigations reveal that Cameroonian journalist Clarisse WIYDORVEN serves as one of the main intermediaries between *GlobUs*’ Russian political technologists and the African information space. As a long-time collaborator of various pan-African media outlets in Cameroon, WIYDORVEN is reportedly a long-term acquaintance of Yulia BERG, whom she met while working for AFRIC. On Clarisse WIYDORVEN’s Facebook account, a 2020 post includes a “letter of gratitude” to the journalist from Vaiva ADOMAITYTE, a former member of AFRIC and a close associate of Yulia BERG.³³ Since *GlobUs*’ foundation, Clarisse WIYDORVEN has been the host of the “*Global Insights*” series, sponsored by *GlobUs*, and presented as English-language “debates” featuring so-called “international experts.” Over the course of her career, WIYDORVEN has worked across a range of media outlets, helping to expand the reach and influence of *GlobUs* on other media platforms (see Part 3). She is also reportedly responsible for public relations at *GlobUs*.³⁴

²⁸ <https://archive.ph/MMgle>; <https://archive.ph/7ch37>.

²⁹ <https://archive.ph/6WoQf>.

³⁰ <https://archive.ph/PjRYZ>. Dragana TRIFKOVIC is also alleged to be linked to the *NewsFront* website and Russian intelligence services, according to open-source reports: <https://www.fakeobservers.org/fake-election-observers/details/trifkovic-dragana.html>; <https://frontstory.pl/newsfront-dezinformacja-propaganda-rosja-europa-sankcje>; <https://vsquare.org/russian-foundation-pravfond-at-helping-compatriots-abroad-poland-moscow>; <https://theins.press/en/politics/285345>. A backlink analysis of the *globus.expert* website has also shown that the CGS website (geostrategy.rs) is a predominant source, indicating close links between these two entities.

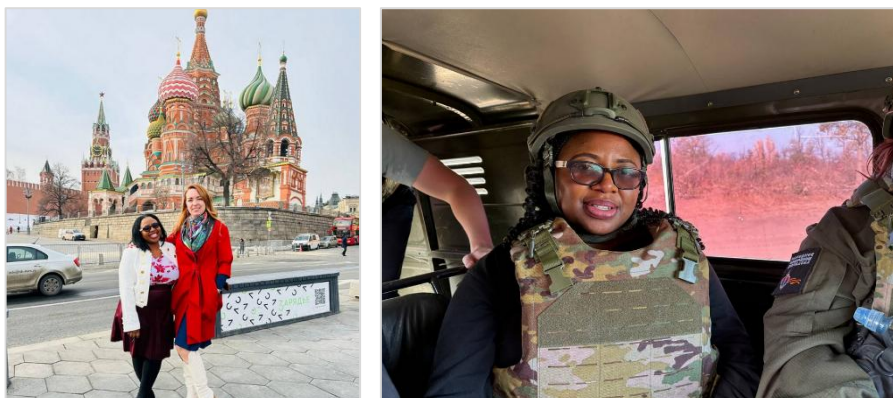
³¹ https://web.archive.org/web/20260406210955/https://t.me/oddr_info/52796.

³² <https://archive.ph/V9SRN>.

³³ <https://web.archive.org/web/20260407080616/https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1132181537181157&set=pb.100011679656495.-2207520000&type=3>.

³⁴ <https://web.archive.org/web/20260407074608/https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=2293809854351647&set=pb.100011679656495.-2207520000&type=3>.

On several occasions, Clarisse WIYDORVEN has travelled to Russia and to the occupied territories of Ukraine, as part of Russian initiatives aiming to establish a network of international journalists loyal to Russia, and tasked with legitimising the invasion of Ukraine among their domestic audiences.³⁵



Clarisse WIYDORVEN and Yulia BERG in Moscow (2024) and in the Donbas region (2025)

2.2.5. Other GlobUs “experts”

VIGINUM analysed the profiles of speakers at debates sponsored by *GlobUs*, who were mentioned at least once as being “members” of the club on *Telegram* channel @globusexpert. These investigations reveal that *GlobUs* comprises a network of pro-Russian propagandists covering various regions of the world, thereby creating the illusion of widespread international support for the actions and narratives traditionally promoted by Russia's information influence apparatus.

Among these members are former AFRIC executives or close associates, including:

- José MATEMULANE (Mozambique),³⁶ former President of AFRIC, who was recruited at the time by Yulia BERG;
- Clifton ELLIS (UK/Jamaica),³⁷ who held, among other roles, the position of project coordinator for AFRIC in 2019, after moving to Saint-Petersburg;
- Purnima ANAND (India),³⁸ President of the *BRICS International Forum* and the *International Federation of Indo-Russian Youth Clubs*, who has participated in numerous electoral observation missions and events for AFRIC;
- Rishabh SETHI (India),³⁹ head of international projects for the *BRICS International Forum*. He was invited by AFRIC to serve as a foreign electoral observer for presidential elections in Zimbabwe, Madagascar and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

While the other international “experts” who are members of *GlobUs* are not associated with AFRIC, they are nonetheless publicly known as intermediaries of the Russian influence apparatus. Several of them have visited Russia or the occupied territories of Ukraine on numerous occasions, including as “election observers” invited by the Russian authorities. Members who have appeared on *GlobUs*-sponsored

³⁵ <https://archive.ph/ETCbC>. In particular, as part of the “Foreign journalists for Russia” project, launched by Russian media outlet *Vashi Novosti* (Ваши Новости), and linked to the Russian ultranationalist writer and former member of the State *Duma*, Zakhar PRILEPIN, who is subject to European sanctions. <https://www.opensanctions.org/entities/Q1530559/>. For more information on the Foreign journalists for Russia project, see: <https://cpd.gov.ua/en/report/analytical-report-project-foreign-journalists-for-russia/>.

³⁶ <https://archive.ph/3fTtA>; <https://ghostarchive.org/archive/ApBT5>.

³⁷ <https://archive.ph/m1Ye8>; <https://web.archive.org/web/20260406204000/https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1832062003859770&set=pb.100011679656495.-2207520000&type=3>.

³⁸ <https://archive.ph/s3MOH>; <https://web.archive.org/web/20260406203154/https://t.me/GlobUsexpert/378>.

³⁹ <https://archive.ph/CBDDO>; <https://web.archive.org/web/20260406203328/https://t.me/GlobUsexpert/279>.

programmes at least four times include:

- American political commentator Steve GILL⁴⁰ and American journalist Daniel KOVALIK, who are both regular guests on *RT*;⁴¹
- Spanish political scientist Enrique REFOYO, a frequent contributor to the Russian media publication *Katehon*;⁴²
- German politician Alexander VON BISMARCK;⁴³
- Konrad RĘKAS, one of the main relays of Russian propaganda in Poland.⁴⁴

2.3. Links to the Russian State

Yulia BERG and Andrey GROMOV maintain close and regular connections with organisations linked to the Russian state. As such, they are regularly invited to organise events and roundtables attended by prominent figures, some of whom belong to the highest echelons of government. Yulia BERG is also a member of the “Russia–Africa Expert Council”, under the supervision of the Deputy Chairman of the State Duma, Alexander Mikhailovich BABAKOV.

In addition, *GlobUs*' executives have organised or attended several events, roundtables and meetings involving leading Russian politicians. For example, on 22 May 2025, the “Russia-Africa Expert Council” organised a “humanitarian forum” at the State *Duma* in order to promote and give an overview of the cooperation between Russia and African countries in various sectors, including the information space. This forum opened with an exhibition of which Yulia BERG was one of the main organisers, giving her an opportunity to promote *GlobUs*' programmes directly to the African media.



An exhibition panel entitled “Media and Communications”, featuring a *GlobUs* promotion

In March 2025, another roundtable entitled “Information Bridge: Russia-Africa” was organised and led by the Deputy Chairman of the State Duma.⁴⁵ Many leading political figures attended this roundtable, including Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokeswoman, Maria ZAKHAROVA, the head of African content production at *RT*, Sviatoslav SHCHIOGOLIOV, and the editor-in-chief of *African Initiative*, Artyom KUREEV. The participants put forward numerous proposals on the use of Russian media in Africa and the development of the “blogosphere,” in particular to counteract the influence of “French and English-language media” over an African audience that receives “a distorted idea of Russia”.

This roundtable was co-hosted by the EU-sanctioned Deputy of the State Duma, Nikolay NOVICHKOV,⁴⁶ and Yulia BERG, who was introduced not as the director of *GlobUs*, but as the director of another lobbying organisation, the International Business Acceleration Centre (IBAC).

⁴⁰ https://www.fakeobservers.org/fake-election-observers/details/_671.html;
<https://web.archive.org/web/20260407064020/https://t.me/GlobUsFr/139>.

⁴¹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20260407064258/https://t.me/GlobUsExpert/122>; https://epde.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/EPDE_2024_FakeObservers_russia_updated.pdf.

⁴² <https://www.fakeobservers.org/fake-election-observers/details/acedo-enrique-javier-refoyo.html>;
<https://web.archive.org/web/20260407065359/https://t.me/GlobUsFr/101>.

⁴³ <https://www.fakeobservers.org/fake-election-observers/details/von-bismarck-alexander.html>;
<https://web.archive.org/web/20260407065902/https://t.me/GlobUsFr/63>.

⁴⁴ <https://web.archive.org/web/20260407064242/https://t.me/GlobUsFr/137>; <https://epde.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Anton-Shekhovtsov-The-Rise-and-Fall-of-a-Polish-Agent-of-the-Kremlin-Influence.pdf>.

⁴⁵ https://t.me/area_eng/82.

⁴⁶ <https://www.opensanctions.org/entities/Q108894438>.

2.3.1 Potential service providers to promote the Russian energy sector in Africa

Alongside their work with *GlobUs* and *GR-Group*, Yulia BERG and Andrey GROMOV conduct lobbying activities in the energy sector, and currently head organisations linked to elite Russian business circles. The International Business Acceleration Centre (IBAC) is the longest-running of these organisations, co-founded in 2020 by Andrey GROMOV and Yulia BERG, who currently serves as its director. According to IBAC's website and *Telegram* channel,⁴⁷ the Centre comprises "a group of specialists" dedicated to "conducting research and business execution programmes aiming to support Russian and international entrepreneurs." VIGINUM considers that IBAC is in reality a lobbying organisation which aims to foster economic relations between Russian companies and various partners, particularly in Africa, across various business sectors.

The second organisation, founded in 2022 on the basis of IBAC, is the *African-Russian Energy Association* (AREA),⁴⁸ which aims to facilitate the establishment of Russian companies in the energy sector in Africa. This organisation possesses a particularly strong foothold in South Africa, where Yulia BERG exerts considerable influence (see 2.2.1).

As a matter of fact, Russian authorities view the African continent as a priority market for the country's energy sector.⁴⁹ Russia has deployed a particularly aggressive influence strategy in Africa since its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, in particular, with the aim of circumventing Western sanctions imposed on Russian hydrocarbon exports. Russia is therefore seeking to invest heavily in the development of Africa's energy industry, by strengthening cooperation in the oil, mining, gas and civil nuclear sectors.⁵⁰



Examples of roundtables attended by Andrey GROMOV in 2024 (left) and Yulia BERG in 2025 (right) that were hosted by Russia's State Duma

Against this backdrop, individual entrepreneurs like Yulia BERG and Andrey GROMOV are probably looking to monetize their experience in conducting influence operations by positioning themselves, through organisations such as IBAC and AREA, as facilitators of the Russia-Africa energy strategy.⁵¹

Based on the profiles of *GlobUs*' directors and their close ties with top-ranking Russian state entities and officials, VIGINUM therefore believes that *GlobUs* may have replaced AFRIC, the organisation responsible for conducting influence and interference operations linked to *Project Lakhta*. In fact, AFRIC and *GlobUs* are linked by a continuum of influence operations and similar activities carried out by Russian agents with extensive experience in the field. These political technologists have adapted to the

⁴⁷ Website archive: <https://ghostarchive.org/archive/QAHdz>. Telegram channels: @ibacglobal; @ibacglobalrus.

⁴⁸ Website archive: <https://ghostarchive.org/archive/bv2yD>. Telegram channels: @area_eng; @arearussian.

⁴⁹ <https://ghostarchive.org/archive/QDBUZ>.

⁵⁰ <https://www.revolution-energetique.com/actus/centrales-nucleaires-flottantes-la-russie-veut-en-installer-en-afrique;>
[https://magazinedelafric.com/african-business/les-ambitions-de-la-russie-dans-lenergie-africaine.](https://magazinedelafric.com/african-business/les-ambitions-de-la-russie-dans-lenergie-africaine)

⁵¹ A post on the *Telegram* channel @area_eng, citing Yulia BERG's comments on Russian energy projects in Africa, illustrates this attempt to gain credibility with the Russian government: "The Rosatom project in South Africa fell into such a trap. The state corporation did not pay due attention to PR and GR, which is why the project, associated with former President Jacob Zuma, literally sank after the head of state left office." Source: https://web.archive.org/web/20260407125546/https://t.me/area_eng/112.

evolving Russian influence market in Africa, which has become highly competitive and part of which has now been centralised by the Russian state. To ensure their long-term viability, these “service providers” have continued to exert influence over long-standing partners, in countries already targeted by similar initiatives (Cameroon, Republic of the Congo).

3. GLOBUS IN CAMEROON, LAUNDERING NARRATIVES THROUGH PRO-RUSSIAN PAN-AFRICAN MEDIA PLATFORMS

At the time of writing, Cameroon is one of the main countries where *GlobUs* has established a presence. *GlobUs* relies on a strategy of information laundering to conduct influence and interference operations and disseminate its narratives on the African continent, through various Cameroonian media platforms, whose leaders are seen as closely aligned with Russia's interests. As a matter of fact, key players in the Russian influence apparatus have, for several years, been conducting influence operations in Cameroon, a country viewed as strategic because it lies at the intersection of several regions of interest (Western Africa, Central Africa and the Gulf of Guinea), and boasts an abundance of natural resources (hydrocarbons, forest resources and mining potential).⁵²

Cameroon serves as a particularly insightful case study for understanding the influence strategies of Russian political technologists, and in particular those operating within *GlobUs*, aiming to build a network of opinion relays which serve their interests and, more broadly, those of Russia. In order to launder its narratives, *GlobUs* has successively relied on three interconnected Cameroonian pan-Africanist and pro-Russian media outlets.

3.1. *Afrique Média TV (AM-TV)*

Afrique Média TV (AM-TV) is a Cameroonian TV channel founded in 2011, publicly identified as one of the main conduits and amplifiers of Russian narratives and information influence operations on the African continent. In December 2022, *Afrique Média TV* notably entered into a partnership with the Russian transnational state-run media organisation *RT*, reflecting an "information influence policy that relies as much on Russian media actors as other players from the targeted regions."⁵³ Several open-source investigations have since revealed partnerships between this channel and actors of the "PRIGOZHIN galaxy," such as *AFRIC* and the *PMC Wagner*.⁵⁴

In this respect, since at least March 2022 and until November 2023, several former *AFRIC* executives and individuals who are now members of the *GlobUs* network regularly appeared on *Afrique Média TV* programmes presented by Clarisse WIYDORVEN, in order to disseminate narratives supportive of Russian interests and anti-Western views. In addition to Yulia BERG, the aforementioned Clifton ELLIS, Purnima ANAND, Arnaud DEVELAY and Steve GILL have also appeared on these programmes.

Furthermore, the first post on *Telegram* channel @globusexpert on 27 October 2023 promoted a documentary produced and directed by *GlobUs* with support from the "Renaissance" Foundation, entitled "The Realities of Donbass." This documentary claimed to "shed light on the coup d'état in Ukraine in 2014" and to combat "propaganda organised by Western media," which it alleged "denies the desire of the Donbass republics to join Russia and hinders the understanding of history." This documentary was broadcast exclusively in English, French and Russian on the channels of *Afrique Média*

⁵² The port in Douala, Cameroon's economic capital, is a particularly strategic gateway for trade routes to the Central African Republic, a stronghold of Russian influence in Central Africa. See in particular: <https://alleyesonwagner.org/2023/05/16/wood-for-mercenaries-on-the-road-to-international-markets/>; <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1574689/politique/de-bangui-a-douala-comment-lex-groupe-wagner-continue-detendre-sa-toile/>.

⁵³ <https://www.cairn.info/annuaire-francais-de-relations-internationales--9782376510673-page-799.html>.

⁵⁴ For more information on partnerships with *AFRIC*, see: <https://thinktank.4freerussia.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/The-Company-You-Keep-Yevgeny-Prigozhins-Influence-Operations-in-Africa.pdf>. For information on ties with the "PRIGOZHIN galaxy," and particularly *PMC Wagner*, see: <https://disinfo.africa/afrique-m%C3%A9dia-tv-wagners-new-african-mouthpiece-7fc7e0a4b9f8>; https://www.africa-confidential.com/article/id/14699/Wagner_pays_cash_for_digital_influence.

TV and GlobUs.⁵⁵



Excerpts from the documentary "The Realities of Donbass"



Examples of programmes featuring GlobUs members, broadcast on Afrique Média TV between 2022 and 2023

Today, despite the suspension of the *Afrique Média TV* YouTube channel and the sanctioning of its founder Justin Blaise TAGOUH by the European Union in May 2025,⁵⁶ the media outlet remains at large through its other channels. In particular, AM-TV's Facebook page, which has garnered 1.2 million subscribers, is one of the main mouthpieces for pro-Russian and anti-French influence operations on the African continent. The leaked internal documents from the "Company" also revealed that Russian specialists had placed articles in various African media outlets to launder their narratives. The most cited example was the *afriquemediatv* website, which reportedly published at least 132 articles in French and English between June and October 2024 on pro-AES (Alliance of Sahel States), anti-Ukraine and anti-Western topics, in exchange for around €28,000.⁵⁷

For *GlobUs*, AM-TV proved to be the ideal testing platform for disseminating its articles and building a network of individuals sympathetic to the Russian cause. However, in late 2023, when AM-TV's integrity was publicly challenged⁵⁸ and Yulia BERG's main ally, Clarisse WIYDORVEN, had left the channel, *GlobUs*

⁵⁵ <https://web.archive.org/web/20231029201050/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXPewWvUkn8;>
<https://web.archive.org/web/20231021014627/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bD424vXzLao;>
<https://web.archive.org/web/20250703045227/https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&si=EgOckXUblWp6ML7O&v=A9vBTkfX2lg>.

⁵⁶ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L_202500965. For more information on Justin Blaise TAGOUH, see: <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1427976/politique/justin-tagouh-la-voix-de-moscou>.

⁵⁷ Approximately \$250 per article, i.e. €216. Source: <https://www.france24.com/fr/afrique/20260327-250-700-dollars-par-article-comment-la-russie-influence-contenus-m%C3%A9dias-ouest-africains>.

⁵⁸ In addition to the publication of open-source investigations and reports calling into question the media outlet's integrity, in December 2023, the offices of the channel's production centre in Douala were shut down. This followed allegations by the Cameroon National Social Insurance Fund (CNPS) that the broadcaster had not registered its staff and had accrued unpaid contributions. See: <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1515437/politique/au-cameroun-fin-de-partie-pour-afrique-media>.

gradually turned its attention to another emerging Cameroonian media outlet, *For You Média Africa*, aiming to replicate the same information influence strategy.

3.2. *For You Média Africa (FYM-A)*

Since the beginning of 2024, the English-language programmes sponsored by *GlobUs* have been broadcast on the Cameroonian television channel *For You Média Africa* (FYM-A). These broadcasts are now called "*Global Insights*" and are still presented by journalist Clarisse WIYDORVEN. The reason for *GlobUs'* and, more broadly, Russia's interest in FYM-A becomes clearer when considering the background of its founder, Cameroonian businessman and politician Serge Espoir MATOMBA.

3.2.1 *Serge Espoir MATOMBA, a pan-Africanist pro-Russian politician*

After making his fortune as a consultant specialising in the hydrocarbon sector, Serge Espoir MATOMBA founded the media holding company *Ton Super Cameroon*.⁵⁹ This holding company comprises a television channel (*For You Média Africa*), an associated radio station, a print media service via the newspaper "*Politics*," which is available in both print and digital formats, a rolling news website called *eurekanews.info*,⁶⁰ and an advertising service that manages "37 LED billboards, in 18 locations across the country."⁶¹



Serge Espoir MATOMBA

In 2010, he founded *United People for Social Renovation* (PURS), an opposition political party which he heads as first secretary. In 2018, he stood as a PURS party candidate and came second from last in the election, with around 1% of the vote, compared to 71% for Paul BIYA.⁶² Over the last few years, Serge Espoir MATOMBA has been presented as one of the new "heroes of anti-Western Pan-Africanism," as head of a media group that serves as "a genuine vehicle for spreading this new ideology."⁶³ And for good reason, as Serge Espoir MATOMBA has appeared several times alongside various pan-Africanist figures who are hostile to France or pro-Russian, such as Kemi SEBA, Nathalie YAMB⁶⁴ or Burkina-Faso coup leader and current president Ibrahim TRAORÉ.⁶⁵



From left to right: S.E.M. and N. YAMB (2022) (2023), S.E.M., N. YAMB and K. SEBA (2024), S.E.M. and I. TRAORÉ (2025)

On 5 April 2025, Serge Espoir MATOMBA was officially nominated as the PURS party candidate for the

⁵⁹ <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/447553/politique/cameroun-serge-espoir-matomba-candidat-declare-a-presidentielle-2018>.

⁶⁰ <https://archive.ph/I6Nte>.

⁶¹ <https://archive.ph/4gJkG>.

⁶² <https://archive.ph/AC3jS>.

⁶³ <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1526010/politique/au-cameroun-serge-espoir-matomba-nouvel-heraut-du-panafricanisme-anti-occidental>.

⁶⁴ <https://archive.ph/7Fjq8> ; <https://archive.ph/0mGmh>. In January 2024, he even invited these two pan-Africanists to the *For You Média Africa* offices: <https://archive.ph/QYJf2>.

⁶⁵ S.E. MATOMBA and I. TRAORÉ met on 10 May 2025, in Moscow, on the occasion of the celebrations marking the 80th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany. During this meeting, which he described as "particularly fruitful," S.E. MATOMBA presented his policy book for the Cameroonian presidential election in October 2025 to the Burkinabé Captain: <https://archive.ph/jj2Ht>.

Cameroon presidential election, which was held on 12 October of the same year. In his policy book entitled “Stand Up for Total Sovereignty”, S.E. MATOMBA advocated a “complete break with the post-colonial order that continues to hinder Cameroon,”⁶⁶ glorifying “the dynamism of the AES States,” to which he pledged his “full support,” and expressed his hope that Cameroon would join this movement. During the election campaign, S.E. MATOMBA was also highly critical of France, suggesting that it had a “hidden agenda” and that it continued to impose “foreign control” over the country’s internal affairs.⁶⁷

Although Serge Espoir MATOMBA does not directly refer to Russia in his manifesto,⁶⁸ he has repeatedly stated that it is “the partner that African countries need,” and that it is fighting “the same battle as Africa.”⁶⁹ Since at least July 2023, S.E. MATOMBA and FYM-A journalists have visited Russia and the occupied Donbas region on several occasions to attend various events (forums, summits, exhibitions, etc.). During these visits, they forged economic and media partnerships, and gave interviews to Russian state media outlets such as *RT* and *Sputnik*.

It therefore appears that the Russian information influence apparatus likely identified Serge Espoir MATOMBA as a particularly useful opinion leader in Cameroon. On *Sputnik Africa*, Serge Espoir MATOMBA also praised the Russian propaganda media outlet’s “credibility,” while denouncing what he described as “growing disinformation” against Russia and criticising “French interference” in the 2025 Cameroon presidential election.⁷⁰ The FYM-A channel, on the other hand, seems to have been used as a platform for laundering pro-Russian narratives among French- and English-speaking audiences across the African continent, much like its predecessor AM-TV.

3.2.2 For You Média Africa, a platform for laundering pro-Russian narratives

By the end of 2024, Clarisse WIYDORVEN had presented around thirty programmes, featuring guests who had previously appeared on AM-TV, while maintaining a pan-Africanist, pro-Russian and anti-Western editorial line that is particularly hostile towards France and the United States. The first programme in this new series, entitled “Ukraine-Russia, the diplomatic solution to the crisis obstructed by the Western agenda,” featured Dmitry POLYANSKY, first deputy permanent representative of the Russian Federation to the UN, as its main guest.⁷¹ Furthermore, the FYM-A editorial team has also been expanded to include other journalists from AM-TV, such as Mohamed Bachir LADAN (see section 3.3.1), Fouth NDEDI and Manuela Sike DOUMBE,⁷² demonstrating the blurring of boundaries between these different media platforms.

The previous version of the *foryoumedia-africa.com* website, displayed a “Partners” section – which has since been removed – featuring the logo of the transnational state-run media outlet *RT*.⁷³ While VIGINUM has been unable to find any reference to this alleged partnership on FYM-A’s various channels, the analysis of the channel’s content, via various live streaming services such as *afriqueendirect.tv*, reveals that *For You Média Africa* broadcasts *RT*’s content and programmes directly in French, without

⁶⁶ <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1704281/politique/serge-espoir-matomba-le-cameroun-doit-sortir-du-franc-cfa-et-sinscrire-dans-le-mouvement-de-laes/>.

⁶⁷ <https://archive.ph/tAf4Y>.

⁶⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/SergeEspoirMatomba/videos/3806890282874886>. Although the “policy” video by S.E. MATOMBA does not specifically mention “Russia,” some of the footage shows him in Moscow or in the company of Russian individuals, some of whom are named herein.

⁶⁹ <https://ghostarchive.org/archive/gxWaH>;

<https://web.archive.org/web/20260405145705/https://www.facebook.com/SergeEspoirMatomba/videos/1727241027764704/>.

⁷⁰ Examples of appearances of S.E. MATOMBA on *Sputnik*: <https://archive.ph/RH25R>; <https://archive.ph/g2EqR>;

<https://archive.ph/9J1l0>; <https://archive.ph/Eqpx6>; <https://archive.ph/yUnqh>; <https://archive.ph/HQ7Ex>;

<https://archive.ph/YQqTZ>.

⁷¹ <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=2049715972094371&set=pb.100011679656495.-2207520000&type=3>.

⁷² Manuela Sike DOUMBE who is now managing director of *For You Média Africa*, had previously served as a correspondent in Russia during the first Russia-Africa Summit in Sochi, whilst working for *Afrique Média TV*.

⁷³ Archives of the website: <https://archive.ph/u9JYv>; <https://archive.ph/bW3L6>. Archive of the HTML tag: « <https://foryoumedia-africa.com/assets/img/home/partners/rt.webp> »: <https://archive.ph/aTxks>.

removing the Russian channel's logo. This content is broadcast between the different *For You Média Africa* programmes.



Excerpts from *RT en français*, broadcast live on the channel *For You Média Africa*. On the left: *La Grande Interview*;
On the right: *Ici Moscou* !

The channel's star journalists are also directly involved in narrative laundering. For example, at a press conference during the BRICS 2024 Summit, FYM-A's lead journalist Manuela Sike DOUMBE was selected to ask Vladimir PUTIN a question. In her remarks, the Cameroonian journalist praised Russia's action in Central Africa and in the AES countries, while, in contrast, highlighting the failure of Western countries. These comments were broadcast on FYM-A with an on-screen banner describing Vladimir PUTIN as "the most powerful man in the world."⁷⁴

Other pro-Russian actors in Europe have also formed partnerships with FYM-A, helping them to reach new audiences. For example, on 7 June 2024, during the *Saint-Petersburg International Economic Forum* (SPIEF), FYM-A and the pro-Russian media outlet *International Reporters* signed a "cooperation agreement." According to Victoria SMORODINA, editor-in-chief of *International Reporters*, this agreement was based, among other things, on the organisation of an "international media forum in Cameroon, where independent journalists from around the world will not only discuss important professional issues, but also share their experience with their African colleagues."⁷⁵ Since the signing of this agreement, several members of the *International Reporters* editorial team have appeared on FYM-A's programmes, notably those sponsored by *GlobUs*, including Andrea LUCIDI, Laurent BRAYARD and Christelle NÉANT.



M.S. DOUMBE and Victoria SMORODINA (june 2024)

The pro-Russian stance of Serge Espoir MATOMBA (and by extension, of his media outlet, FYM-A) came late in his journalistic career, and primarily appears to be an opportunistic attempt to increase his political influence, and diversify his support base, and, potentially, his sources of income, through the establishment of various partnerships. The link between *GlobUs* and Serge Espoir MATOMBA is consistent with the activities of AFRIC, which sought to support candidates aligned with Russian interests in the run-up to strategically important elections. It therefore seems likely that Russian political technologists have identified S.E. MATOMBA as a key candidate to expand its network of opinion leaders and facilitate *GlobUs*' activities in the country.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ <https://web.archive.org/web/20260405142012/https://www.facebook.com/DavidEboutouMedia/videos/582337110800240/>.

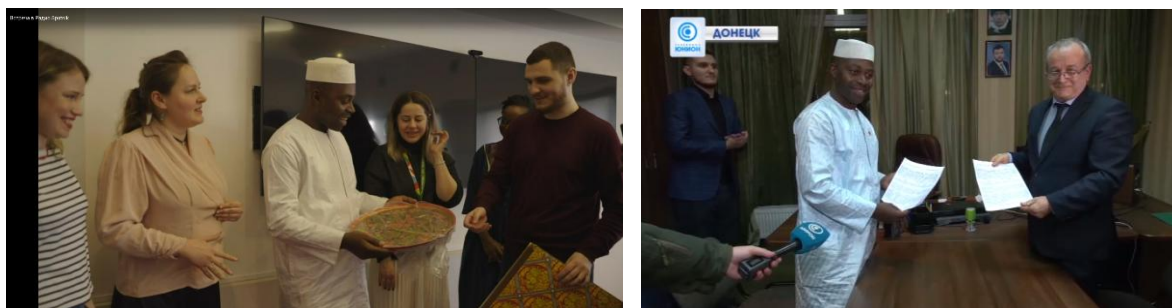
During her speech, Ms S. DOUMBE mentioned that she had just returned from the Donbas, a region where *For You Média Africa* had produced a documentary film entitled 'The Russian-Ukrainian Conflict: The Hidden Truth', which had its preview screening in Moscow and was broadcast on *For You Média Africa* and several African media outlets: <https://archive.ph/o7HKG>.

⁷⁵ <https://archive.ph/zfMT8>.

⁷⁶ In addition to his influence in the media, it is likely that S.E. MATOMBA's experience in the energy sector also proved instrumental in forging partnerships with Russian political technologists.

When recently contacted by the *Jeune Afrique* publication, S.E. MATOMBA stated that he had no “structural or financial partnership with *GlobUs* that would influence [his] editorial line,” and that FYM-A was “not bound by any financing or editorial policy agreement with foreign entities.” He also asserted that he had financed his own visits to Russia, “for strictly journalistic purposes.”⁷⁷

Nevertheless, VIGINUM’s investigations have shown that S.E. MATOMBA had established certain strategic partnerships with Russian entities, particularly in the field of information. During a visit to Russia between February and March 2024, S.E. MATOMBA and a team from FYM-A met their counterparts at Sputnik Afrique, including its director Victoria BUDANOVA, during a meeting aimed at developing bilateral relations and “promoting the Russian agenda in the African media space, as well as combating disinformation spread by the Western press.” This meeting reportedly gave rise to “a series of strategically important agreements.”⁷⁸ During the same trip, S.E. MATOMBA also signed an agreement with the Russian Donbas television channel, “Union.” In a report broadcast by this channel, the partnership with FYM-A is presented as a way to “let the truth be heard [in Africa] about what is happening in the Russian counter-terrorist operation zone, rather than the distorted information spread by the Western media.”⁷⁹



S.E. MATOMBA forging partnerships with Sputnik (on the left) and the Union media (on the right)

Despite clear support from the Russian information influence apparatus and the *GlobUs* network, S.E. MATOMBA secured only 0.35% of the vote in the Cameroon presidential election in October 2025, even less than during his previous bid in 2018. This result puts the actual influence of Russian political technologists in the country into perspective, and underscores that their claims of campaign “success” to their sponsors may be widely exaggerated.⁸⁰

While FYM-A and Serge Espoir Matomba continue to spread pro-Russian and anti-French narratives today,⁸¹ *GlobUs*’ members have turned to a new Cameroon media platform, *Panafrican Média TV*.

3.3 Panafrican Média TV (PM-TV)

Since February 2025, the programmes sponsored by *GlobUs* have been broadcast on another pro-Russian Cameroonian platform: *Panafrican Média TV* (PM-TV). In addition to a TV channel, this platform also has a website, *panafricanmedia.tv*, and affiliated social media accounts.

3.3.1 Mohamed Bachir LADAN

⁷⁷ <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1768423/politique/cameroun-enquete-sur-les-reseaux-russes-dans-les-medias-panafricanistes/>.

⁷⁸ <https://archive.ph/qH4O1>.

⁷⁹ <https://archive.ph/aD091>. The link between *For You Media Africa* and these various organisations was made possible, amongst other things, by the work of another Russian political technologists, Vladislav SHEVASHIN (which appears in both photos).

⁸⁰ <https://forbiddenstories.org/fr/journalistes-fantomes-paiements-en-cash-et-recits-du-kremlin-quand-les-agents-russes-ont-tente-dinfluer-les-medias-argentins/>.

⁸¹ In December 2025, S.E. MATOMBA gave an interview to Kamal LOUADJ, a Sputnik Afrique journalist, in which he stated that if “Mali has been able to regain its territory” and “a large part of its sovereignty,” it is thanks to “the arrival of Russian instructors.” <https://web.archive.org/web/20260406131048/https://www.facebook.com/reel/887202577043553>.

As with *For You Média Africa*, *GlobUs* has chosen this platform partly because of links to its founder, Mohamed Bachir LADAN. A Cameroonian journalist and imam, he worked at *Afrique Média TV* for nearly 11 years before announcing that he was leaving to join *For You Média Africa* as director of programmes in March 2022. On both AM-TV and FYM-A, Mohamed Bachir LADAN has presented various programmes with a pan-African framing, which sometimes promote anti-Western and pro-Russian views.⁸² He is regarded as a close associate of the directors of AM-TV and FYM-A, Justin B. TAGOUH and, S.E. MATOMBA respectively.⁸³



Mohamed Bachir
Ladan

The BRICS International Alliance

On 21 June 2023, Mohamed Bachir LADAN was appointed Head of the Communications and Media Department of the BRICS International Alliance in West and Central Africa.⁸⁴ Alongside this role, Mohamed Bachir LADAN was promoted in December 2023 to “Representative for Strategic Projects in Central Africa.”⁸⁵

Established in 2016 with the “active support” of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and “a number of government institutions”, this non-profit organisation, which claims to promote the interests and institutions of the BRICS countries, is a powerful vehicle for exerting influence in various regions of the world, including in Africa.⁸⁶ Its president, Larisa ZELENTOVA, is a diplomat with close ties to the Russian political and economic elite, who has been awarded several honours for her work on “strengthening the sovereignty of the Russian Federation.” She is also believed to share links with individuals within the Russian intelligence services.⁸⁷

M. B. LADAN explained his role within this organisation as having “responsibility for creating a network, a spider’s web linking all media platforms in Central and West Africa to promote the BRICS International Alliance” and, more broadly, to serve Russia’s interests in the region.⁸⁸



Extract from a PM-TV programme featuring Larisa ZELENTOVA and M. B. LADAN (left) and Ahoua Don MELLO (right)

⁸² For example, the two topics covered in one of his first programmes on FYM-A were: “The urgent need to diversify security partnerships in Africa” and “The Bucha massacre: what really happened?”:

<https://www.facebook.com/foryoumediafrica/posts/pfbid0358t8TQu138wUYTwKDWrqQafF3X1oTeireMeNlwvDEj4npTfYJULDF1LQrimgVs5SI>. In 2015, Mr. B. LADAN was suspended from AM-TV for six months due to a lack of control over his programmes, after Cameroon’s *National Communication Council* (NCC) ruled that they had become characterised by a “generalisation of professional misconduct”. In several programmes, France was accused of supporting the terrorist group *Boko Haram* in Cameroon: <https://www.agenceecofin.com/regulation/0506-29573-cameroun-la-chaîne-de-tele-afrique-media-a-ete-suspendue-pour-un-mois>.

⁸³ <https://archive.ph/QhFPc>.

⁸⁴ <https://archive.ph/6jNOx>; <https://archive.ph/SLcFw>.

⁸⁵ <https://archive.ph/Rrevl>.

⁸⁶ Archive of the *iabrics.org* website: <https://archive.ph/Yftkf>.

⁸⁷ <https://www.intelligenceonline.fr/europe-russie/2026/03/25/l-ombre-du-svr-derriere-la-visite-du-fondateur-des-loups-de-la-nuit-en-chine,110682532-art>.

⁸⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/reel/2412890552241559>.

The pro-Russian pan-African influencer Ahoua Don MELLO, now vice-president of the BRICS Alliance, reportedly introduced Mohamed Bachir LADAN to Larisa ZELENTSOVA. Ahoua Don MELLO is an Ivorian politician, a former close associate and member of Laurent GBAGBO's government, who also served as special adviser to former Guinean president Alpha CONDÉ until he was overthrown in a September 2021 coup. Now living in Russia, he went on to work for the Russian business establishment, under the auspices of the Kremlin, overseeing investment in Africa. In October 2025, he ran as a candidate in the Ivorian presidential election, campaigning on a pan-African and fundamentally anti-Western platform. Today, he is one of the principal intermediaries in Russia's influence network on the African continent, particularly in the media, economic and political spheres.⁸⁹

3.3.2. Programmes promoting anti-French narratives

Drawing on this broad range of experiences, Mohamed Bachir LADAN then founded *Panafrican Média TV*, which is similar to its two predecessors AM-TV and FYM-A, both in terms of format and the news that it broadcasts.

On the PM-TV channel, as well as the "*Global Insights*" series presented by Clarisse WIYDORVEN, *GlobUs* sponsored, from September 2025, a new programme in French called "*Regard sur le monde*", which replicated the English-language programme, featuring the same "experts" and covering similar topics. The programme is presented by Cameroonian journalists Fabrice NDOUM and Fouth NDEDI, who also worked for *Arique Média TV* and *For You Média Africa*. VIGINUM analysed various programmes sponsored by *GlobUs* and broadcast on PM-TV. Most of the narratives conveyed in programmes covering topics related to France are inaccurate or misleading. For example, in an episode of "*Global Insights*" on 11 December 2025, entitled "AES/Benin: invisible threat, real challenges", France was portrayed by panellists as engaging in "interference in Benin" and deploying "strategies to threaten the stability of the Sahel." ECOWAS was also described as "a lever for French imperialism in the region."⁹⁰

GlobUs-sponsored programmes have also featured pan-African activists who VIGINUM has already identified as having amplified several information operations targeting French interests. Some of these activists are regular contributors to PM-TV, outside of programmes sponsored by *GlobUs*. An analysis of the channel since its launch has shown that Cameroonians Jonathan BATENGUENE, Charly KENGNE and Banda KANI are among its main contributors. Regularly presented as political analysts, they have helped to propagate inaccurate or misleading narratives about France. For example, in one of its programmes on 22 March 2026⁹¹ and hosted by Mohamed Bachir LADAN, France was once again accused of attempting to destabilise Niger with support from Benin.⁹²

Furthermore, Charly KENGNE and Jonathan BATENGUENE are reportedly named on multiple occasions in one of the "Company's" internal documents entitled "information campaigns with bloggers." Screenshots included in an article published by the AEOW/INPACT collective suggest that Charly KENGNE and Jonathan BATENGUENE recorded videos in September 2024 as part of a campaign that aimed to discredit Ukraine on the African continent, and accused the country of supporting terrorists in Mali.⁹³ These videos were posted on the Facebook page "Mali media+223", which is still active and has

⁸⁹ <https://disinfo.africa/meet-the-newest-pro-russian-influencer-brics-don-mello-6229ca9ed878>; <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1256719/politique/ahoua-don-mello-livoirien-qui-murmure-a-loreille-de-gbagbo-de-conde-et-des-russes/>; <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1727427/politique/des-palais-africains-au-kremlin-les-mille-reseaux-du-candidat-souverainiste-ahoua-don-mello/>. Moreover, in the leaked internal documents from the aforementioned "Company", Russian specialists claimed to have been approached in May 2019 by representatives of President Alpha Condé, at the time when A. Don MELLO served as his special adviser, without specifying whether he acted as an intermediary: <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20260330-comment-les-experts-russes-ont-travaillé-à-cimenter-et-élargir-l'alliance-des-états-du-sahel>.

⁹⁰ <https://web.archive.org/web/20260407152833/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i4RMkvM0oFI>.

⁹¹ Entitled "The Pan-African Feast (in French: "Le festin panafricain").

⁹² <https://web.archive.org/web/20260407153548/https://www.facebook.com/panafricanmediatv/videos/2010661289833280>.

⁹³ <https://alleyesonwagner.org/2026/03/27/beyond-the-sahelian-illusion/>.

garnered 831,000 followers; VIGINUM considers this page to be linked to *Project Lakhta* with a moderate level of confidence.



Excerpts from the internal document on bloggers. Source: AEW/INPACT

In addition, the now suspended *Facebook* page "AES – Pour une Afrique unie" also appears in this same screenshot, which VIGINUM has linked with a high level of confidence to *Project Lakhta*. Together with the mentioning of these bloggers in this type of document, and their regular interventions on the PM-TV channel, including on programmes sponsored by *GlobUs*, the tactic employed by Russian operators is reflected in their reliance on local so-called "experts" to disseminate pro-Russian, anti-Ukrainian or anti-Western narratives, in return for payment.

4. GLOBUS IN THE REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO: A STRATEGY OF INFLUENCE AND INTERFERENCE IN THE DIGITAL AND PHYSICAL SPHERES

Cameroon is not the only country that has been targeted by *GlobUs*. In the run-up to the presidential election held in March 2026 in the Republic of the Congo, VIGINUM detected increased activity among *GlobUs* members in the capital, Brazzaville. As a matter of fact, Congo-Brazzaville is a strategic partner for Russia, with which it has maintained historical relations dating back to the Soviet era. VIGINUM has also identified several technical indicators that point to Russian actors, operating as part of a digital influence strategy implemented by *GlobUs*. Hence, VIGINUM considers that *GlobUs*' involvement and activities in the country prior to an election cycle are comparable to the influence strategies described in the "Propaganda Machine" investigations, and are modelled on those deployed by organisations like *African Initiative*.⁹⁴

This section describes *GlobUs*' modus operandi in the Republic of the Congo from August 2025 until the presidential election in March 2026, comprising various phases that include both online and offline operations:

- Organising exhibitions and disseminating content to promote the benefits of cooperation between the target country and Russia;
- Conducting sociological field surveys to identify strategic levers for action;
- Establishing educational, informational and sporting programmes to train local youth as opinion leaders;
- Infiltrating and instigating citizen movements, presented as grassroots groups, to further strengthen Russia's foothold and advance its interests.

4.1. Exhibition in Brazzaville

On 30 August 2025, *GlobUs* launched a photo exhibition in Brazzaville entitled "Global Transformation: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow", attended by the Russian Ambassador to the Republic of the Congo, Ilias ISKANDAROV.



Ilias ISKANDAROV, Russian Ambassador to the Republic of the Congo, and Andrey GROMOV at the opening of the exhibition in Brazzaville

The exhibition panels, which highlighted in particular the purported shared values between Russia and the Republic of the Congo, stated, among other things, that in 2014, "a coup d'état took place in Kyiv with the support of Western countries. Government policies, the constant incitement to hatred and hostility and the glorification of Nazism have prompted fierce resistance from the people of Donbass."

⁹⁴ https://www.sgdsn.gouv.fr/files/files/Publications/20250612_TLP-CLEAR_VIGINUM_FCDO_EEAS_Rapport_Technique_African_Initiative_FR.pdf.

This photo exhibition is similar to that organised by *African Initiative* on 8 May 2024 in Equatorial Guinea, dedicated to the 80th anniversary of the “Victory in the Great Patriotic War,” which drew a parallel between Nazism and the alleged “neocolonialism” of Western countries. This type of commemorative event not only serves to promote a disparaging image of the Ukrainian enemy, but also to present modern-day Russia as the preferred partner in the fight against “neocolonialism,” while drawing a parallel with the former Soviet Russia, hailed as a nation that wants to help African countries break free from the “Western capitalist system.”

4.2. Socio-economic surveys

In October 2025, *GlobUs* began training dozens of Congolese young people to conduct surveys for a “socio-economic study” covering several regions of the country.⁹⁵ Officially, this study served as the “basis for strategic planning” for *GlobUs*, to develop “projects tailored” to citizens’ needs. In the photos of these training days, the trainee survey interviewers all wore clothing with the brands of *GlobUs* and IBAC. To lead this research project, *GlobUs* appointed Olga USTINOVA, a political scientist with ties to Russia’s consultancy sector. She is the director of the Environmental Mediation Centre of the Russian Society for the Environment, an organisation with close ties to the United Russia Party which provides consulting and mediation services on environmental issues at the regional and local level across Russia.⁹⁶

This practice of conducting surveys in the Republic of the Congo is similar to those described in the “Company’s” leaked internal documents. The analysis of these documents indicates that “considerable sums” were spent on conducting sociological surveys.⁹⁷ In reality, these surveys are reportedly part of the “preparation phase,” conducted prior to influence operations, which helps operators to define and better target their audience, the distribution channels that should be utilised, and the narratives to be disseminated in order to maximise their impact. The *Forbidden Stories* investigation also states that, after this phase, which involves “surveying, mapping actors, approaching high-ranking political figures and gradually infiltrating opinion leaders — destabilisation operations can be launched and amplified by local media.”⁹⁸

This practice was observed across other regions of the world prior to information operations linked to Russian actors and Information Manipulation Sets (IMSs), for example in Moldova during the September 2025 parliamentary elections.⁹⁹

VIGINUM believes that this survey tactic is also deployed to identify the channels of influence to be targeted, and in particular those where the State is sometimes not present or does not have the necessary expertise.¹⁰⁰ This strategic loss leader, designed to attract the interest of the authorities, in this case the Congolese administration, may enable *GlobUs* to position itself as a potential subcontractor, thereby increasing both its influence and financial gains.

⁹⁵ <https://ghostarchive.org/archive/UTBIP>.

⁹⁶ <https://web.archive.org/web/20260330093210/https://www.ecosociety.ru/news/v-edinoj-rossii-prezentovali-tsentr-ekologicheskoy-mediatsii/>.

⁹⁷ <https://dossier.center/africa-politology-v2/>.

⁹⁸ <https://forbiddenstories.org/propaganda-machine-secret-documents-reveal-russias-foreign-influence-strategy-across-three-continents/>.

⁹⁹ https://stratcom.md/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/TTP-Raport_Interferente-1.pdf.

¹⁰⁰ This particularly applies to its humanitarian credentials: in March 2026, a few days before the anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Russia and the Republic of the Congo (16 March), *GlobUs* inaugurated several drinking water facilities to provide “regular and free access to more than 300,000 people in Brazzaville”. Source: <https://ghostarchive.org/archive/SKiMh>.

4.3. "The Media School"

A few days after the aforementioned exhibition, Andrey GROMOV announced the opening of a "Media School" in Brazzaville which aims to train "a new generation of independent experts". In his speech, he notably explained how to become a popular blogger, the key steps in creating viral content and how social media algorithms work.



Excerpts from a report by Vox Congo on the training of survey interviewers by GlobUs

The launch of this type of educational programme is reminiscent of the methods used by *African Initiative*, which opened a "Russian School of Journalism" in Bamako in July 2024 through its Malian partner association, *La Perspective Sahélienne*. In the online courses delivered at that time, the Internet was presented as a "battlefield" and journalists as "information activists".¹⁰¹

On 4 November 2025, *GlobUs* hosted several events in Brazzaville to celebrate "National Unity Day" with the support of the Russian Embassy in the Republic of the Congo.¹⁰² An article in *African Initiative* stated that the events had been covered by the leading Congolese media outlets and that "graduates of the *GlobUs* school of journalism [had] helped prepare the media reports, which constituted their first professional experience."¹⁰³



Photos taken at the "National Unity Day" celebration, on the street and at the Russian House in Brazzaville

"The Media School" likely serves as a particularly strategic influence platform for *GlobUs* to disseminate pro-Russian and anti-Western narratives, under the guise of fast-track journalism training courses.¹⁰⁴ Franco-Russian propagandist and co-founder of *International Reporters*, Christelle NÉANT, and Cameroonian journalist Clarisse WIYDORVEN were among the first guest speakers to deliver lectures at this "school."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ https://www.sgdsn.gouv.fr/files/files/Publications/20250612_TLP-CLEAR_VIGINUM_FCDO_EEAS_Rapport_Technique_African_Initiative_FR.pdf.

¹⁰² <https://ghostarchive.org/archive/OgJ8X>; <https://ghostarchive.org/archive/SiFWD>.

¹⁰³ <https://ghostarchive.org/archive/b32Ka>.

¹⁰⁴ Launched in September 2025, the first "cohort" of students graduated in December 2025, at a ceremony attended by the Russian Ambassador to the Republic of the Congo. The course duration is only 120 hours according to the training certificates: <https://archive.ph/bb4z4>; <https://archive.ph/rhTla>.

¹⁰⁵ <https://web.archive.org/web/20260330140334/https://t.me/GlobUsFr/67>.

Furthermore, *GlobUs*' various initiatives in Brazzaville were covered by Congolese television and its press, as well as by their media partners on the African continent. In particular, *Panafrican Média TV* broadcasts an in-depth report on these activities, attesting to the organisation's extensive information network across various countries.¹⁰⁶

VIGINUM considers it likely that *GlobUs*' political technologists have sought to establish a network of opinion leaders who can be called upon when expanding its operations in the local media, in order to disseminate narratives that best serve Russian interests. More insidiously, this "media school" was primarily used as a recruitment ground to launch a local movement called "Avenir du Congo" in late 2025.

4.4. The "Avenir du Congo" movement

The "Avenir du Congo" movement was presented as a "community of young people ready to build the Congo of tomorrow." However, VIGINUM believes that the movement "Avenir du Congo", which purports to be a grassroots organisation, was in fact primarily engineered and artificially amplified by *GlobUs*. This tactic of leveraging youth movements is often deployed by actors in Russia's information influence network in Africa, as demonstrated by the practices of influence agents working for the "Company."¹⁰⁷



On the left, some pupils from the School of Media with Yulia BERG, on the right, two of her students who became presenters on Avenir du Congo TV

A similar approach was applied in the Republic of the Congo: after creating a physical meeting space (the Media School) and instilling a pro-Russian editorial line among the participants, the movement sought both to create an engaging digital community, and to organise real-world events that lend it greater credibility. *GlobUs* was then presented as a simple "partner" of the movement, rather than its instigator. It is also worth noting the somewhat fluid semantics used by *GlobUs*, which sometimes presents itself in the Republic of the Congo as an "international" or even "humanitarian" organisation, rather than a "club of experts". The ambassadors of the "Avenir du Congo" movement are graduates of the first cohort of the *GlobUs* "Media School" and now manage the movement's social media accounts and *Web TV* channel.

4.4.1. A digital environment created and maintained by Russians

"Avenir du Congo" has various social media accounts (*Facebook*, *Instagram*, *TikTok* and *YouTube*), a *Web TV* channel and a website, *avenir.cg*. While several Congolese individuals are known to be linked to this digital environment, VIGINUM considers, with a high degree of confidence and based on technical data, that it was created by individuals linked to *GlobUs*. It would appear that certain – at the very least, Russian-speaking – individuals, are actually responsible for creating social media accounts (although they may no longer be posting content on them today), as well as for the development, hosting and

¹⁰⁶ <https://web.archive.org/web/20260330131437/https://t.me/GlobUsFr/62>.

¹⁰⁷ <https://forbiddenstories.org/sahel-journalists-activists-ngos-russian-agents/>.

maintenance of web infrastructure related to the “Avenir du Congo” movement. For example, the Facebook page for WebTV lists the email address globusmedia5@gmail.com¹⁰⁸ in its description. Another Facebook page linked to the ecosystem, but currently inactive, entitled “Avenir du Congo Missions,” specifies “French language” in the personal information section, but is set to Cyrillic.¹⁰⁹ The website *avenir.cg*, which also contains Cyrillic characters in its source code, is hosted on an IP address located in Russia, and was created using Russian tools and services such as *Craftum* or *Se/CDN*.¹¹⁰

The *avenir.cg* website is a gaming platform where participants can complete “missions” and earn virtual points, which can then be exchanged for rewards such as mobile phones, school textbooks or microwaves. The website included a “My points” tab that was linked to the *Metabase* service, an open-source data visualisation platform, which was also configured in Russian, and on which the personal data of several individuals, most likely Congolese, was freely accessible.

LE CONGO, C'EST SON PEUPLE, ET SURTOUT SA JEUNESSE!

Beaucoup disent que notre pays est riche de son sous-sol, mais c'est nous qui savons que la vraie richesse du Congo est son peuple. Et surtout sa jeunesse.

Aujourd'hui, sa voix est (souvent) inaudible, son énergie étouffée et son avenir semble flou. Mais nous n'allons pas attendre que quelqu'un construise notre avenir pour nous.

Aller de l'avant commence par un petit pas, et aller vers le meilleur de demain commence par la détermination d'aujourd'hui.

S'inscrire sur un réseau social - AFree

Postuler pour participer

Nombre de la mission: 31
Domaine: MISSIONS TECHNIQUES
Récompense: 10
Participants requis: 0
Période de mission: 21.01.2025 - 2027
Adresse de la tâche:
Adresse du Quartier Général:
Récompenses supplémentaires: non

Description de la mission et règle de son exécution:
Inscrivez-vous sur le réseau social AFree.
Téléchargez-ci <https://afree.la/download/index.html>

Après votre inscription, envoyez-nous par message privé sur WhatsApp une capture d'écran contenant votre inscription.
Conditions spéciales:

Arriver au Quartier Général avant la mission (pour l'inventaire): non
Arriver au QG après la mission: non
Actions pour confirmer la mission: Écrivez en message privé des captures d'écran prouvant que vous avez été inscrit.
Remboursement des frais de transport: non
Compensation spéciale: non

Points: 60

L'AVENIR DU CONGO

Liste des composants principaux du système (n° 1 à n° 2000)

Participant Number	Nombre De Tâches	Nombre Heures	Nombre Points	Points Deductions	Recompenses Us		
1	0	0	0	0	0		
2	0	0	0	0	0	Participant	1
3	1	2	60	0	0	Participant	1
4	0	0	0	0	0	Participant	1
5	10	19	612	0	0	Spécialiste	1.1
6	1	2	60	0	0	Participant	1

Загрузить как PDF

Скачать результаты

L'AVENIR DU CONGO

Accueil | Mission | Profil | Récompense | Historique | Paramètres | Aide

Missions disponibles | Missions en cours | Missions complètes

Missions disponibles

20 points
Soutenez une nouvelle vidéo Avenir TV
Points: 20

Ouvrir la mission

20 points
Partagez l'Avenir du Congo avec 5 personnes sur WhatsApp
Points: 20

Ouvrir la mission

20 points
Soutenez une publication d'Avenir du Congo TV
Points: 20

Ouvrir la mission

Missions en cours

20 points
Soutenez une publication d'Avenir du Congo TV
Points: 20

Ouvrir la mission

Missions complètes

20 points
Soutenez une publication d'Avenir du Congo TV
Points: 20

Ouvrir la mission

Historical screenshots of the *avenir.cg* website (top), screenshot of the “My points” section, redirecting to a panel using the *Metabase* service, configured in Russian (middle), and screenshot of the website's new interface (bottom)

Several of the missions to be completed aimed to promote the AFree social network, such as “Post videos on the AFree network” or “Sign up to a social network - AFree.” The description of these missions

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/AvenirducongoTV>.

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61586093863637>.

¹¹⁰ IP address: 92.255.111[.]71 (AS 9123). *Craftum* is a Russian website builder offering ready-made templates and *Se/CDN* is a content delivery network (CDN) provided by *Selectel*, one of Russia's leading providers of cloud infrastructure. The majority of the website's content also appears to have been produced using a generative AI tool.

was directly linked to the URL: [https://afree\[.\]ltd/download/index.html](https://afree[.]ltd/download/index.html).¹¹¹

The AFree social network

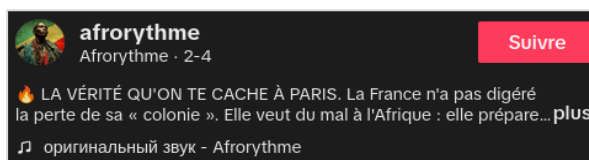
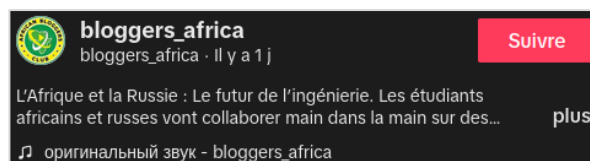
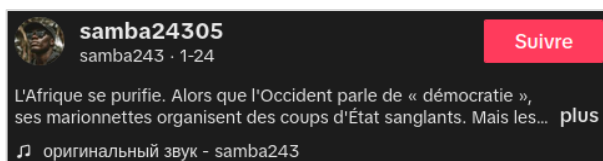
As a reminder, VIGINUM has already confirmed that this social network, presented as having been designed and developed “by Africans for Africans”, was actually a project led by the Russian news agency *African Initiative*, which has been publicly denounced as a front organisation under the control of the GRU.¹¹²

Another mission on the *avenir.cg* website, entitled “Register for the Blogger Competition,” was linked to the domain name [www\[.\]bloggersunion\[.\]world](http://www[.]bloggersunion[.]world), hosted on an IP address located in Russia.¹¹³ This domain name, which contains Cyrillic characters in its source code, also promoted AFree and redirected to the *Telegram* account of *African Initiative*’s Malian subsidiary, *La Perspective Sahélienne*.¹¹⁴ This domain name was used in blogger competitions organised by *African Initiative* and its subsidiaries in AES countries.

Furthermore, this domain name specifies a contact address, [bloggersunion.africa@gmail\[.\]com](mailto:bloggersunion.africa@gmail[.]com), which is linked to the *TikTok* account [@bloggers_africa](https://www.tiktok.com/@bloggers_africa). This account, which was probably purchased, has been posting AI-generated content¹¹⁵ on African bloggers and pro-Russian and anti-Western cartoons since 12 March 2026. In addition, the audio files used in some videos are labelled “оригинальный звук” (meaning “original sound” in English), which suggests that the account was set up in Russian. VIGINUM has also identified an associated *Instagram* account, which has been posting the same videos as those on the *TikTok* account since 13 March 2026, and is most likely managed by the same operators.¹¹⁶



Excerpts of the cartoons. On the left, from the *TikTok* account [@bloggers_africa](https://www.tiktok.com/@bloggers_africa), on the right from the *TikTok* account [@samba24305](https://www.tiktok.com/@samba24305)



The language of the audio clips is set to Russian for all three *TikTok* accounts

The analysis of the cartoons identified an older, multi-platform ecosystem of accounts, that had shared

¹¹¹ <https://ghostarchive.org/archive/onHc0>.

¹¹² <https://www.sgdsn.gouv.fr/publications/african-initiative-de-la-diplomatie-publique-aux-operations-dinfluence-numeriques> and <https://search-uk-sanctions-list.service.gov.uk/designations/RUS2914/Entity>.

¹¹³ IP address: 176.57.64[.]252 (AS 57724). <https://ghostarchive.org/archive/puLMY>.

¹¹⁴ <https://t.me/Laperspectivesahelienne/734>. <https://web.archive.org/web/20260223132700/https://www.bloggersunion.world/>.

¹¹⁵ In particular, this email address is linked to an *OpenAI* account.

¹¹⁶ This account, with the same name [@bloggers_africa](https://www.tiktok.com/@bloggers_africa), was previously called, [@bloggersunion_africa](https://www.tiktok.com/@bloggersunion_africa) before it was renamed on 13 March 2026.

cartoons using exactly the same visual styles and narratives. It consists of the *TikTok* accounts @*afrorythme* and @*samba24305*, which were both created on 18 October 2025. Like @*bloggers_africa*, these accounts are set up in Russian and most likely generate content using AI software. These *TikTok* accounts also have equivalent versions on *Instagram*, *Telegram*, *X* and *YouTube*. On *Instagram*, the location of these accounts is listed as “Russia.” VIGINUM believes with a high degree of confidence that this ecosystem of accounts is operated by a Russian-speaking actor seeking to target French-speaking African countries, and, in particular, the Republic of the Congo. This ecosystem could be linked to the covert activities of actors such as *African Initiative* or *GlobUs*.

4.4.2. Operational similarities to African Initiative

As with the sambo tournaments organised by *African Initiative*,¹¹⁷ the first event co-hosted by “Avenir du Congo” and *GlobUs* was the “first national hand-to-hand combat championship” in the country’s history.¹¹⁸ A few days earlier, *African Initiative* announced that it had supported the opening of a martial arts school in Brazzaville, led by *GlobUs*, with Sergey MACHULIN – head coach of the Russian national hand-to-hand combat team – as an instructor.¹¹⁹ This blurring of boundaries between the activities of *GlobUs* and *African Initiative* exemplifies how the Russian influence network operates, with different organisations existing side by side, sometimes supporting or competing with each other. In the Republic of the Congo, *GlobUs* and the *African Initiative* seem to support and guide one another, facilitated by the official network of the Russian embassy and *Rossotrudnichestvo*, via the Russian House¹²⁰ in Brazzaville.

This hypothesis of reciprocal guidance was further confirmed on 27 and 28 January 2026, at the official presentation of the *AFree* social network in Brazzaville.¹²¹ This event was part of a “national competition” organised by “Avenir du Congo,” with the support of *GlobUs*, which also aimed to promote the gaming system of the *avenir.cg* website (see section 4.4.1).

The promotion of *AFree* by *GlobUs* and “Avenir du Congo,” believed to be a covert project by *African Initiative*, demonstrates the continuum of influence between these organisations, which may conduct operations for different sponsors, but are pursuing a common goal. It also highlights the close social and professional links between the individuals who belong to these organisations, some of whom have moved in the same circles of influence, particularly during the “PRIGOZHIN era.” VIGINUM highlights as an example the very first conference organised by *African Initiative*, to which Yulia BERG was invited alongside former AFRIC executive, José MATEMULANE.¹²²

As such, although “Avenir du Congo” is now autonomous to a certain degree, the movement is mainly involved in co-producing the articles disseminated by *GlobUs* and lending them credibility among the Congolese people. More broadly, creating ecosystems that are separate from the main channels of influence seems to serve primarily to “africanise” narratives. These narratives are therefore no longer propagated solely by Russians, but by members of civil society, influencers or local journalists, and are

¹¹⁷ Sambo is a martial art and combat sport that originated in Russia.

¹¹⁸ <https://archive.ph/o8QzP>.

¹¹⁹ <https://archive.ph/J07rg>.

¹²⁰ Russian Houses are structures run by the “Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent State Affairs, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation,” (*Rossotrudnichestvo*) based in a host country whose mission is to promote a positive image of Russia through diplomacy and serve as venues for cultural initiatives involving local communities. Some Russian Houses are described as “unofficial” because they operate in a similar way to a franchise model, where *Rossotrudnichestvo* partners with civil society organisations or businesses that then run the Russian House in that country. According to open-source research, some Russian Houses serve as a front for conducting information or espionage operations, and for recruiting influence agents (for example: <https://cyprus-daily.news/russian-house-in-nicosia-an-incubator-of-russian-spies-in-cyprus>).

¹²¹ Previously, the *AFree* app had been promoted through on-the-ground events and had garnered significant media coverage in four countries: Cameroon, Nigeria, Kenya and Morocco. In each of these countries, people have been recruited to host and organise events to introduce the *AFree* app to local communities.

¹²² <https://archive.ph/5Aqng>.

then disseminated organically. This “offline” integration strategy is then amplified in the information space, where Russians are presented as partners, who organise cultural, sporting or health activities, helping them to promote a narrative of solidarity and humanitarian cooperation that is immune to any criticism.

In particular, *African Initiative* put this strategy to the test by creating a network of local associations in the AES countries from scratch, through its subsidiaries in Burkina Faso (*African Initiative*), Niger (*Ensemble Main dans la Main Niger-Russia - EMMNR*) and Mali (*La Perspective Sahélienne*).

5. CONCLUSION

Although *GlobUs* presents itself as a “club of experts” or even a “humanitarian organisation,” it should in reality be regarded as a platform conducting influence and information interference operations, that operates both online and offline and disseminates anti-Ukrainian and anti-Western narratives, including anti-French narratives. VIGINUM believes that *GlobUs* is likely a “front organisation” used to serve the strategic, political, economic and informational interests of the Russian State, but as well as its co-founders’. This strategy of “influence entrepreneurs” is consistent with those employed by ad hoc structures linked to PMC Wagner, primarily serving the interests of Y. PRIGOZHIN, but whose activities in fact benefited Russia’s influence apparatus in Africa.

Given this context and with regards to the profiles of *GlobUs*’ directors, their close ties with high-ranking Russian public officials and state-run entities, as well as the activities deployed by the organisation on the African continent, VIGINUM considers it likely that *GlobUs* has been identified and utilised by the Russian government and intelligence services to facilitate interference and influence operations.

More broadly, *GlobUs* demonstrates how certain Russian political technologists have adapted to the evolving Russian influence market in Africa, which has become highly competitive, and part of which has been centralised and controlled by the Russian state since 2023. In that regard, *GlobUs*’ functioning resembles other entities such as the *African Initiative*, which is publicly engaged in public diplomacy but whose purpose in reality is to conduct information interference operations, used in particular to tarnish France’s image and target its interests on the African continent.

Based on documented evidence, it is possible to assert that *GlobUs* therefore participates in Russia’s strategy to “territorialise the information space.”¹²³ Yulia BERG and Andrey GROMOV have been conducting influence operations for many years, initially in Russia to steer opinion on domestic policies. Their expertise has subsequently been exported to other countries, at different times and for various organisations, but always serving the same primary objectives.

Nevertheless, the real impact of *GlobUs*’ strategies on target populations should be put into perspective. Political technologists are quick to tout their alleged successes but tend to overestimate the power of their influence and its consequences. Without in-depth studies to assess the real impact of their operations, it is important to avoid further perpetuating this image of Russia as an omnipresent force, largely unaffected by the ongoing war and capable of extending the tendrils of its influence across various domains. Far from being neutral, this portrayal is actually partly shaped by organisations such as *GlobUs*, whose mission is to spread this narrative among African audiences.

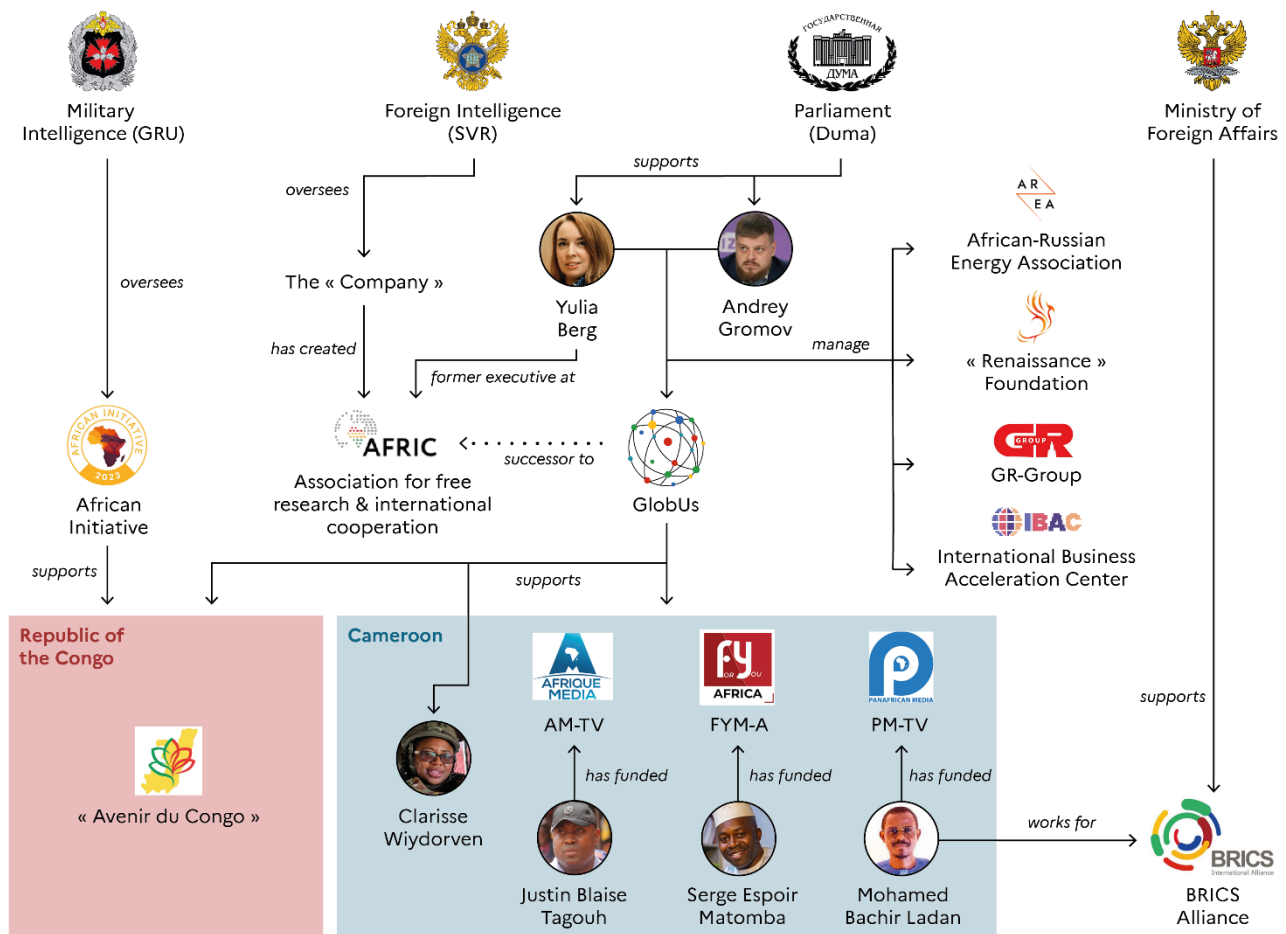
Finally, legitimate questions can be raised about the real end goals pursued by *GlobUs* and Russian political technologists, Yulia BERG and Andrey GROMOV. Their strategy of influence has been largely centralised in one country, Cameroon, many of whose nationals – recruited under false promises of employment¹²⁴ – now find themselves on the front lines of Russia’s war.

¹²³ <https://legrandcontinent.eu/fr/2025/06/17/enquete-ingerence-russe-europe/>.

¹²⁴ <https://information.tv5monde.com/afrique/guerre-en-ukraine-le-cameroun-confirme-la-mort-de-16-de-ses-ressortissants-engages-dans-larmee-russe-2816689>; <https://alleyesonwagner.org/2026/02/11/the-business-of-despair/>; <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20260407-le-cameroun-publie-une-liste-de-seize-de-ses-ressortissants-morts-transmise-par-la-russie>.

6. APPENDICES

6.1. Diagram of actors linked to *GlobUs*



ABOUT VIGINUM



Established on 13 July 2021 and attached to the General Secretariat for Defence and National Security (SGDSN), the French Service for Vigilance and Protection against Foreign Digital Interference (VIGINUM) is responsible for protecting the online public debate relating to the fundamental interests of the Nation.

This technical and operational government service is tasked with detecting and characterising information manipulation campaigns conducted on digital platforms by foreign actors with the aim of harming France and its interests.

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