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# Who Runs Russia's Africa Portfolio: The 2025–2026 Reshuffle and the Erosion of Governability

Russia's Africa portfolio is being carved up among the Kremlin, the military and Dmitriev, with no regional expert at the top. Also here: who holds which post today, three embassies that show the same pattern, and why the Africa Corps is running short of men and money.

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Russia's Africa portfolio has no chain of command of its own, and in 2025–2026 it lost the one overseer it had. Mikhail Bogdanov was relieved of his posts on July 9, 2025, his seat stood empty for more than six months, and a new directorate in the Presidential Administration took shape under Sergei Kiriyenko and Vadim Titov. This report, dated August 31, 2026, maps who now holds which part of it and argues that the reshuffle has weakened and fragmented its governability.

## Who holds which part of the portfolio

The first half of the report is a working map. It follows the portfolio from Putin and the Presidential Administration through the Foreign Ministry's Department for Partnership with Africa and the Arabists who handle North Africa, to the Defense Ministry and military intelligence behind the Africa Corps, the state corporations Rosatom, Rostec and Rosoboronexport, and Kirill Dmitriev's parallel "investment diplomacy." Each block comes with names — Yevkurov, Averyanov, Alekseyev, Chemezov, Mikheyev — and with what has happened to them. Alekseyev was wounded in an assassination attempt in February 2026, Timur Ivanov is in prison, and Igor Chaika, a businessman under US sanctions, has replaced Yevgeny Primakov at Rossotrudnichestvo.

## Three embassies, one pattern

The report then tests the headquarters picture against the field, through three missions of very different weight:

“ In Cairo, the ambassadorship stood vacant from February to August 2026 and was then filled by the director of the Department of International Information Security — that is, by someone from outside the Arabist track, more likely tied to the security services. In Kampala, the ambassador left his post in March 2026, and as of August the mission is run by a chargé d'affaires ad interim. In Addis Ababa, by contrast, Yevgeny Terekhin has held the post since March 27, 2019, speaks Amharic, and had already served at the same embassy as minister-counselor in 2002–2006 — making it the only one of the three where a genuine country specialist remains in place, with seven years of continuity, even though it is the post through which the fewest resources flow.

In my assessment, a direct correlation is at work here: churn in appointments occurs where money and assets move through the mission, while calmer continuity survives at posts that carry status but no resources. This is essentially the same mechanism as the six-month vacancy in the position overseeing the Middle East and Africa bloc at MFA headquarters. And it points to a broader conclusion about the African file as a whole: the policy track is becoming harder to manage not because the course has changed, but because control is being redistributed among agencies as resources contract.

*Sergey Konyashin, Who Runs Russia's Africa Portfolio: The 2025–2026 Reshuffle and the Erosion of Governability (From the Inside, Démarche, August 31, 2026)*

## Why this is not routine turnover

From there the report reads the personnel changes as a carve-up rather than a rotation. It sets the arrest of Bogdanov's aide Vasily Kravchenko, the attempt on Alekseyev and the long vacancy at the top beside one another and names the likely beneficiaries — the FSB and the Dmitriev clan. It traces how regional expertise was replaced at every key node by adjacent expertise or by opportunistic appointments, and how the center of gravity moved from the Foreign Ministry to the *siloviki*.

The closing section weighs the cost. Plans for the Africa Corps run against the losses on the Ukrainian front, with around 12,000 men by the end of 2026 looking more realistic than the 20,000–40,000 in circulation. Russia's share of foreign direct investment in Africa is about one percent. And the hard-power spine the model rests on began to shake in Mali just as the reshuffle took hold.

## What the report is based on

The analysis is built on the record of appointments, dismissals and decrees from 2025–2026 — dates, posts and careers set side by side — and on the author's own assessment of what they add up to. Where the conclusions are the author's reading rather than established fact, the report says so.

## ABOUT

I am Sergey Konyashin, a former Russian diplomat. I spent nearly a dozen years in the Russian Foreign Ministry, with postings in Yemen (2010–2013), Sudan (2014–2018) and Algeria (2019–2021), and left Russia in 2022, after Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

*Démarche* is my independent journal on Russian policy in the Middle East and Africa: analysis from inside the system, for readers outside it. I also write for *The Moscow Times*, *Republic*, *The Insider* and other independent outlets; see [konyashin.com/elsewhere](https://konyashin.com/elsewhere) for that work.

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