

Abstract

The latest coups d'état in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger are illustrations of a gradual decline in French influence in the Francophone Africa. France's historic offer of military partnership has been replaced by new players, such as Russia, which has stepped up its relations in the security field - through Wagner and then through the new Africa Corps. This rejection of France has been accompanied by an 'anti-French sentiment' that has developed thanks to anti-colonial and pan-Africanist rhetoric, accompanied by campaigns of disinformation and interference that are coming mainly from Moscow. Russia has deployed a strategy of influence that were most of the time successful in several cases across the region. These partnerships aim to safeguard the ruling elites while promising to pacify the territories where the forces are deployed. However, this French crisis in the Francophone Africa should not be limited to an analysis of Russian action, as this resentment stems from reasons internal to France's relationship with the continent. Faced with this crisis, France needs to change its strategy radically in order to deal with the new competition that also comes from Beijing, Ankara and Washington. This realistic restructuring concerns the military sphere - the main driving force behind anti-French theories - the diplomatic sphere and the renewal of a softer influence on the continent organized around the assets that Paris possesses in Africa