

4.4.1. Chechen military units

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After Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the head of Chechnya, Ramzan Kadyrov, significantly expanded Chechen military formations, 924 reportedly establishing ten additional units,925 including new regiments and battalions as well as 'volunteer' Akhmat unit, which are subordinated to the Russian MoD.926 In addition, a new regiment and a separate OMON (Special Police Mobile Unit) detachment were established within the National Guard (*Rosgrvardiya*).927 The military and paramilitary Chechen units are colloquially known as 'the *kadyrovtsy*.'928 According to Huseyn Aliyev, there are roughly nine different Akhmad regiments, with some of them being part of *Rosgvardiya* and others being under MoD and the Ministry of Interior (MoI). At least seven or eight of these units have reportedly been deployed to Ukraine and are either operating directly within the country or on Ukraine-Russian border.929 In March 2025, a new regiment, Akhmat-Kavkaz, subordinated to MoD, was created.930

The Akhmat special forces are often viewed as Ramzan's Kadyrov's private army931 and have been deployed to fight in Ukraine since the start of the war in February 2022.932 After the disbandment of the Wagner group, some of its fighters transferred entire units to Akhmat battalions, due to reluctance to serve under the MoD,933 with the Akhmat Battalion commander stating in October 2023 that it was a 'mass influx.'934 In April 2024, Ramzan Kadyrov announced that another 3 000 former Wagner fighters were expected to join the Akhmad battalion.935 From late 2022, the Chechen forces in Ukraine have increasingly assumed rear-area tasks, such as policing, supporting Russia-appointed local authorities, and providing border security duties.936 For instance, several Chechen units have been deployed in or around Mariupol, where they are tasked with so-called implementation of 'law and order.'937

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  Huseyn Aliyev, Online interview with EUAA, 7 October 2025

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