



## **HS DISEC - "Addressing the Role of Private Military Companies in Global Security"**

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A private military company (PMC) or private military and security company (PMSC) is a private company providing armed combat or security services for financial gain. PMCs refer to their personnel as "security contractors" or "private military contractors." These companies offer various military and security services to governments, international organizations, and private clients. The background of PMCs in international affairs can be traced back to several factors, starting in the post-Cold War era. During this time, in the late twentieth century, the end of the Cold War significantly reduced the size of military forces worldwide. Many governments sought cost-effective alternatives to maintain military capabilities, leading to the rise of PMCs as a flexible and efficient solution. Furthermore, increased globalization and privatization of various sectors also influenced the military and security domain. Governments began outsourcing certain military functions to private entities, from logistics and training to combat and security operations. The changing nature of conflicts, including insurgencies, terrorism, and asymmetrical warfare, created a demand for specialized security services. PMCs positioned themselves to meet this demand by offering counterinsurgency, intelligence, and critical infrastructure

protection expertise. Geopolitical shifts, technological advancements, and changes like conflicts shape the background of private military companies in international affairs. While PMCs provide valuable services in specific contexts, their involvement also raises important legal, ethical, and security considerations that continue to be subjects of debate and scrutiny in the international community. Non-state actors are not bound to international law or UN resolutions. For the international community, PMCs raise essential issues such as a fear that they disregard the innocent, the legal accountability of combatants, pressure for privatization and adaptability in the face of globalized and highly adaptive security threats, and more.

According to the UN's [seventy-third session in 2018](#), private military companies “can violently destabilize a country, rendering it helpless and ineffective.” The most infamous example of the lack of control over private military security came on 16 September 2007, when American employees of Blackwater Security, guarding a U.S. State Department convoy, panicked and launched a ten-minute machine-gun attack on Iraqi civilians in Baghdad’s central Nisour Square, killing 17 and injuring 20 innocent civilians. There are over 30 Private military and security companies (PMSCs) worldwide. Without any standard rules of conduct and a system of punishment, these companies fall into the same problem of UN control as terrorist groups.

The United Nations has dramatically increased its use of PMSCs (Private Military Security Companies) in recent years, hiring them for a wide array of security services and giving them considerable influence over its security policies, as a 2012 report revealed. Many nations might rely on PMCs because their armed forces are too small or ideologically committed to privatization, even if this means sacrificing state control. For

others, PMSCs are helpful because they can be dispatched without the legal requirement for using state armed forces, such as a declaration of war or a UN resolution.

The United Nations is dedicated to preserving and promoting peaceful coexistence among its 193 member states and the welfare of the world's 7.5 billion people. Since PMSCs are non-state actors (NSAs), they challenge the UN's and the Charter's core principles. The costs and benefits of these companies must be weighed carefully. Given that the UN has used some of these organizations in the past, especially for the protection of humanitarian work, the UN member states are sharply divided on whether to get rid of them altogether or to create a hard-fast standard to prevent issues from arising in the future. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the dominant UN voting bloc, generally agrees on an outright ban. However, some members increasingly see a role (if carefully regulated) in some circumstances, primarily to protect commercial investments from guerrilla or terrorist attacks. Others, including China, some European Union states, Russia, and the United States, want to preserve prerogatives or protect their business interests.

Additional Sources:

[http://psm.du.edu/international\\_regulation/un\\_initiatives/](http://psm.du.edu/international_regulation/un_initiatives/)

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Mercenaries/WGMercenaries/Pages/StudyOnPMSC.aspx>

[http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46413#.VbdIZoow\\_cs](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46413#.VbdIZoow_cs)