



FORUM: Disarmament and International Security (DISEC)

AGENDA: The Role of Private Military Companies in Contemporary Conflicts

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Esteemed Delegates and Honorable Advisors,

It is my utmost honor and immense pleasure to welcome every single one of you to TTMUN'26.

Ever since its first session in 2015, TTMUN Conferences have been an undeniable portrayal of unity, collaboration, and resilience by the fellow members of the TTMUN Club. As the executive team of TTMUN'26, we have dedicated countless hours to organize the 11th annual session of TTMUN; while doing so, we have maintained the same passion and dedication with every step we have taken to sustain the quality of TTMUN. That being said, as the Secretary-General of TTMUN'26, I would like to thank my fellow executive team members and our remarkable advisor, Vesile Acar, whose support made it possible to organize this conference and host you here at our school on the 27th, 28th, and 29th of April. Yet, beyond its tradition, TTMUN'26 is shaped by its purpose.

Our mission in TTMUN Club is to foster mutual growth in a collaborative environment where we are not only discussing real-world issues but also work towards solutions. Therefore, in correlation with our mission, we have chosen the theme of TTMUN'26 to be "Bridging Divides in Human Rights". The significance of the theme lies in the unfortunate irony of the persistence of human rights violations. Today, our world is witnessing and turning a blind eye to human rights violations that the United Nations was initially established to ensure that the world would never witness and do so again. Acknowledging this, we, the youth shall not only wait for our turn to come tomorrow but shape it today. Hence, as the executive team, we hope for a fruitful conference where everyone, regardless of their role, contributes to the debates, lobbying, and discussions, bearing the urgency of our global reality in mind.

As we embark on this journey, this mission will be in action over the course of three days as the delegates will have the opportunity to be active in one of nine committees of TTMUN'26 with fifteen diverse agenda items that seek to solve the serious issues that our world is facing. While doing so, let's embrace the unparalleled value of collaboration, respect, and empathy for a better future. Finally, I hope that you have an incomparable MUN experience and once again as the Secretary General, I wholeheartedly welcome everyone to the TTMUN'26.

“All my hope is in youth!”

—Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

Yours sincerely,

Derin Halatçı - Secretary General

INTRODUCTION

In the recent decades, the rate of warfare has significantly increased, a reason being non-state actors' prominent role in armed conflicts in today's world. Apart from these actors, private military companies (PMCs) have gathered as effective participants, providing military, logistical, and security services in conflict zones. These military companies operate in different regions including the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Africa; often having a contract between governments, cooperations and any other asset.

Private military companies can be efficient and skilled. However, their growing role creates concerns about accountability, legality, and the loss of state control over the use of force. Because of this, modern warfare is sometimes described as becoming more "privatized." As a result, this issue has become increasingly important for international security and requires stronger regulation.

Private Military companies
a rising challenge

- LEGITIMACY & ACCOUNTABILITY**
PMCs often operate outside legal boundaries with little care for Human Rights
- STATE SOVEREIGNTY**
challenging the monopoly of legitimate force
- PERFORMANCE**
despite a high level of experience, loyalty might be challenged by financial objectives
- THREAT TO PEACE AND STABILITY**
more PMCs could mean escalating or prolonging conflicts or create new ones to support their business model
- POST CONFLICT**
What future for the personnel and their weapons once the conflict is over?

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS:

Private Military Company (PMC):

Businesses that carry out tasks usually associated with national armies. Instead of being a part of the state, they are hired with the help of contracts to provide services such as security, military training, protecting infrastructure, and sometimes even participating in combat. Their

role in conflicts raises important questions because their motivation is often financial rather than national.

Mercenaries:

Individuals who take part in armed conflict mainly for personal profit rather than loyalty to a country. Although the term is often alternated with private military companies' expertise, international law makes a distinction between the two, which can make defining their role more complex.

International Humanitarian Law:

The rules that aim to limit and prevent the effects of armed conflict. It focuses on protecting civilians and setting boundaries on how the war lasts. All actors included in the conflict, including private military companies, are expected to follow these rules, even if the practice is not always consistent.

Accountability:

Being held responsible for one's actions, especially when laws are broken. In the context of PMCs, responsibility can become unclear, as it may fall on the individual, the company, or the state that hired them, making legal consequences harder to enforce.

State Sovereignty:

The prospect that a country has full say over its land and internal affairs without outside involvement. The intervention of private military companies, especially foreign ones, can complicate this law by introducing external actors into civil conflicts.

Human Rights Violations:

Human rights violations refer to actions that infringe upon the fundamental rights and freedoms entitled to every individual, including abuses related to race, gender, and social status.

Proxy Warfare:

When states support other actors to fight on their behalf instead of avoiding direct conflict. Private military companies can be used in this way, allowing states to have an impact over conflicts without officially being involved, which can increase the complexity and reduce clarity.

The Legal Grey Area:

Exists where laws are unclear or not fully developed. PMCs often operate within such spaces, as international regulations have not fully adapted to their growing role in modern conflicts.

Use of Force:

The enforcement of military power in conflicts and wars. Traditionally, only states were considered the actual users of force, but the involvement of private military companies challenges this idea and raises questions about who should have that authority.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Although the use of private actors in warfare has changed dramatically over time, the modern Private Military Companies first appeared after the Cold War, when many states stood back their armed forces and increasingly relied on private contractors to cover operational and logistical gaps. Functions that were "Once exclusively reserved for national armed forces", started to be outsourced to private organizations, which was a severe change. These businesses eventually moved beyond logistical functions and started actively participating in security and military operations.

Private military companies are currently recognized as private businesses that offer military related services, such as operational support and protection, frequently in high risk situations. Their emergence is strongly associated with globalization and the evolving character of conflict, as states have come to prioritize flexibility and quick deployment. PMCs have become powerful players in areas like the Middle East and Africa, where they frequently operate in unstable or conflict affected systems.

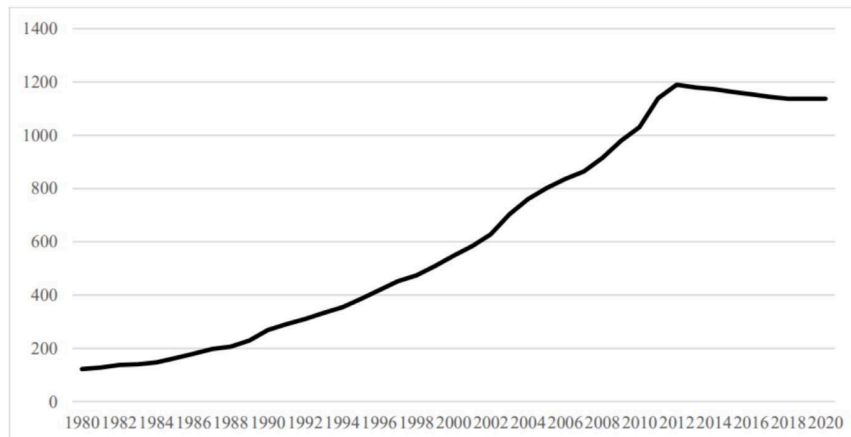
A major change in the scope and visibility of private military companies' operations happened during the 2003 Iraq War. Thousands of contractors served alongside national forces during this time, carrying out tasks including armed escort missions and infrastructure security. This dilation showed how PMCs might function outside of established military systems while working with conventional groups.

However, there are serious ethical and legal issues with this advancement. There are inconsistencies in monitoring because international frameworks like the UN Mercenary Convention were never meant to control contemporary private military companies. Although private military companies operate according to international humanitarian law, their global structure makes it difficult to uphold these agreements. In the same way, the UN Human Rights Council study (A/HRC/57/53) states that private military companies have been able to function in settings with little control due to past unclear regulations that they are used to.

Because of this, the rise of private military companies is a reflection of a larger change in warfare; the growing privatization of force, which makes it harder to distinguish between corporate interests and public authority.

NUMBER OF PRIVATE MILITARY COMPANIES ACROSS THE GLOBE

1980-2020, by year



Source : UN-OHCHR

CURRENT SITUATION

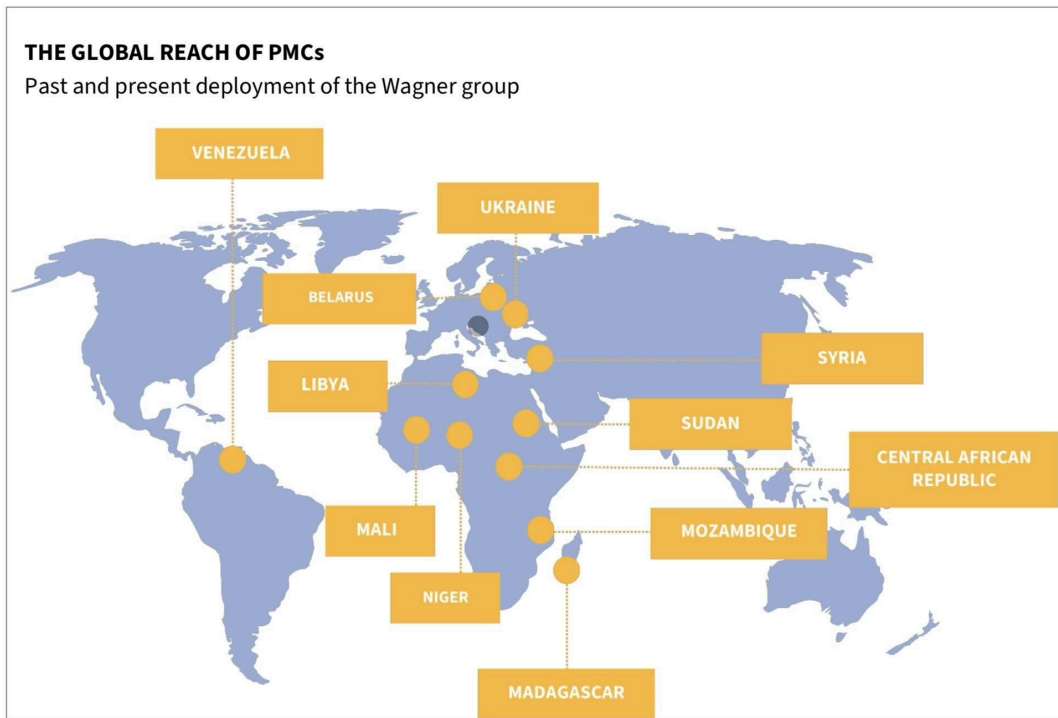
Private military companies now operate in almost every major conflict zone, frequently supporting or even replacing the armed forces of their home countries. In order to lower political expenses, avoid direct military engagement, and acquire specialized capabilities that might not be accessible inside their own governments, they are depending more and more on these businesses. PMCs are now firmly established in the structure of contemporary conflicts as a result.

But their increasing number has also brought to light important moral and legal issues. The lack of a single international framework governing their operations is one of the most urgent problems. PMCs can operate internationally with little monitoring since different nations use different legal requirements, which leads to inconsistencies. It is challenging to assign responsibility for breaches due to this fragmented framework.

Human rights are still a major concern. PMCs have been connected to acts of unlawful killings, torture, and civilian abuse in a number of international reports. In many of these situations, it's difficult to determine who is responsible; individual consultants, the businesses themselves, or the states that hire them. Because of the uncertainty, there sometimes are a few legal penalties, which maintains an ongoing pattern of the lack of punishment.

PMCs are also being utilized more frequently in proxy or indirect warfare. Their engagement may decrease clarity by enabling states to affect local conditions without formally committing troops. The use of PMCs has increased in unstable areas, especially in portions of Africa and the Middle East, as governments try to handle security issues with little funding.

Private military companies' ongoing growth has started worries about how it would affect international law and state sovereignty. The conventional framework of international security becomes more challenging to handle when governments are no longer entirely accountable for controlling the use of force. The current state of affairs shows a resistant inconsistency between the benefits of PMCs and the risks they pose to accountability and stability, which is why the international community continues to emphasize the need for stricter oversight and clearer regulation.



The map shows the countries where PMCs have been active in recent years, including conflict zones such as Ukraine, Syria, Libya, Sudan, and the Central African Republic. It highlights how PMCs operate across different regions, especially in areas with political instability or ongoing conflicts.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS:

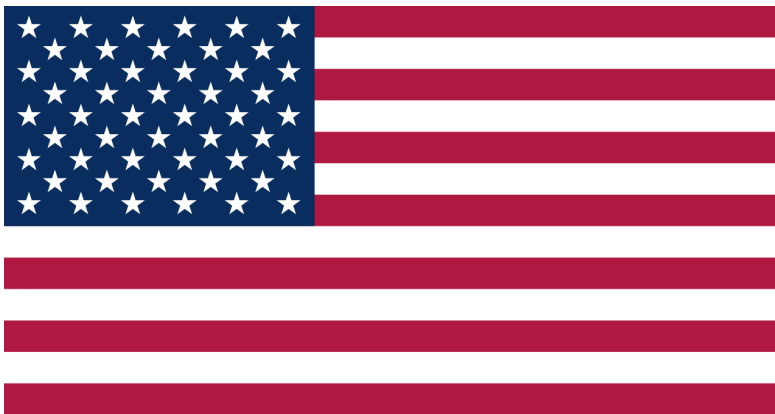
| <u>DATE</u> | <u>EVENT</u> |
|-------------|---|
| 1990s | Emergence of modern PMCs after the Cold War |
| 2003 | Large-scale use of PMCs during the Iraq War |
| 2007 | Nisour Square incident highlights accountability issues after PMC personnel |

| | |
|-------------|---|
| | killed civilians |
| 2014-2022 | Expansion of Wagner Group operations in Ukraine and other regions |
| 2010s-2020s | Increased use of PMCs in African conflicts |
| 2023 | EU report highlights growing risks of PMCs |
| Present | Continued global use of PMCs raises concerns over accountability and regulation |

MAJOR PARTIES INVOLVED

Private Military Organizations (PMCs):

PMCs are major figures in this problem. Their activities have an impact on the dynamics of conflicts, and their growing number is reflective of the larger trend of privatizing warfare. Significant questions of responsibility, legality, and control over the use of force are brought up by how they operate.



United States of America:

As seen by its involvement in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States is among the biggest consumers of private military firms. The United States is the starting point for conversations regarding responsibility and regulation because PMCs are frequently used for security and logistics.



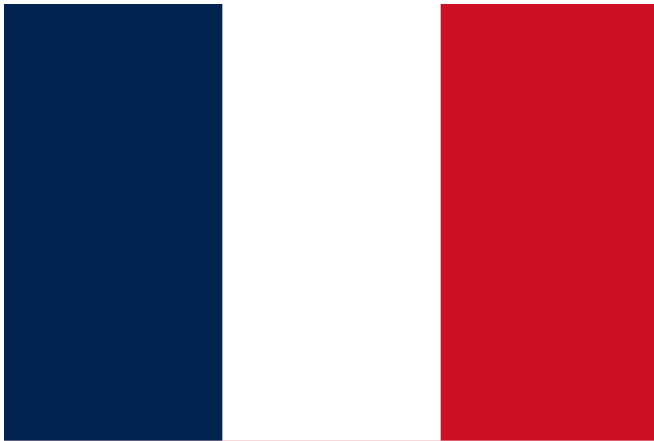
Russian Federation:

Private military organizations like the Wagner Group have strong connections to the Russian Federation. Concerns over proxy warfare and the use of PMCs as tools of state effect have been raised by these forces' operations in Syria, Ukraine, and a few African nations.



Ukraine:

One important example of how PMCs have contributed to ongoing violence is Ukraine. The involvement of private actors in today's conflict and its effects on security and sovereignty have been revealed by the existence of organizations like Wagner.



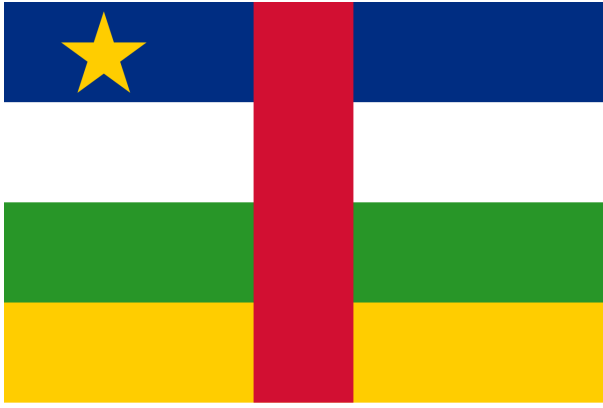
France:

Particularly in the Sahel region, France has been heavily involved in security operations throughout Africa. Additionally, it has been directly impacted by the rise in PMC attendance in nations like Mali, where national stability has been impacted by private forces.



Mali:

An important example of PMC participation in Africa is Mali. The government's reliability on private military actors for the support of security has raised concerns about human rights, cultural sovereignty, and international interference.



Central African Republic:

Especially when it comes to international organizations supplying military assistance, PMC activity has been common in the Central African Republic. Because of this, it has become an important example of how PMCs can affect regional conflicts.



China:

China is becoming more interested in private security firms, especially for securing its foreign investments. Its involvement represents the increasing global spread of private security stakeholders, even if they are not actively involved in military operations.



India:

A significant developing nation that is impacted by international security is India. Even though it uses PMCs less often, it is crucial to global discussions over sovereignty and regulation.



United Kingdom:

A few significant private security and military firms are based in the UK, which has taken part in regulatory debates on their use. It has a significant impact on the development of PMC related legal frameworks.

RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS

The 1949 Geneva Conventions and Supplementary Protocols:

International humanitarian law depends on the Geneva Conventions. They try to protect innocent civilians and establish guidelines for how battles must be fought. PMCs are also required to stick by them even if it's challenging to apply these regulations in practice.

International Convention banning the hiring, employment, funding, and training of mercenaries (1989);

The purpose of this UN treaty is to restrict the employment of mercenaries in armed conflicts. Even though it does not completely govern contemporary PMCs, it is still one of the few international initiatives addressing private actors in combat.

The Montreux Document (2008);

The rules in this document are for states to use to control military and security companies. It provides well rounded ideas for guaranteeing accountability and explains what is required under international law, even though it is not legally enforceable.

Private Security Service Providers' International Code of Conduct (ICoC);

The program's goal is to establish guidelines for private security firms, emphasizing on ethical behaviour and human rights. Participation is voluntary but companies that do sign it agree to follow certain rules.

Report of the United Nations Human Rights Council (A/HRC/57/53);

Private military companies' dangers are emphasized in this report, mostly with relation to the lack of accountability and human rights violations. Its demand is to create more precise legal structures and to have more effective international control.

Report of the Council of the European Union: "The Business of War" (2023);

This paper's duty is to discuss the growing role of PMC's in international conflicts and the dangers they cause, such as less accountability, and decreased clarity.

SOLUTION ALTERNATIVES

Creating Global PMC Guidelines:

The absence of precise international standards is one of the primary problems. The UN could support the creation of informal rules that specify appropriate PMC actions and duties rather than establishing a fully enforceable worldwide system. This would uphold state sovereignty while helping in the reduction of legal uncertainty.

Improving Accountability Mechanisms:

It's frequently unclear who is at fault when violations happen. Ensuring that PMCs and the states that employ them are held accountable under international law might enhance accountability. States should look into violations and, if needed, take appropriate legal action.

Promoting Global Collaboration and Information Exchange:

States could collaborate by exchanging information about PMC operations instead of establishing a new UN monitoring agency. This may include using already-existing international organizations, reporting violations, and sharing best practices.

Encouraging PMC Contract Transparency:

States might be encouraged to provide general knowledge regarding their use of PMCs, even though full transparency might not always be realistic. This would improve openness without interfering in internal affairs.

Restricting PMC Participation in Direct Combat:

PMCs might only be used for non-combat functions including protection, training, and logistics. This would allow states to profit from their services while lowering the dangers involved in contracting the use of force.

Enhancing National Regulations:

It is the duty of any state to control PMCs that operate inside its boundaries. While maintaining national sovereignty, governments can enhance legal procedures, establish more precise legal boundaries, and guarantee that violations are punished.

USEFUL LINKS

United Nations – Maintaining International Peace and Security;

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