



# The Role of Private Military Companies in Defense Policy and Military Operations

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## ABSTRACT

This research explores the role of private military companies (PMCs) in defense policy and military operations. This research utilizes a qualitative approach, primarily relying on secondary data sources such as government reports, academic articles, and legal documents. The findings highlight PMCs' diverse legal and regulatory landscape, including international conventions and national legislation. These frameworks aim to provide oversight and accountability for the activities of PMCs, addressing their status, recruitment, and operational limitations. Furthermore, the study highlights the ethical considerations associated with using PMCs, such as human rights abuses, transparency, and accountability issues. Lastly, it uncovers the geopolitical implications of relying on PMCs, including the potential erosion of state sovereignty, regional power dynamics, and the risk of conflict escalation.

## INTRODUCTION

Private military companies (PMCs) have become significant players worldwide in defense policy and operations. This research aims to understand their historical evolution, roles, functions, and impact on defense policy and operations. By studying PMCs' roles and functions, we can gain insights into their transformation from small private security firms to significant defense policy and operations players. Analyzing PMCs' impact on defense policy and operations will reveal the advantages and drawbacks of relying on private forces, enabling governments and armed forces to make informed decisions regarding their partnerships with PMCs (Ageli, 2016).

PMCs, originating from ancient mercenary groups, gained prominence in the post-Cold War era as nation-states reduced military expenditures and downsized their armed forces (CAUIA & ZACON, 2022). They provided specialized military services to governments and non-state actors, including logistics, training, intelligence, and humanitarian aid. Their global presence expanded, creating a complex and controversial industry that shapes the modern security landscape. Governments and organizations must carefully weigh the advantages and risks of partnering with PMCs, considering factors like accountability, legality, and the potential erosion of state sovereignty. Understanding the historical evolution of PMCs is essential for making informed decisions and navigating complex dynamics (CAUIA & ZACON, 2022).

Table 1. List of PMC Organizations in the World  
Source: processed by the researcher (2023)

No.	Name	Leader	Country of Origin	Year Formed
1.	Academy (formerly	Eric D. Prince	United States	1997

	known as Blackwater)			
2.	G4S Risk Management	Ashley Almanza	United Kingdom	1901
3.	Executive Outcomes	Simon Mann	South Africa	1989
4.	Wagner Group	Dmitriy Valeryevich Utkin (also known by the nickname "Wagner")	Russia	estimated around 2014
5.	Aegis Defense Services	Tim Spicer	United Kingdom	2002
6.	Control Risks Group	Nick Allan	United Kingdom	1975
7.	Triple Canopy Inc.	Ignacio Balderas Jr.	United States	2003
8.	DynCorp International	George Krivo	United States	1946
9.	Olive Group	Unknown	United Kingdom	around 2001
10.	Sandline International	Tim Spicer	United Kingdom	1996

PMCs provide various services, such as logistics support, intelligence gathering, counterinsurgency operations, training, and security consulting, in complex legal and ethical situations (Bijos & de Souza, 2020). They employ professionals like former military personnel, intelligence operatives, and security experts. PMCs partner with governments and corporations to offer expertise in conflict zones and unstable regions. They also support peacekeeping missions and humanitarian efforts. Despite concerns about accountability, transparency, and human rights abuses, PMCs play a significant role in global security, filling gaps that traditional military forces cannot or unwillingly address (Vestner, 2019).

### Private Military Companies and defense policy

PMCs significantly impact defense policy due to their flexibility and cost-effectiveness. Governments often contract PMCs to perform tasks that conventional armed forces cannot perform, allowing them to allocate resources more efficiently. However, outsourcing raises concerns about accountability, oversight, and the potential erosion of state sovereignty. Private military firms play a significant role in military operations, particularly in conflict zones and unstable areas. PMCs have combat and non-combat operations expertise, but their presence raises ethical questions about transparency, force use, and human rights abuses (Stryzhak & Filianina, 2019).

The rise of private military companies (PMCs) has sparked significant interest and discussion within defense policy and military operations. PMCs, private security companies, and military contractors have become increasingly prevalent in contemporary conflicts (O'Reilly, 2007). This research explores the significance and rationale behind studying PMCs, highlighting their impact on defense policy and military operations.

1. **Enhancing Military Capabilities:** PMCs enhance military capabilities by providing specialized skills, manpower, and resources, addressing gaps in capabilities, ensuring operational flexibility, and providing a strategic advantage in conflicts requiring rapid responses (Jefferies, 2002).

2. **Privatization of Security:** PMCs privatize security, blurring the line between state and non-state actors in military operations. Studying PMCs helps policymakers understand their implications and impact on the relationship between the state, military, and private sectors (Perret, 2013).

3. Ethical and Legal Considerations: Examining PMCs is essential for addressing ethical and legal concerns, as they operate in gray areas of international and domestic law. Studying PMCs helps policymakers establish regulatory frameworks and ensure compliance with international norms (Kalashnikov, 2021).

4. Implications for Defense Policy: Understanding PMCs is crucial for defense policy formulation, enabling governments to assess the risks and advantages of outsourcing military operations to PMCs, balance security needs and vulnerabilities, and make informed decisions on PMC involvement (Gwatiwa, 2016).

Table 2. Several countries that use PMC  
Source: processed by the researcher (2023)

No.	Country	Name of PMC	Operation Area	Year
1.	United States	Academy (formerly known as Blackwater)	Worldwide	1997
2.	United Kingdom	Aegis Defense Services	Worldwide	2002
3.	South Africa	Executive Outcomes	Sub-Saharan Africa	1989
4.	Russia	Wagner Group	Ukraine, Syria, Africa	Not sure, circa 2014
5.	France	Socopex	Central Africa	Not sure, around 2000
6.	Australia	Unity Resources Group	Middle East, Southeast Asia	2000
7.	Israel	International Security and Defense Systems (ISDS)	Worldwide	1982
8.	Germany	Asgaard German Security Group	Middle East, Africa	1999
9.	Iraq	Olive Group	Iraq and the surrounding region	2001

### Research problem, objectives, and research questions

Private military companies (PMCs) are crucial in modern defense policy and operations, providing combat support, security, and logistical services. This research addresses three research problems, objectives, and questions to understand their role better.

Research problems:

1. PMCs lack legal framework and oversight, causing concerns about accountability for actions during military operations due to their private nature.
2. Ethical implications of outsourcing critical defense functions raise morality and legitimacy questions regarding non-state actors' involvement in traditionally state military activities.
3. Impact on Global Security: Research Questions PMC proliferation's impact on global security, international relations, state sovereignty, and conflict dynamics.

Objectives:

1. Analyze PMCs' legal and regulatory frameworks for accountability.
2. Evaluating the ethical implications of PMCs in defense policy and military operations, considering limitations and challenges.
3. Examining PMCs' global security impact on international relations, state sovereignty, and conflict dynamics.

Research questions:

1. What legal and regulatory frameworks exist at the national and international levels to hold PMCs accountable for actions committed during military operations, and how effective are these mechanisms in ensuring compliance with ethical standards and legal obligations?
2. What ethical considerations are associated with utilizing PMCs in defense policy and military operations? How do these considerations relate to state sovereignty, just war theory, and the responsibility to protect?
3. What are the geopolitical implications of relying on PMCs in military operations? How does their involvement impact state relations, regional stability, and the potential for conflict escalation?

The three questions discussed in this text are related to the use of Private Military Companies (PMCs) in military operations. The first question examines the legal and regulatory frameworks to hold PMCs accountable, the ethical considerations surrounding their use in defense policy and operations, and the geopolitical implications of their involvement. Understanding these interconnections provides a comprehensive perspective on the complex dynamics surrounding the use of PMCs in military operations. The questions also explore the potential for conflict escalation and state relations.

By addressing these critical areas of concern, policymakers and researchers can gain insight into the legal, ethical, and security implications associated with the expanding utilization of PMCs in modern warfare and international security contexts.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Qualitative research is crucial for gaining comprehensive insights and understanding complex phenomena. When studying sensitive topics like the role of private military companies (PMCs) in defense policy and military operations, utilizing qualitative research methods becomes imperative. This essay explores applying qualitative research methods using secondary data according to Creswell's framework in investigating PMCs' significance in defense policies and military operations.

**Defining Private Military Companies (PMCs):** PMCs are private entities that offer military and security services to governments, organizations, and individuals. They provide various services, including combat support, logistical assistance, intelligence gathering, and training, thus influencing defense policies and participating in military operations. Understanding the dynamics of these companies is critical for policymakers and academics alike.

**Importance of Qualitative Research:** Qualitative research methods enable researchers to explore complex social phenomena by uncovering multiple perspectives and understanding the underlying contexts. By employing qualitative research techniques, researchers can generate rich and nuanced data that shed light on the multi-faceted nature of PMCs' involvement in defense policies and military operations.

**Secondary Data and Creswell's Framework:** Secondary data refers to data collected by other researchers or organizations for a different purpose. Primary data collection might be challenging in studying PMCs due to these organizations' secretive and private nature. However, secondary data sources, such as government reports, official documents, media archives, and academic publications, can provide valuable insights into PMCs' activities and their impact on defense policies and military operations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

**Creswell's Framework for Qualitative Research:** Creswell's framework is a guide for qualitative research using secondary data. It consists of three stages: data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Data collection involves identifying relevant secondary sources related to PMCs, defense policies, and military operations. Analysis involves using content, thematic, and discourse analysis techniques to extract meaningful insights. Interpretation involves critically evaluating and organizing the findings to understand the research topic comprehensively (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Legal and regulatory frameworks at the national and international levels regarding private military companies (PMCs)**

National legislation regulates PMCs' activities, with the US enacting MEJA and South Africa implementing RFMAA to oversee overseas criminal offenses committed by contractors. Laws like MEJA and RFMAA aim to address risks and challenges in private military and security companies' operations. These countries establish jurisdiction and regulations to ensure legal frameworks and accountability for PMCs, transforming them into a more regulated and transparent industry.

MEJA is a law in the United States that allows the prosecution of U.S. personnel for certain criminal offenses committed outside of the country. It extends the jurisdiction of U.S. courts to individuals working for PMCs who commit crimes while operating abroad. Ensuring that PMC employees can face legal repercussions for their actions encourages accountability and deters misconduct (Kerrigan, 2004). On the other hand, the RFMAA, also known as the Mercenary Regulation and Accountability Act, is a law designed to regulate and increase transparency within the PMC industry (del Prado, 2019). It aims to transform the industry into a more regulated and accountable one by heightening the oversight and monitoring of PMCs. The RFMAA typically establishes guidelines and regulations that PMCs must adhere to, such as reporting requirements, licensing procedures, and operational standards. By implementing such measures, countries strive to prevent abuses, protect human rights, and minimize the risks associated with the activities of PMCs.

Laws like MEJA and RFMAA are essential in creating legal frameworks and ensuring accountability within the private military and security industries. These regulations transform the industry into a more regulated, transparent, and responsible sector.

International efforts have been made to regulate PMSCs, including the Montreux Document and the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoC). The Montreux Document outlines the responsibilities of states and PMSCs in ensuring compliance with humanitarian law and human rights standards (Cockayne, 2008). The ICoC sets principles and standards for PMSCs, including respect for human rights, humanitarian law, and cooperation with state authorities. By signing on to the ICoC, companies commit to upholding these principles and

undergo independent audits to ensure compliance. These global frameworks aim to enhance the credibility and professionalism of the private security industry and mitigate risks associated with its operations.

The International Covenant on Cyber Crime (ICoC) promotes transparency and accountability in the private security industry. Companies must disclose information about their operations, policies, procedures, and training programs, allowing scrutiny and oversight. The ICoC encourages collaboration between PMSCs and state authorities, ensuring security challenges align with sustainable development and peacebuilding objectives. This approach fosters trust, confidence, and best practices, enabling PMSCs to improve operations and contribute positively to communities. The ICoC is crucial in promoting responsible and ethical conduct, resulting in safer and more secure environments for all (Wallace, 2011).

A PMSC adhering to the International Code of Conduct (ICoC) can improve the professionalism and competence of its personnel by implementing rigorous vetting and training programs. This leads to more responsible security operations and increased transparency and accountability (Jerbi et al., 2013). PMSCs can also demonstrate their commitment to upholding human rights, attracting more clients who value ethical practices. The ICoC also serves as a platform for sharing best practices and learning from each other, ultimately improving the effectiveness and efficiency of private security operations worldwide.

Despite implementing the ICoC, PMSCs have been involved in human rights abuses and unethical practices. The 2007 case of Blackwater Worldwide in Iraq showed employees killing civilians, highlighting the lack of ethical standards and prioritization of human rights. These incidents raise concerns about the effectiveness of the ICoC and the need for stricter enforcement mechanisms. The lack of accountability and oversight allows some PMSCs to operate with impunity. Profit-driven industries often prioritize financial gains over ethical practices; monitoring and evaluating PMSCs is essential for upholding human rights and ethical standards (Kurylev et al., 2017; White, 2022).

Stricter enforcement mechanisms may hinder the private military and security industry's growth and innovation, but they also risk prioritizing profit over ethical practices, potentially leading to human rights abuses. International efforts have established legal mechanisms to ensure PMC accountability, such as the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoC). Under international humanitarian law, PMCs can be held accountable for violating human rights and committing war crimes, similar to state actors (Shah, 2013).

The International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoC) is a legal framework for PMCs to ensure accountability and compliance with international standards. It emphasizes human rights, avoiding excessive force use, and promoting transparency and accountability. By adhering to the ICoC principles, PMCs can demonstrate their commitment to ethical standards and be held accountable for violations. Additionally, international humanitarian law governs PMCs' conduct during armed conflicts, ensuring they are subject to the same laws and regulations as state armed forces. Integrating international humanitarian law into operations can contribute to the protection of civilians and overall stability in conflict-affected areas (Cameron & Chetail, 2013; ICRC, 2013).

Incorporating humanitarian law into PMC operations establishes accountability and responsibility for violations, holding individuals and organizations accountable, ensuring justice for

victims, and deterring future misconduct. Adherence to humanitarian law enhances PMCs' credibility and legitimacy in the international community, demonstrating a commitment to human rights and peace (Pattison, 2014). This integration helps mitigate the negative impacts of armed conflicts, prevent excessive use of force, and build trust and cooperation between PMCs and local communities. In conclusion, integrating humanitarian law into PMC operations contributes to a sustainable, peaceful resolution of conflicts, paving the way for long-term stability and development.

Table 3. List of legal bases governing the use of PMC in several countries  
Source: processed by the researcher (2023)

No.	Country	Legal Basis
1.	United States	The United States Government regulates the use of PMC through various laws and regulations, including the National Defense Debt Act, the Federal Regulation on Defense Contracts, and other regulations.
2.	United Kingdom	The UK's use of PMCs is governed by various laws and regulations, including the Private Military Companies Act 2001 and the Private Military Companies Ordinance.
3.	South Africa	South Africa has no laws specifically governing PMCs. However, countries usually use PMCs through contractual agreements and internal regulations.
4.	Russia	Russia has no laws specifically governing PMCs. Private military companies' participation in military operations is often based on contracts and internal regulations.
5.	France	France's use of PMC is governed by contract law and other regulations.
6.	Australia	Australia regulates the use of PMCs through various laws and regulations, including the Defense Act 1903 and the Defense Regulations 2016.
7.	Israel	Israel regulates the use of PMCs through various laws and regulations, including the 1986 Security Act and the Ministry of Defence regulations.
8.	Germany	Germany has no laws specifically governing PMCs. However, countries usually use PMCs through contractual agreements and internal regulations.
9.	Iraq	Iraq has no laws specifically governing PMCs. However, using PMCs in Iraq is usually based on contractual agreements and internal regulations.

In a conflict zone, a PMC under humanitarian law would use proportional force and establish protocols to distinguish between combatants and non-combatants. However, the ongoing conflict in Syria highlights the challenges of implementing a more humane warfare strategy due to the disregard for proportionality and distinction (Kalamar, 2021). The use of chemical weapons, indiscriminate bombings, and intentional targeting of civilians has led to widespread human rights violations and the significant loss of innocent lives. This counterexample undermines progress towards more civilized and ethical conduct in warfare and calls for more robust enforcement measures to hold accountable those responsible for such atrocities. Achieving a more humane

approach to warfare requires a collective commitment from all parties involved to prioritize the protection of civilians and respect for human rights.

Prioritizing humanitarian principles in conflict may hinder effective combat and defeat, potentially prolonging the conflict and causing further harm to civilians (Sarjito, 2023). However, the long-term benefits of upholding these principles outweigh any short-term setbacks. By prioritizing the protection of civilians and respecting human rights, parties involved in warfare can rebuild trust within affected communities and create a foundation for lasting peace. Furthermore, a more humane approach to warfare can enhance international cooperation and strengthen diplomatic relations, ultimately contributing to global stability and security. Therefore, while it may pose challenges, prioritizing humanitarian principles in conflict is essential for creating a more just and compassionate world.

### **The ethical considerations associated with utilizing PMCs in defense policy and military operations**

State sovereignty is the authority and independence of a state to govern its affairs without external interference (Jasper & Assis, 2022). PMCs in military operations raise security concerns, sovereignty erosion, morality, accountability, and transparency. Just war theory evaluates morality, while states must ensure alignment with international law and ethical standards. PMCs risk human rights abuses due to their private status, which may not meet the same standards as regular military forces. Reports of unlawful activities, such as excessive force, torture, and drug trafficking, have tarnished the state's reputation and had severe consequences for those affected. PMCs can cause severe consequences, including trauma, livelihood loss, and even life loss. The industry's lack of oversight and accountability makes it difficult to hold individuals accountable. Governments and international organizations must regulate and monitor PMC activities, ensuring compliance with human rights standards and accountability. Building strong national security forces can help address ethical and legal dilemmas posed by the proliferation of PMCs (Leander, 2005). PMCs deployed in conflict zones may violate local rights due to cultural sensitivities or language barriers, causing tensions and instability and undermining security objectives.

Government investment in national security forces can uphold law and order while respecting individual rights. This approach fosters trust and cooperation and empowers communities. Addressing ethnic or religious tensions requires engaging community leaders, religious figures, and influential individuals. Investing in economic development and infrastructure projects can alleviate poverty and inequality, fostering peace and stability (Usaid, 2023).

Addressing security challenges requires dialogue, understanding, and addressing historical and ideological factors beyond economic development and dialogue. State sovereignty is crucial in international relations, but PMCs challenge it by introducing non-state actors, raising ethical questions, and limiting democratic control. PMCs blur lines between state and non-state actors, potentially undermining international law. Private military companies operate outside traditional command structures, creating a complex web of actors with varying accountability levels. The lack of clear guidelines and regulations exacerbates this issue. Comprehensive frameworks and oversight mechanisms are crucial to prevent human rights violations and maintain international law (Fulloon, 2015).

Frameworks should guide PMC personnel recruitment, training, engagement, and monitoring, balancing security and safeguarding fundamental rights, ensuring human rights compliance in complex global environments (Mursitama & Setyawan, 2012). Robust regulatory



frameworks for PMCs ensure compliance with international law and human rights through regular audits, fostering transparency and responsibility.

A robust regulatory framework for PMCs in conflict zones should prioritize civilian protection and minimize force use. Regular audits can assess compliance and address violations, fostering trust and trust among local communities and international organizations. However, the case of PMC Blackwater in Iraq highlights contractor disregard for rules and excessive force, causing civilian deaths (Sadhya & Singh, 2017). PMC Blackwater in Iraq highlights the lack of enforcement and accountability for violations by private military companies. While not all companies engage in misconduct, generalizing instances of violations undermine their effectiveness in conflict resolution (Welch, 2008).

Just war theory evaluates the ethical justifiability of force used, but PMCs present unique challenges in criteria like proportionality, non-combatant immunity, and distinguishing legitimate and illegitimate targets. The potential for PMCs to operate outside traditional military structures complicates these ethical considerations (Davenport, 2011). The lack of accountability and oversight for private military companies (PMCs) raises ethical concerns. PMCs often receive contracts from private organizations or governments, influencing decision-making and potentially compromising ethical integrity. This complicates the distinction between legitimate military operations and potential abuses of power, necessitating a closer examination of their role and regulation in international law.

The Iraq War exposed private military contractors' involvement in excessive force and human rights abuses, like the Nisour Square massacre. These incidents highlighted the potential for PMCs to prioritize personal gain and disregard ethical standards, undermining civilian well-being and just warfare principles. The industry's reputation was tarnished, prompting stricter regulations and accountability measures. Blackwater, a private military company in Iraq, faced international outrage after a 2007 incident involving 17 Iraqi civilians (Daponte, 2007). The incident highlighted the need for accountability and clear chains of command in the private military industry. While not all companies have the same lack of oversight, many adhere to strict regulations. Distinguishing between responsible and misconduct-prone companies is crucial for protecting civilians and maintaining the industry's reputation.

R2P is a principle that ensures states are responsible for protecting populations from mass atrocities. However, when private military companies (PMCs) are involved in defense policy and operations, ethical concerns arise, such as potential profit motives and state responsibility for civilian protection (Gray, 2022). Concerns arise about transparency and accountability in private military and security companies (PMCs), which often operate outside legal frameworks. This lack of accountability can lead to conflicts of interest, compromising humanitarian interventions and human rights violations. To address these concerns, states and international organizations must establish robust regulatory frameworks, ensuring private actors align with R2P principles and adhere to the same standards as state actors (Houry, 2022).

To promote a fair and secure world, establish independent commissions or international tribunals to investigate and prosecute war crimes and crimes against humanity, ensuring victims have access to justice and compensation (Hamourtziadou & Khan, 2021). Legal mechanisms are essential for holding perpetrators accountable and providing justice for victims, ensuring true reconciliation and lasting peace. While dialogue and education are crucial for healing, they alone cannot fully mend the social fabric.

## **The geopolitical implications of relying on PMCs in military operations and their impact on state relations, regional stability, and the potential for conflict escalation**

Outsourcing security refers to the involvement of private military companies (PMCs) in military operations, introducing privatization and commercialization into national defense policies (Bijos & de Souza, 2020). The shift in state-centric models blurs lines between state and non-state actors, raising concerns about state relations, regional stability, and conflict escalation. Commercialization of warfare introduces profit motives, potentially affecting military objectives and ethics and prioritizing financial gain over civilian protection.

The reliance on market forces in the defense sector raises concerns about warfare's future and traditional military forces' role in maintaining global security. Private military and security companies' involvement in conflicts raises concerns about accountability and potential human rights abuses (Fanara, 2011). Prioritizing profit over civilian protection in the arms industry raises ethical dilemmas and undermines warfare principles, compromising global peace and stability.

The arms race between India and Pakistan intensifies tensions due to their heavy investment in advanced missile systems and nuclear weapons. This conflict strains diplomatic relations and diverts resources for social development and poverty alleviation. However, diplomacy and strategic negotiations have maintained peaceful resolutions and regional stability (Romero, 2011). This demonstrates that an arms race does not guarantee conflict and can be managed through effective international cooperation.

During the Cold War, the US and Soviet Union avoided direct military confrontation, but tensions were high, and the world was on the brink of nuclear war multiple times. Diplomacy and strategic negotiations can manage an arms race, but the high tensions and near misses highlight potential risks and dangers (Gottmoeller, 2023).

The principal-agent theory explains the relationship between states and PMCs in defense policy, where states engage PMCs as proxies to achieve military objectives. This raises concerns about potential conflicts, moral hazards, and reduced accountability due to PMCs prioritizing profits over state objectives. The principal-agent theory suggests an asymmetrical relationship between states and private military companies (PMCs). PMCs possess specialized skills and knowledge that states lack, creating a delicate balance between maintaining state control and harnessing their expertise. States often establish contractual agreements with PMCs to control actions and decisions. However, the power dynamics between states and PMCs can be complex, with concerns about accountability and transparency. States must navigate these complexities to retain sovereignty and utilize PMCs' expertise effectively (Amos Fox & Army, 2019; Scott & Li, 2021).

State hires private military contractors for security in conflict-ridden regions, raising concerns about actions and potential human rights abuses. Clear regulations and oversight mechanisms are necessary for accountability. However, there is still the risk of a PMC operating outside the state's control and engaging in illegal activities (Еропова, 2022). The case of Blackwater USA during the Iraq War highlights the challenges of maintaining accountability in conflict zones. Strengthening regulations and oversight mechanisms can mitigate the risk of PMCs operating outside state control. However, there is no guarantee that private military companies will not engage in excessive use of force and human rights violations (Pinzauti, 2007).

PMCs significantly impact state relations, affecting diplomatic ties, abdicating security responsibility, and straining bilateral or multilateral relationships. Private entities' lack of transparency and accountability raises concerns about motives and loyalties, increasing tensions and breakdowns in diplomatic communication. The reliance on PMCs can contribute to power imbalances, human rights abuses, and violations of international law, undermining principles of justice and human rights. The widespread use of PMCs challenges the international community's efforts to promote global peace, security, and equality (European Council, 2023).

In order to address these challenges, the international community must take concrete steps toward regulating and holding PMCs accountable for their actions. One key measure would be establishing a comprehensive legal framework that outlines the rights and responsibilities of PMCs as well as mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing compliance. This would help ensure that PMCs operate within the bounds of international law and are held accountable for violations. Additionally, increased transparency and reporting requirements could help shed light on the activities of PMCs, making it harder for them to operate with impunity (Transparency International, 2016).

Governments must collaborate with international organizations and countries to develop common standards and regulations for private military contractors (PMCs). This will prevent exploiting loopholes and ensure effective monitoring and enforcement of PMC activities globally. Establishing an independent oversight body, requiring strict regulations, and sharing information and intelligence among countries will enable a comprehensive monitoring system, preventing illegal activities and holding PMCs accountable (Cimini, 2018). A global regulatory framework will help governments better track and regulate PMC activities, minimizing risks of human rights abuses, corruption, and illicit practices. This will contribute to a transparent and responsible private military industry, benefiting global security and the countries' reputation.

The lack of enforcement and compliance with existing regulations in many countries hinders global regulation effectiveness and private military contractors' accountability (PMCs). Governments may blindly ignore PMCs' actions due to political or economic interests, allowing them to operate with impunity. This undermines global regulation and perpetuates human rights abuses and corruption. However, not all countries lack enforcement and compliance with existing regulations. Regulatory frameworks can still deter and encourage better behavior from PMCs, even if complete enforcement is not universally achieved. Additionally, while some PMCs may engage in wrongdoing, it does not necessarily mean the entire industry is corrupt (Transparency International, 2016).

PMCs can significantly impact regional stability by causing tensions to escalate and contributing to arms and human rights abuses. Their profit-driven motivations and lack of accountability can lead to escalations and retaliation. The lack of accountability and oversight surrounding PMCs further exacerbates these concerns. PMCs operate in a legal gray area, making it difficult to hold them accountable for their actions. This can lead to impunity, disregarding international laws and regulations, and a conflict of interest. The reliance on private contractors also creates an opaque decision-making process, making it harder to hold PMCs accountable for misconduct or human rights violations. PMCs' unchecked power and profit-driven motives can undermine efforts to promote stability, security, and respect for human rights in conflict zones. The absence of a clear chain of command and blurred lines between state and private actors creates a breeding ground for potential abuses. PMCs can operate with impunity, allowing for the perpetration of atrocities without fear of consequences. The lack of accountability and transparency

within the private military industry enables the exploitation of local populations and exacerbates existing grievances (Daniels, 2015). Ineffective regulation and oversight can perpetuate cycles of violence and hinder the establishment of democratic institutions and the rule of law. It is crucial for the international community to address these issues and establish stringent regulations to hold PMCs accountable for their actions.

The case of Blackwater, a US-hired private military company during the Iraq War, exemplifies the negative impact of profit-driven PMCs. Blackwater employees engaged in excessive force incidents, including the Nisour Square massacre, which violated human rights, fueled anti-American sentiment, and hindered Iraqi stabilization. Despite public outrage, Blackwater faced legal repercussions. However, it is important not to generalize this behavior to all private military companies, as numerous responsible and accountable security firms operate in conflict zones (Singer, 2007).

## CONCLUSION

Countries regulate private military and security companies through laws like MEJA and RFMAA, promoting accountability and transparency. International efforts like the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoC) address human rights abuses and ethical standards. However, challenges like jurisdictional issues, a lack of transparency, and operational complexity may hinder effective implementation. State sovereignty is essential for governing affairs without external interference, but private military command raises ethical questions and challenges traditional law. Just war theory addresses force use ethically, but private military contractors face ambiguity, a profit-driven nature, and a lack of transparency. Differentiating between responsible and misconduct-prone companies is crucial for civilian protection and industry reputation. To ensure accountability, states and international organizations must establish regulatory frameworks, implement monitoring systems, and provide justice for victims. A comprehensive legal framework, increased transparency, collaboration, and an independent oversight body are needed to address global peace, security, and equality challenges. Lack of enforcement and compliance in many countries hinders global regulation and accountability, affecting international peacekeeping efforts and long-term peace and stability in conflict-ridden regions.

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