



SPECIAL PROCEDURES
UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL



Special event to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination:

“Hybridization in the use of violence: emerging trends in mercenaries, mercenary-related actors and PMSCs”

Tuesday 17 June 2025 at 14:00 – 16:00 (CET / SAST) / 15:00 – 17:00 (EAT)

Register here: <https://forms.office.com/e/4V2nUBLVet>

Background

The [United Nations Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination](#) (hereinafter the Working Group) is co-organizing a webinar with the Institute for Pan-African Thought and Conversation (IPATC), University of Johannesburg, South Africa. The theme of the webinar is **“Hybridization in the use of violence: emerging trends in mercenaries, related actors, and PMSCs”**. This initiative is part of a series of events organized to mark the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Working Group and to strengthen its ongoing dialogue with civil society organizations (CSOs), academics and other relevant stakeholders on the activities of mercenaries and related activities in Africa.

Mercenaries and related actors threaten global and regional stability and human rights by operating outside legal frameworks, supporting elites, regimes, commercial entities, cartels, and/or rebels in exchange for resource access and/or other pecuniary/non-pecuniary benefits. Their presence exacerbates local and regional instability, transnational criminality, and may lead to conflict escalation, complicating the capacity of states and regions to achieve lasting peace and effective governance. Current trends towards the ‘insourcing’ of these actors into state command and control structures threatens to undermine and weaken the professionalization and legitimacy of national forces, and create ongoing pathways towards privatization and hybridization. Linked to human rights abuses such as torture, killings, extrajudicial detention, sexual violence and civilian displacement, these actors often act with impunity.

This event aims to strengthen partnerships and foster greater engagement between civil society organizations (CSOs), academics and other relevant stakeholders on the issue of mercenarism and the growing hybridization in the activities of mercenaries, related actors, and Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs), online and offline, as well as emerging and evolving public-private manifestations in the use of violence. Further, the event aims to identify ways to achieve sustainable peace, security and development, while ensuring stronger protection of people and accountability against human rights violations committed by mercenaries, mercenary-related actors, and PMSCs.

The Working Group and IPATC extend an invitation to all interested organizations and individuals carrying out field activities or research on issues concerning mercenaries, mercenary-related actors and PMSCs. As projected, shared experiences and views will contribute to advancing the overall understanding of issues related to the hybridization of mercenarism.

Agenda

Tuesday 17 June 2025 14:00 – 16:00 (CET / SAST) 15:00 – 17:00 (EAT)	
14:00 – 14:10	Opening remarks Ms. Jovana Jezdimirovic Ranito , <i>Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group</i>
14:10 – 14:25	Existing and emerging trends and dynamics across the African continent Ms. Maram Mahdi , <i>Researcher at Institute for Security Studies</i>
14:25 – 14:40	Witness testimony on human rights violations committed by mercenary-related actors <i>Witness on the situation in Mali</i>
14:40 – 15:40	The human rights implications of hybrid forms of mercenary-related activities <i>General discussion</i>
15:40 – 15:50	Summary of discussions and key messages Prof. Adeoye O. Akinola , <i>Department of Politics & International Relations, & IPATC, University of Johannesburg</i>
15:50 – 15:55	Closing remarks Ms. Jovana Jezdimirovic Ranito , <i>Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group</i>

Languages

Deliberations will be conducted in English and French, with simultaneous interpretation facilities.

Registration

To follow the event online, please complete and submit the [registration form](#) by **Monday 16 June 2025**.

Contact

For any further queries or questions, please contact the **Secretariat of the Working Group on the use of mercenaries** at hrc-wg-mercenaries@un.org.

Annex

Background Documents

- [Mercenarism and private military and security companies \(2018\)](#)

This document provides an overview of the work carried out by the Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination.

Thematic reports prepared by the Working Group:

Year	Presented	Subject of the report	Link to report page
2024	GA 79 th session	Trends and challenges in the financing of mercenaries and related actors	A/79/305
	HRC 57 th session	Role of mercenaries, mercenary-related actors and private military and security companies in the trafficking and proliferation of arms	A/HRC/57/45
2023	GA 78 th session	The Regulatory Environment for Mercenaries, Mercenary-related actors, and PMSC: A Call to Action	A/78/535
	HRC 54 th session	Recruitment, including predatory recruitment, of mercenaries and mercenary-related actors	A/HRC/54/29
2022	GA 77 th session	Maritime Security	A/77/268
	HRC 51 st session	Access to justice, accountability and remedies for victims of mercenaries, mercenary-related actors and private military and security companies	A/HRC/51/25
2021	GA 76 th session	Provision of military and security products and services in cyber space by “cyber mercenaries” and related actors and its human rights impact	A/76/151
	HRC 48 th session	Human rights impact of PMSCs in humanitarian action	A/HRC/48/51
2020	GA 75 th session	Evolving forms, trends and manifestations of mercenaries and mercenary-related activities	A/75/259
	HRC 45 th session	Impact of the use of private military and security services in immigration and border management on the protection of the rights of all migrants	A/HRC/45/9
2019	GA 74 th session	Gendered human rights impacts of private military and security companies	A/74/244
	HRC 42 nd session	Relationship between PMSCs and the extractive industry from a human rights perspective	A/HRC/42/42
2018	GA 73 rd session	Challenges associated with mercenaries, foreign fighters and PMSCs to the realization of Sustainable Development Goal 16	A/73/303
	HRC 39 th session	Recruitment of children by non-State armed groups, including mercenaries and private military and security companies	A/HRC/39/49
2017	GA 72 nd session	Use of private security companies in places of deprivation of liberty, and its impact on human rights	A/72/286
	HRC 36 th session	Global Study on national regulatory framework and legislation on PMSCs (2013-2016)	A/HRC/36/47

2016	GA 71 st session	Evolution of the phenomena of mercenaries and foreign fighters	A/71/318
	HRC 33 rd session	Part IV of the Global study - National laws and regulations relating to PMSCs of selected countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), the Asia and Pacific region (Australia, New Zealand, Nauru and Papua New Guinea) and in North America (USA)	A/HRC/33/43 View report page
2015	GA 70 th session	Phenomenon of foreign fighters and the possible linkages with mercenarism	A/70/330
	HRC 30 th session	Part III of the Global study - National laws and regulations relating to PMSCs of selected countries in Central America and the Caribbean (Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama), South America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay) and Europe (France, Hungary, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)	A/HRC/30/34 View report page
2014	GA 69 th session	Use of private security companies by the United Nations	A/69/338
	HRC 27 th session	Part II of the Global study - National laws and regulations relating to PMSCs of selected countries in Africa (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Morocco, Senegal and Tunisia) and in Asia (China, India, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and United Arab Emirates)	A/HRC/27/50 View report page
2013	GA 68 th session	Review of States' efforts to regulate PMSCs and conclusions related to phase I of the national legislation survey	A/68/339
	HRC 24 th session	Part I of the Global Study - National laws and regulations relating to PMSCs of countries in Africa (Botswana, Ghana, Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda and Zimbabwe)	A/HRC/24/45 View report page
2012	GA 67 th session	Update on mercenary activities in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Libya and the evolving role of PMSCs in Afghanistan and Iraq	A/67/340
	HRC 21 th session	WG's engagement in processes to elaborate standards for the regulation of PMSCs at the international level and research into national regulation of PMSCs	A/HRC/21/43
2011	GA 66 th session	Update on recent activities of mercenaries and PMSCs and the issue of accountability, expert seminar on the State monopoly on the legitimate use of force, and achievements under the mandate	A/66/317
	HRC 18 th session	Review of the achievements of the mandate since its establishment in 2005 and the key challenges	A/HRC/18/32
2010	GA 65 th session	Challenges regarding the increasing privatization of security, the growing dependency on PMSCs, and the accountability of PMSCs and their personnel. Annex:	A/65/325

		Main elements of a possible draft convention on private military and security companies	
	HRC 15 th session	Progress achieved in the elaboration of a draft legal instrument for consideration and action by the Human Rights Council. Addendum no. 1 on Communications to and from Governments Addendum no. 4 on regional consultation in Bangkok. Addendum no. 5 on regional consultation in Addis Ababa. Addendum no. 6 on regional consultation in Geneva.	A/HRC/15/25 A/HRC/15/25/Add.1 A/HRC/15/25/Add.4 A/HRC/15/25/Add.5 A/HRC/15/25/Add.6
2009	GA 64 th session	Work on a possible new draft international convention on the regulation of PMSCs, missions to Afghanistan and USA, and summary of the regional consultation for Eastern European and Central Asian countries Annex: Status of the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries as at 2 July 2009	A/64/311
	HRC 12 th session	Standards, principles and guidelines for a new international convention on regulating private military and security companies and other legal regulatory instruments. Addendum no. 1 on Communications to and from governments. Addendum no. 3 on regional consultation in Moscow.	A/HRC/10/14 A/HRC/10/14/Add.1 A/HRC/10/14/Add.3
2008	GA 63 rd session	Overview of developments regarding mercenaries, mercenary-related activities and PMSCs; draft principles, guidelines and criteria elaborated by the Working Group in view of the possible development of national and international regulation mechanisms to address the activities of PMSCs	A/63/325
	HRC 7 th session	Transnational issues, including the privatization of warfare, the activities of PMSCs, and extraterritorial and accountability issues. Addendum no. 1 on Communications to and from governments. Addendum no. 5 on regional consultation in Panama.	A/HRC/7/7 A/HRC/7/7/Add.1 A/HRC/7/7/Add.5
2007	GA 62 nd session	Country situations by region in implementing certain paragraphs of GA resolution 61/151 The State as the primary holder of the use of force, also in light of the effects of the activities of PMSCs on the enjoyment of human rights	A/62/301
	HRC 4 th session	The State as the primary holder of the use of force, also in light of the effects of the activities of PMSCs on the enjoyment of human rights	A/HRC/4/42
2006	GA 61 st session	Methods of work adopted by the Working Group at its first session, analysis of the responses received	A/61/341

		to a questionnaire on its mandate and activities, and effects of the activities of private companies offering military assistance, consultancy and security services on the international market on the enjoyment of human rights	
	CHR 62 nd session	Results of the Working Group's first session, held in October 2005 (methods of work, priority areas of work, and future activities) Addendum: meeting held in February 2006 to complete the first session	E/CN.4/2006/11 E/CN.4/2006/11/Add.1