

# BLURRING THE MONOPOLY ON VIOLENCE

## ***Private Military and Security Companies and coercive state power***

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*The state's role in security has been progressively privatised, from the military to the prison system. The result is a shadowy corporate world in which violence is facilitated, accountability is diminished and human rights violations and impunity abounds.*

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The growing alarm over the security situation in Cabo Delgado (Mozambique), where more than half a million people have been displaced by the violence of the clashes between Islamist armed groups and state forces, [has recently been reported](#) in the media. The conflict, which has also left more than 2,500 people dead and has worsened risks of famine illustrates the nature of the alliance between states, Private Military Security Companies (PMSC) and companies involved in extractive industries, since the Wagner Group and the South African PMSC Dyke Advisory Group [have been deployed in Cabo Delgado](#) to help to combat insurgent groups who are threatening the gas deposits exploited by the French transnational Total.

Indeed, the progressive privatisation of the state's role in security is part of a worldwide phenomenon of deregulation, which has stripped the public sector to the bare bones. As states outsource increasing number of their roles and responsibilities, leaving these at the mercy of maximising profit rather than prioritising the public interest, this has left them unable to provide economic protection and social welfare ravaged by the very neoliberalism they espouse. As the French philosopher Michaël Foessel notes, enacting criminal laws and building walls helps hide the weakness of nation states.<sup>34</sup>

It allows weakened states to take refuge in the rhetoric and practice of security, appealing to the social pact that underpins the state itself. It is ironic therefore that even this sector is being outsourced to private corporations. Security has become both a legitimisation for the state and another source of profit maximisation. Understanding this complex and seemingly contradictory nexus is critical to understanding coercive power today.

This essay examines the sector of private military and security companies (PMSCs) that provide personnel for military and security services. The deregulation of security functions has enabled them to expand dramatically in recent decades. They have become service providers linked to coercive power – the standard, legitimate and legal power, visible or not, that states exercise through their armies and security forces.

PMSCs are essentially a new kind of mercenary. They differ from the traditional mercenary, as defined by international law, for three reasons. First, they are by their very nature private companies registered in one state but often working in another, offering their services on corporate websites and with international networks of offices and facilities. Second, their personnel may be foreign or nationals of the country in which the PMSC operates. And third, in relation to the broad and complex range of services they offer, from security tasks such as protecting physical spaces and patrolling public or private areas, to military functions including participating in combat, operational support, intelligence, logistics, etc, as well as humanitarian work, clearing landmines and organising the rescue of hostages.

Although governments often refer to them as private security companies, PMSCs also include companies that differ from these by virtue of their military and coercive state functions, their international reach and their vast operational capacity, including the military equipment – such as heavy weapons, combat helicopters and armoured tanks – such as any modern army would have at its disposal.

## KEY SERVICES OFFERED BY PMSCS & PROMINENT COMPANIES

1. Security and protection: G4S, Garda World
2. Intelligence: Control Risks, Amarante International, Tigerswan, RSB group
3. Consulting and training for police: Garda World, Academi, Dyncorp
4. Military operational support: Constellis, KBR, CACI
5. Construction and maintenance of military infrastructure: Reed Inc., KBR/Halliburton
6. Military logistics support: Agility, CACI
7. Maritime security: Seagull Maritime Security, Hart International, Mast
8. Provision, maintenance, and disposal of weapons/explosives
9. Other (legal support, hijacking management, etc.): Control Risks,
10. Military assistance: KBR, CACI
11. Mine clearance and demining: Constellis group, Dyncorp
12. Quasi-police tasks: G4S
13. Humanitarian aid: Saracen, Dyncorp, G4S
14. Provision and maintenance of surveillance systems, remote control. Cybersecurity: CACI
15. Combat and military operations: Wagner group, Academi, Reed Inc., Hart Group
16. Prisons, detention center: CoreCivic, GEO group, MVM Inc., G4S

This capacity, together with their highly versatile ability to be deployed anywhere in the world, has made PMSCs essential for many governments. They are used both for international missions in conflict zones, where they support conventional armies or oppose insurgents (control and protection of extractive industries, counter-terrorism, etc), and to provide domestic security services alongside or instead of the state's own security forces (border control, protecting critical infrastructure, prison security management, etc).

Although western countries, especially the United States (US) and the United Kingdom (UK), have historically dominated the world of PMSCs, in recent years companies based in countries such as China, Russia, and – to a lesser extent – Turkey have come to the fore. Their activities appear to accompany these countries' geostrategic ambitions and their drive to expand their economic and political influence.

## The outsourcing of foreign policy through PMSCs

States' efforts to further their geopolitical interests have traditionally been based mainly on military power, meaning the capacity and size of their armed forces and the strength of their technological and weapons capability. Today, PMSCs have become a key player in foreign policy. They are functional, flexible and multi-faceted actors whose close involvement in the new types of armed conflict – asymmetric and hybrid – breaks with one of the premises that supposedly characterise the modern state, according to the classical authors on state power such as Max Weber: the exclusive monopoly on violence. Comparative analyses of the [involvement of PMSC personnel and US Army troops](#) in the most privatized conflicts in recent history, Afghanistan and Iraq, for example, show that in 2013, for every US soldier there were three private security contractors.

Moreover, the new operational settings in which these firms provide their services have led them to develop a dual nature. On the one hand, PMSCs are mere 'instruments' in the service of the states that hire them to implement a specific political agenda. On the other, they have become independent non-state armed actors under the umbrella of fragile states that contract them to perform many roles formerly carried out by their own public security forces, thus undermining those forces' legitimacy.

## PMSCs and extractivism

The end of the Cold War brought a halt to the military build-up by the two former super-powers, leaving vast defence facilities and stockpiles of equipment and materiel, as well as large armies, without a purpose. The ending of various national conflicts had a similar outcome, such as the end of the Apartheid government in South Africa, which had developed huge structures of repression and racial segregation based on the state security forces. A transformation of the military and security industry was inevitable. The military surplus was reabsorbed by private firms, contributing to the emergence of PMSCs.

The South African firm *Executive Outcomes* and the British company *Sandline*, considered the first examples of modern PMSCs, came to prominence in the 1990s due to their active role in the civil wars in Sierra Leone and Angola, including their participation in [the so-called "blood diamonds" business](#). Later, the involvement of the PMSC *Blackwater* in the occupation of Iraq and the massacre of civilians in Nisour Square in Baghdad turned the spotlight on these companies once again, reviving the debate on the use of mercenaries in wars.

There has been no reduction in the use of PMSCs in armed conflicts since then. In fact, they have become an extension of the state security apparatus in national and international conflicts. Some governments have attempted to justify this policy by claiming that it is a strategy to reduce military spending, arguing that, in contrast to professional armies, it is not necessary to maintain these military contractors in 'peacetime'. In reality, the use of PMSCs allows governments to intervene in armed conflicts while avoiding public scrutiny and taking advantage of the 'grey areas'<sup>35</sup> that evade international regulation, where the new types of mercenaries have ample room for manoeuvre.

The so-called 'proxy wars', such as recent wars in Libya and Syria, have been fertile terrain for the use of PMSCs in international conflicts, whereby third countries participate by contracting these non-state armed actors. In February 2015, the media reported that hundreds of employees of *Wagner Group*, one of the largest Russian PMSCs, had died [in an airstrike by US troops](#) in the Deir Ezzor region of Syria. In fact, this episode was the most lethal – albeit indirect – clash between the US and Russia since the end of the Cold War. Following their usual strategy, the Russian authorities denied any connection with the Russian mercenaries.

The concealed involvement of PMSCs, through contracts with governments and/or transnational corporations (TNCs), allows them to secure control of geostrategic territories for the exploitation of natural resources, thus reinforcing the extractivist economic logic in many armed conflicts.

In the highly fragmented civil war that has afflicted Libya from 2014 to very recent times, dominated by the confrontation between the militias of the former Libyan colonel Khalifa Haftar and the Government of National Accord (GNA) recognised by the United Nations, both parties have been supported by PMSCs. The armed forces of the official government had between [3,000 and 6,000 Syrian mercenaries](#), formerly

providing their services to the Turkish government and [trained](#) by the Turkish PMSC *Sadat*, while Khalifa Haftar has the support of about 200 combatants from the Russian PMSC Wagner Group, financed by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and equipped with Russian weapons.<sup>36</sup> This has allowed the Russian PMSC to extend its control over oil facilities, revealing its clients' interest in Libya's energy resources.

## Evading public government oversight

Wagner Group is one of the military and security companies whose tentacles are most entwined with conflicts and tensions in African countries, often in collaboration with Chinese TNCs. US General Thomas Waldhauser, quoting an opponent of Kabila, then president of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), says that, regarding PMSC, '[the Chinese bring the money and the Russians bring the muscle](#)'.

Although China and Russia may be similar in terms of governance, they have taken very different paths regarding the regulation and control of their private military and security companies. China has signed the 2008 Montreaux Document, a non-binding international regulatory framework that assigns responsibilities to governments based on International Humanitarian Law (IHL), while Russia remains reluctant to make any such commitment. This makes it impossible for the international system to exercise any control over the actions of Russian PMSCs that may be involved in illegal activities or abuses.

Indeed, one of the factors that has led to states preferring to use PMSCs is the extremely lax national and international legislation governing the sector. There is no binding system for holding them accountable, nor any transparency regarding the services they perform, due to their private status and the confidential nature of their contracts. This opaqueness makes it difficult for the authorities to know where PMSC are operating, even in their own territories. It also clouds their relationship with the state contracting or supporting them, as the ties that link these companies to government institutions in their home country are less than transparent, as we have seen in the case of Russia.

This opaqueness has its advantages, of course, because it is politically less costly for governments contracting these companies to perform services of a sensitive nature, where there may be heavy casualties. Governments know that citizens do not react in the same way to the death of a contractor working for a military and security company as for the death of a soldier, who may be seen as fighting to defend their country. The state contracting the PMSC is able to avoid parliamentary or congressional scrutiny and a public scandal while also achieving its operational objectives.

This is the reason why the Russian private military services market can be seen as a hybrid, due to the Russian government's involvement – albeit concealed – in the PMSCs' missions. Indeed, a strategy the Kremlin habitually employs to deny its participation in conflicts abroad is to describe the PMSC personnel involved in these conflicts as 'armed volunteers of Russian origin'.

The current legal vacuum that has led to states secretly contracting PMSCs in almost all active armed conflicts makes it enormously difficult to hold them accountable for the human rights abuses and violations committed by their employees (torture, kidnapping, rape, murder – especially during their deployment in Afghanistan and Iraq), which could be considered infringements of IHL. The most recent instance of this impunity is [Trump's pardoning of the mercenaries](#) working for Blackwater (now called Academi) who were serving a prison sentence for the civilian massacre in Nisour Square in Iraq.

## Private policing

As governments in the two largest privatised wars, Afghanistan and Iraq, regained control of their political institutions while their national security forces took control of their territory, the major PMSCs have begun to focus on other emerging sectors in the arena of national security, including in advanced economies.

Responding to the political chorus warning of 'new threats' to national stability such as terrorism, cyber-attacks or migration, PMSCs have boosted their supply of services related to the protection of critical infrastructure, management of migration flows, the institutions of punishment such as prisons and migrant detention centres, cybersecurity and national intelligence, and other quasi-policing tasks.

Once again, PMSCs have found governments willing to collude. For example, in the context of widespread public protests in France, companies such as Groupe DCI provided training and advisory services for the government's security forces. Groupe DCI is one of several companies whose services include training and advice to riot police in locations as diverse as the US and Bahrein, despite the heightened sensitivity that their deployment may arouse in public opinion.

PMSCs have also been an instrument in the US-funded [international "War on Drugs"](#), such as Plan Colombia and the 2006 Mérida Initiative in Mexico. They have also engaged in and continue to perform tasks such as [training, maintenance, and providing logistical support and equipment to state actors](#) that are directly and indirectly responsible for human rights violations.

The last bastion of these companies' penetration of state security is the role of maintaining public order. They are increasingly used not just to guard elite housing developments, but also public spaces too. Some majority-Jewish neighbourhoods in Jerusalem, for example, [are protected by PMSCs such as Modi'in Ezrachi](#), which perform roles that could properly be considered to be those of public security forces. In some cases, such as Cape Town, where the exercise of public security often continues to reflect the inequalities of the Apartheid era, private security companies such as Professional Protection Alternatives not only patrol wealthy white neighbourhoods but also public areas such as beaches, carrying out operations to [evict people from public spaces](#). Paradoxically, this challenges the state's monopoly on coercion and force but with the state's open connivance.

## Feasting on punishment

One of the trends that best illustrates the privatisation of security as another niche business opportunity for unbridled capitalism is the privatisation of prisons, internment facilities and migrant detention centres. This business is worth billions of dollars a year and it often implies not only handing over management of the state's prisons and other punitive institutions to private companies but also opening the door to PMSCs offering these services.

This is the aspect of their involvement in public security that sparks the greatest opposition and alarm among human rights defenders and in civil society, to the extent that the United Nations Working Group on the use of mercenaries published a report in 2017 on the impacts of the [privatisation of prisons and migrant detention centres](#) on human rights. The UN was concerned about the widespread increase in the prison population that resulted from increasingly punitive policies, such as the expansion in offences punishable by a prison sentence or involving the deprivation of liberty, as well as – of course – the right to migrate or seek asylum being treated as a criminal offence.

The UN report pointed out that PMSCs involved in incarceration come from several countries including Austria, Australia, France, the Netherlands, New Zealand, South Africa, Spain, the UK and the US. In the case of the US, the three PMSCs that dominate the market – *CoreCivic*, *Geo Group and Management and Training Corporation* – have a long history of complaints about degrading treatment, forced labour, abuse, violence and sexual assault in prisons, correctional facilities, and detention centres holding children and migrants.<sup>37</sup>



Portraits of undocumented Latin American immigrants inmates in Maricopa County's Tent City Jail in Phoenix, Arizona. It became notable particularly because of Phoenix's extreme temperatures, with its daytime temperatures inside the tents reported as high as 150°F (65°C). From 2006–2016, Joe Arpaio calling himself 'America's Toughest Sheriff' focused increasing energy on criminalising the undocumented Latin American community in Maricopa County. Arpaio was convicted of criminal contempt of court in 2017, for which he was subsequently pardoned by Donald Trump. Tent City Jail was finally closed in 2017. Credit: © Jon Lowenstein / NOOR

Their actions and the profits they make by locking up migrants have given rise to major advocacy and civil protest campaigns led by organisations such as Worth Rises, which has achieved notable victories such as the [decision taken by the city of Denver](#) (Colorado) in 2019 not to renew the \$10.6 million contracts with GEO Group and CoreCivic. Recently, the new US President [Joe Biden announced his commitment to end federal funding of private prisons](#).

These privatisations involving the handover of facilities to security companies with dubious human rights standards grew during the second Obama administration and were intensified with the anti-migrant policies of former president Trump. The pandemic made this situation even worse, leaving migrants' health and safety at the mercy of PMSCs such as MVM Inc. Before the Covid-19 crisis, this company used to transport migrant families from the US border to detention and internment centres. In the wake of

the pandemic, it has been [using hotels overseen by a PMSC to detain](#) and confine children and babies before deporting them, as The New York Times revealed in August 2020.

Despite the numerous scandals in prisons and migrant detention centres, privatisation continues, thanks to the perceived win-win relationship between the public and the private sectors, whereby the companies obtain highly profitable public-sector contracts while governments outsource public security roles that are highly sensitive in human rights terms in order to evade effective accountability. Protection is thus shifted into the background as priority is given to private-sector profits and the absence of public scrutiny.

Cases of human rights abuses and violations place the spotlight on the company rather than the public authorities responsible for the outsourcing, while terminating its contract may sometimes quell the media outcry without having to change the underlying policy. In October 2020, the British firm G4S, very recently [acquired by the PMSC Allied Universal](#), with a presence in 90 countries, was awarded a contract to [run the Wellingborough mega-prison for ten years](#), despite the fact that a contract running two migrant detention centres had been terminated the previous year after images of inmates being attacked and assaulted were made public.

G4S has been involved in multiple scandals and accused of repeated human rights violations in the UK and elsewhere. Consequently, along with Blackwater, G4S is one of the most frequently criticised PMSCs, facing resistance from organisations such as the Palestinian [Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions \(BDS\) movement](#) and the British NGO War on Want. It has faced multiple campaigns for its involvement in providing services to the [US base in Guantánamo](#) where torture occurred, and for staff abuses at an Australian-funded migrant detention centre on Manus Island (Papua New Guinea). A campaign focused on its involvement in the occupied territories, including [providing equipment to Israeli checkpoints](#) in which Palestinians frequently have their rights violated, led to a successful boycott of the company, forcing G4S to announce their withdrawal from Israeli prisons.

## From traditional intelligence to cyber-mercenaries

Forms of state power have been changing, not only in alignment with contemporary conflicts but also with the digital age and so-called 'hybrid threats'. Since 9/11, the US has invested massively in intelligence work as part of the fight against international terrorism, and has gradually stepped up the outsourcing of these services to PMSCs. Tim Shorrock, author of [Spies for Hire: The Secret World of Intelligence Outsourcing](#), states that 70% of the US intelligence budget in 2007 was outsourced to security contractors. A year later, an investigation by [The Washington Post](#) found that 1,931 private companies were collaborating on national security, counter-terrorism and intelligence tasks from 10,000 US locations.

Government intelligence agencies contracting from corporations producing surveillance technologies is nothing new. What is unusual is the contracting of specialised staff for intelligence and national security work. The database of the [Shock Monitor network](#) records 216 PMSCs, out of a total of 770, providing intelligence services to governments, TNCs and private clients.

These services have evolved with the use of new technologies and now also include threats from cyberspace. Private security contractors supply and maintain software technology and hardware systems; gather data related to national security by intercepting calls, hack mobile phones and IT systems; analyse and systematise data related to national security; produce risk-assessment reports



for the military high command; operate reconnaissance drones during protests or in armed conflicts beyond borders; and conduct secret operations that involve illegal activities such as infiltrating social movements or interrogating suspects.

Some PMSCs have also set up their own cybersecurity departments to meet their clients' new requirements. Booz Allen Hamilton, one of the main US intelligence contractors, offers cybersecurity services that enable it to carry out attacks in the cyber domain. The Russian PMSC [RSB Group](#) has specialised in intelligence and cybersecurity since 2016, and the British firm G4S set up a Cyber Consulting and Security Operations Centre in the same year. Other companies, such as the French firm *Amarante International*, the Danish firm Risk Intelligence, which specialises in maritime security, and the British firm *Control Risks*, have developed sophisticated big-data tools to produce international security reports that identify specific risks to their clients.

The involvement of PMSCs and private security contractors in data-analysis places them in an ideal position to influence perceptions of the threats faced by their government clients, which means that they can also influence public policies or security plans. The profit motive and their military and technical security approach shape the results of PMSCs' investigations and their proposals for how to neutralise the identified threats. Ultimately, this approach influences their clients' perception of insecurity and ignores the social and political dynamics in the situations analysed, side-lining non-military responses involving diplomacy or mediation.

Cyber-espionage has thus become one of the PMSCs' key services, involving contracting large numbers of hackers – or what the United Nations Working Group on the use of mercenaries calls [cyber-mercenaries](#). The outsourcing of intelligence services to PMSCs reinforces the logic of impunity, diminishes supervision and accountability, and deliberately complicates democratic oversight of these operations, as the researcher [Armin Krishnan has pointed out](#). These services include highly sensitive and controversial work, as PMSCs are used as proxies to evade public scrutiny and meddle in the domestic affairs of other countries.

The Russian military intelligence agency (GRU) used the services of the Internet Research Agency, also known as the [Troll Factory](#), linked to the oligarch Yevgeny V. Prigozhin, to interfere in the 2016 US presidential election by hacking into Democratic Party email accounts and computer networks and spreading disinformation on social media in order to favour Donald Trump's presidential campaign.

The Troll Factory's data-hacking activities are not an isolated case. On a lesser scale, numerous PMSCs provide offensive services such as active cyber defence (ACD) or hacking to recover stolen information and disrupt or damage potential enemy infrastructure networks. These hackers also [perform tasks remotely](#), such as using drones to conduct reconnaissance thousands of kilometres away, offensive actions on the internet, or supporting authoritarian governments in actions to repress their citizens. In other words, security contractors are able to act on the frontline of contemporary conflicts from the comfort of their living room. Both situations make it challenging to regulate PMSCs' cybersecurity activities in terms of applicable jurisdiction and involvement in cyberwarfare.

At the same time, cooperation in the field of intelligence implies that private security contractors have access to sensitive information related to national security and to the databases of government agencies that contain citizens' personal information. This clearly has an impact on civil and political rights. For example, investigations made by [The Intercept](#) revealed shadowy intelligence activities by the

PMSC Tiger Swan who gathered data by infiltrating the Standing Rock indigenous and environmental movement protesting against the oil pipeline project of the firm Energy Transfer in North Dakota. The reports produced by Tiger Swan were used by the local police, the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Fusion Centers set up after 9/11 to combat international terrorism.

Such practices like these are also widely used in low- and middle-income countries, where complicity between state security forces, security contractors and hired killers is responsible for the death of numerous human rights defenders, such as [the case of Berta Cáceres in Honduras and many more in Colombia and Brazil](#).

Finally, the privatisation of intelligence has meant that experts from government agencies work for the highest bidder, whether a company, another government or a private tycoon. In 2019, a former NSA agent uncovered the [Raven project](#), an intelligence unit set up by the UAE and staffed by cyber-mercenaries, including some previously hired by US intelligence agencies. The Raven analysts also had a very sophisticated system – of unknown origin – for hacking into iPhones, known as Karma. The Raven project [spent years monitoring dissidents and others critical of the Abu Dhabi government](#), such as the British journalist Rori Donaghy, the Emirati activist Ahmed Mansoor, and Tawakkol Karman, leader of the ‘Arab Spring’ protests in Yemen.

## Threats to civil and political rights

Social movements, trade unionists, activists, journalists and indigenous leaders have frequently been targeted by governments, TNCs and private intelligence agencies. That work may now be carried out by a PMSC. There are numerous cases of TNCs contracting the services of PMSCs to spy on activists: *Kroll* was contracted by Texaco Chevron in Ecuador, *Academi* (formerly Blackwater) became the intelligence department of Monsanto, and [Stratfor](#) worked for Coca-Cola. PMSC intelligence services have been crucial for identifying social leaders and launching campaigns to discredit them. Tragically, such practices are widespread in Latin America, where they are conducted on the orders of oil and mining companies with the complicity of local authorities.

The symbiosis between governments, economic elites and PMSCs has led to [scandals involving conflicts of interest and revolving doors](#)<sup>38</sup> with the top brass of government intelligence agencies going to work for PMSCs and vice versa. But more worrying still is the political and ideological alignment between the public and the private sector, leading to a worldview and interpretation of international security that favours the geostrategic interests of western governments.

There is an organic relationship between states and the major TNCs registered in their jurisdiction. Governments prioritise economic security by promoting and protecting their companies, including the PMSC sector, and this leads to business loyalty even though the companies may have contracts with third countries. The case of Russia illustrates the strong ties that bind these companies to the country’s political and economic establishment, and the same tendency is also found in western countries.

Towards the end of 2020, Iranian prosecutor Ali Al-Qasi Mehr accused the G4S of being involved in the assassination of General Qassem Soleimani and Commander Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis on 3 January 2020. According to Al-Qasi Mehr, G4S provided information to the Trump administration [about the arrival of top Iranian military officers](#) at Baghdad airport, where G4S has been providing security since

2010. G4S rejects the claim but clearly is able to use its privileged position to conduct intelligence tasks for many western governments.

The connivance between economic and political elites, typical of this world of privatised security, was crystallised during the Trump administration. The US tycoon Sheldon Adelson, a close friend of Trump, used his influence to spy on Julian Assange at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London through the Spanish firm *Undercover Global S.L.* This firm recorded private conversations between Assange and his lawyers for the CIA, infringing the activist's right to privacy and also formally invading the territory of Ecuador.

Underlying these relationships and structures is an alignment with the economic, social and moral agenda of neoliberalism in its most advanced state, which sees the public sphere solely as an economic opportunity to be exploited, with no concern for its social consequences. The outsourcing of security by governments and their agencies is not simply based on mere efficiency and devoid of ideology. The evidence shows that the tendency to leave the private sector in charge of matters as sensitive – and fundamentally political – as security, and issues so intrinsic to the foundations of the liberal capitalist state as the monopoly on violence and coercive power, is a deliberate process, and also very dangerous. It endangers the physical integrity of people in the situations of armed conflict and tension where these companies operate, but also for the civil and political rights of those who live in the states that contract them.

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## Notes

- 33 Observatory on Human Rights and Business in the Mediterranean Region ([www.odhe.cat](http://www.odhe.cat)) and Shock Monitor ([www.shockmonitor.org](http://www.shockmonitor.org)) are projects led by Suds and Novact.
- 34 Foessel, M. (2011) *Estado de vigilancia: crítica de la razón securitaria* (trans. État de vigilance: la banalité sécuritaire). Madrid: Lengua de Trapo.
- 35 These grey area are used to refer to certain dynamics in political conflict whereby states deploy 'undercover' actions of a coercive nature but which remain too small to escalate into a military conflict.
- 36 Fabricius, P. (2019) 'The proliferation of outside forces in the conflict, with different and obscure agendas, complicates peace efforts. Institute for Security Studies. [issafrica.org/iss-today/russia-throws-more-weight-behind-haftar-in-libya](http://issafrica.org/iss-today/russia-throws-more-weight-behind-haftar-in-libya)
- 37 Information drawn from the Shock Monitor database. [shockmonitor.org/](http://shockmonitor.org/)
- 38 Chatterjee, P. (2013) 'How Booz Allen made the revolving door redundant'. Inter press Service. [www.ipsnews.net/2013/06/how-booz-allen-made-the-revolving-door-redundant/](http://www.ipsnews.net/2013/06/how-booz-allen-made-the-revolving-door-redundant/) [consulted 18 December 2020].