

THE POTENTIAL USE OF PMSCS TO FULFILL THE EU SECURITY STRATEGY

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ABSTRACT: The EU is facing a gap between its security ambitions and the reality of its military capabilities. It is often argued that the suitably regulated use of Private Military Companies and Private Security Companies (PMSCs) by international organisations would prove beneficial for cost savings and the removal of an organisation's dependence on voluntary and poorly equipped contributions from Member States. This work provides a policy recommendation to the use of PMSCs both by Member states within the operational framework of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), and directly by EU's bodies. Though PMSCs do not appear to have been deployed to any extent in large-scale EU operations, there will be pressure to use them as Member States' armed forces contract while the EU's security competence and activities expand.

KEYWORDS: Private Security Companies, Private Military Companies, ESDP, peace operations, EU operations, international organisations

INTRODUCTION

It is often argued that the suitably regulated use of Private Military Companies (PMCs) and Private Security Companies (PSCs) by international organisations would prove beneficial for cost savings and for the removal of an organisation's dependence on voluntary and probably poorly equipped contributions from Member States.

The focus of this work rests on the potential role of PMSCs in EU peace operations to reflect the organisation's growing competence (as a security actor) and as a regulator of private security services. Though PMSCs do not appear to have been deployed to any extent in the large-scale EU operations, there will be pressure to use them as Member States' armed forces contract while the EU's security competence and activities expand. Generally, there is a discernible

trend among international organisations to use the services of PM-SCs.¹

This work provides a policy recommendation on the use of PM-SCs by Member States within the operational framework of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), and directly by the EU's bodies. It is argued that PMSCs might, under certain circumstances and appropriate regulation, provide considerable support to ESDP missions in combat and non-combat roles.

In order to provide a recommendation grounded on empirical data, an overview of the chief ESDP goals in the Community sphere will be presented in the first section. Sub-sections will introduce aims and necessities highlighted in EU documents related to the EU's Security Strategy (ESS). In the following section, an introduction to PMSCs and their services will be presented. In the third section the main advantages and disadvantages for the EU to contract a PSMC will be discussed. An attempt to relate private security companies' tasks and missions to the EU need for a stronger, more reliable and efficient military force will follow. In particular, analysis is undertaken to reveal the potential use of PMCs in support of the wide range of ESDP tasks, as acknowledge by the ESS, the Headline and Civil Headline Goals 2010, and, eventually, the Lisbon Treaty. In the final section, concerns related to the use of PMSCs especially within the EU, will be assessed. With praxis as a starting point, when existing or acquainted, it will be evaluated, in the last sub-section, how the use of PMSCs by the EU, if beneficial, could be regulated.

THE EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

There is a growing culture of security in Europe, along with the recognition of the need for the EU to play a more consistent, active and effective role in crisis management, as acknowledged in the 2003 ESS.² Notwithstanding that the EU has made substantial progress for its 'full potential to be realised we need [it] to be still *more capable, more coherent and more active*,' as stated in the December 2008 "Report on the Implementation of the ESS."³ In the "Declaration on Strengthening Capabilities" drawn up by the Council of the EU, Members States express their will for the Union to enhance its contribution to international peace and

security and to evolve its capacity to confront the dangers and menaces to its security as identified in the ESS and the 2008 report updating it.⁴

At the December 1999 Helsinki European Council meeting, EU Member States set a military capability target known as the Headline Goal. EU member states should have been able to deploy 50,000 to 60,000 troops within 60 days and for a period of at least one year, to sustain the Petersburg Tasks.⁵ Despite that the Headline Goals were formally met in 2003, the European Council in June 2003 acknowledged that the EU's operational capability across the full range of Petersburg Tasks still remained limited. At the same Council a new Headline Goal was set, formally adopted in June 2004 by EU defense ministers.

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Battlegroups and Civil Missions

The new Headline Goal 2010 envisages the capability to respond to crisis management operations with rapid and decisive actions. It expressed the necessity for more flexible, mobile and interoperable forces, using efficiently available resources by sharing assets. These forces, militarily effective and coherent, should be rooted on the concept of "Battlegroups" (BGs), comprising 1,500 troops, deployable in less than 10 days for a period of up to 120 days.⁶ Their mission tasks include the Petersburg Tasks as well as additional missions set by the 2003 ESS, which comprises joint disarmament operations and the assistance of non-EU countries in countering terrorism.

In 2007 the BGs reached their full operational readiness, and since then two BGs remain on standby for a six-month period, with guaranteed availability, enabling two simultaneous operations to be deployed within five to ten days. To determine if it is capable of responding to emergency situations, a BG undergoes a range of exercises before going on standby.⁷ A BG should be able to 'conduct autonomous operations or take part in the initial phase of larger operations. It may be formed by a single state or by a multinational coalition of member states [...].'⁸ Although some of these BGs are fully operational and highly trained (such as the Nordic BG), they have not yet been deployed.⁹

Furthermore, in 2007 the Civilian Headline Goal 2010 was signed, which enlists ESDP's most important priorities namely:

- Strengthening EU crisis management through an improvement of operating procedures and an optimisation of training dynamics;
- Strengthening the EU's capability to plan and deploy several missions at the same time in rapid-response situations;
- Developing suitable management tools for mobilising capabilities for civilian missions;
- Developing administrative, financial, logistical and human resources aspects of missions;
- Optimising synergy between civil and military assets and between ESDP missions and third pillar actors (EUROPOL, EUROJUST, etc.);
- Facilitating, nationally, the deployment of personnel.

Accordingly, EU member states can internationally deploy police officers, civil administrators, civil defenders and monitoring teams to prevent and manage crises.¹⁰ No reference is made to Private Military/Security Companies (PMCs/PSCs).

On 13 December 2007, the 27 European heads of State and Government signed the Lisbon Treaty, amending the former Treaty on European Union. The Treaty, which entered force on 01 December 2009, includes more resources, a higher profile and greater coherence for the ESDP, which became the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). In fact, the EU civilian and military tasks are extended, in the new Article 28 B (par. 1), to joint disarmament, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and post-conflict stabilisation.¹¹

Resources and Capabilities in Support of ESDP Missions

In military missions, the ESDP can be supported by resources and capabilities of member states, the EU, NATO, and a spectrum of multinational forces under Member States' initiatives. Even if these forces are external to the Union, member states make them available to respond to EU operative necessities. These forces include *inter alia* the European Operational Rapid Force (EUROFOR), created in 1996 by France, Italy, Spain and Portugal and the European Maritime Force (EMF). Their tasks are humanitarian and evacuation

missions, peacekeeping and peace-enforcement operations. Other multinational forces are the European Gendarmerie Force (EGF) (France, Italy, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Romania) and EUROCORPS, created in 1993 by France, Germany, Belgium, Spain and Luxembourg.¹²

Over the past decade the ESDP, as an integrated part of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), has enhanced its capabilities and experiences.¹³ Since 2003 the EU has conducted 23 ESDP missions, six of which are military missions.¹⁴ The other 17 have deployed police, border guards, monitors, judges and administrators.¹⁵ Many scholars argue that EU missions have been more effective when member states' interests clearly converged. For instance, the EU monitoring mission in Georgia sheds light on this assumption: it was deployed only a few weeks after the August 2008 war between Russia and Georgia, and the political determination of EU member states has been able to translate into a mission that made a difference on the ground. The rapid EU deployment ensured that the ceasefire between Russia and Georgia held when other international actors could not intervene. The dispatch of the naval operation off the coast of Somalia to fight piracy, protect humanitarian aid and trade routes, is another example of the power of political will. As of the end of 2008, the EU has deterred several pirate attacks, handed over 68 pirates to authorities and ensured the delivery of 267,000 metric tonnes of food aid.¹⁶ Nevertheless, EU operations still experience real difficulties, the lack of qualified civilian personnel and adequate military equipment *in primis*. For example, EU governments have only sent 225 police officers out of 400 authorised for their training mission in Afghanistan. Moreover, it took more than six months for the EU to find 16 helicopters and 10 transport planes for their peacekeeping operation in Chad. Yet, everywhere, the coordination of ESDP operations with other European efforts (i.e. national programmes for security forces or aid project by the European Commission) has proved inefficient.¹⁷

Training, Professionalism and Expenditure

Military equipment and training are of vital importance for EU operations. A successful ESDP policy requires professionalism measured according to a universal conception of military power in terms

of preparedness and performance.¹⁸ Introducing standards of professionalism in the ESDP is an issue of high importance. Training, field and command post exercises are required to develop effective working practices, levels of professionalism and shared knowledge.¹⁹ The role of the EU should be to ensure that standards of training are created and monitored under the ESDP.

Joint training would contribute to the smoothness of internal (administration) operations and would provide better operability among EU forces. It would increase troops' cooperation and effectiveness while securing facile operability in real events by enabling problems that emerge in the exercises to be identified and addressed.²⁰ As reported in the "Declaration on Strengthening Capabilities," in addition to the improvement of force projection in operations, the modernisation of the air-force, and the development of a more effective information-gathering and space-based intelligence, it is necessary to 'strengthen interoperability and the ability of European personnel to work together: development of exchanges of young officers, modeled on Erasmus; improved functioning of the European Security and Defence College [...].'²¹

The 2008 updated version of the ESS returns to this concept while assessing the necessity for the ESDP to assemble trained personnel with a variety of skills and expertise at short notice for civilian missions.²² Moreover, Gerd Höfer, Member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the European Security and Defence Assembly (ESDA/WEU), argues that

As it is now common knowledge that Member States lack armored personnel carriers, protective equipment for troops, communication, command and control facilities, strategic air and sea transport, helicopters and other things, it seems obvious that these gaps should be filled jointly with the same types of equipment [...]. The advantages would be larger production runs, lower unit costs, and unified logistic, training and deployment criteria, the potential savings are considerable.²³

Yet, to enable the timely deployment of forces, equipment, procurement and budgeting should be made available and provided more effectively.²⁴

Finally, ESDP civil operations are funded from the CFSP budget, a Community budget managed by the Commission. However, it is

the Council that decides to use the funds of this budget for administrative or operative civil expenses. For the period 2007-2013 it has been agreed to provide a budget of at least €1,74 billion, i.e. nearly €250 million a year.²⁵ In contrast, defense or military operations cannot be financed from the Community budget. Some of this expenditure is shared among member states according to the GNP key and is managed by an administrative and financial mechanism, called the ATHENA mechanism, instituted in February 2004. The remainder of the expenditure is financed directly by those members participating in the mission.²⁶ In practice, less than 10% of an operation's total cost is pooled in the case of military crisis-management.²⁷

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PRIVATE MILITARY AND SECURITY COMPANIES

Until the nineteenth Century, a large part of most European nations' forces was supplied by the private sector. The provision of military services for commercial reward dominated Europe since the monopoly of the *condottieri* in the Italian city-states of the fifteenth century. Later, until the increasing scale of warfare and the advent of mass citizen armies during the French Revolution, formed units of mercenaries were hired by the emerging European nation-states to be integrated in their armies. Swiss, Scots, Irish and German soldiers were among the those often contracted by France, Great Britain and other European states.²⁸

Recently, however the accepted model has been to maintain armed forces in state employment, through conscription or individual recruitment. Only since the Cold War have both Western and developing countries increasingly employed private military companies (PMCs) and private security companies (PSCs) for missions both at home and abroad, involving a wide range of services.²⁹ As Singer argues in his study of the military services industry, in the post-Cold War era 'the private military market has expanded in a way not seen since the 1700s.'³⁰ The corporatisation of military services is one of the chief differences between current security service providers and private military units in the past. The services provided today are part of a business sector, and many firms are part of bigger multinational corporations (for example Halliburton, L-3 Communication or Lockheed Martin).³¹

PMSCs are regular, for-profit, enterprises which offer specialised services traditionally associated with the state security sector, especially with the military, para-military and intelligence agencies. They are employed by governments, companies and individuals, both at home and abroad. Their main business areas are direct or indirect combat support, by offering logistic (housing, transportation, amenities), intelligence (interrogation, satellite surveillance and analysis), training and advice (risk-management, training of Police and army), personnel, escorts, security facilities and a spectrum of operations, procurement, maintenance and weapons system development.³² The extreme end of the spectrum is the provision of direct combat operations (as provided by the former South African firm Executive Outcomes and the British Sandline International). Nevertheless, the employment of such services has been rare and, as foreseen by the industry, will probably end soon.³³ However, the distinction between PMCs and PSCs is blurred. In principle, PMCs are associated with the supply of services in proximity with the military frontline and might include engagement in combat, while PSCs are usually concerned with services delivered in a civilian context.³⁴

The private military and security industry performs globally as both its structure and operative mode are transnational. Currently, most companies are based in the US, UK, France and Israel, but also in many developing countries (for instance, China is increasingly exporting private military and security services to protect its oil firms in Africa).³⁵ A two-year research project by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists identified around 90 PMCs which operated in 110 countries as of 2002, and different sources estimate that about 200-300 PMSCs are currently active.³⁶ Between 1994 and 2002, the US established more than three thousand contracts with PMSCs. The two wars in Iraq clearly show the extent of the enhancing security privatisation: from 1:50 ratio of civilian contractors to military personnel in the 1991 Gulf War, to an estimated 1:10 ratio in the 2003 campaign. Despite the current focus on US-led operations, especially after the high employment of PMSCs in Afghanistan and Iraq, the use of these firms is growing steadily also in UK, France, Denmark, Finland and many other EU member states.

Moreover, the industry has a wide range of clients besides national governments, including intergovernmental organisations

(such as the UN, the African Union and the EU), NGOs (often in the humanitarian sector) and multinational corporations (MNCs). Examples are the use of British PSCs by the EU to protect officials in Iraq, and the logistical support in peace operations or de-mining tasks provided by US PSCs for UN missions (for instance by “Pacific Architects and Engineering” and “Medical Support Solutions” in Darfur),³⁷ although neither organisation has an explicit policy on their use.³⁸ In the humanitarian sector, NGOs, non-political actors that in their missions uphold a position of neutrality, often contract PSCs for the safeguard of their staff, resulting in heated debates as to the impartiality of such decision.³⁹

It is clear that the resort to private security is a growing trend that is still to reach its *apex*, with significant impact on the problems of accountability and regulation, as explored below. Possibly, international organisations such as the EU will enhance their use of PMSCs as their security roles increase and their capabilities to respond efficiently prove insufficient.

THE POTENTIAL USE OF PMSCs BY THE ESDP

Recent conflicts have shown that a small force of motivated, well trained and equipped soldiers may produce outstanding military impacts. Although even the largest PMC is hardly able to deploy more than 500 troops, ‘this should prove sufficient for a limited intervention mission with logistic assets and EU or NATO support.’⁴⁰ As discussed, since the enunciation of the 2003 ESS, the creation and maintenance of rapid-response forces, BGs, able to be deployed effectively in a short time-frame has been expected. Nevertheless, the success of such BGs, as well as that of other law-enforcement European units (EUROFOR, EMF, EUROCORPS, etc.) is ambiguous.

Rapid-Reaction Forces

In a hypothetical EU BGs operation,

a PMC could be hired to intervene rapidly in a deteriorating security situation, defeat local opposition, and stabilise a conflict long enough to allow peacekeepers from member states or the UN to deploy at a more leisurely pace

without significant military risks. In addition to providing units for forced entry operations, a combatant PMC might also provide a rapid reaction force in support of an EU peacekeeping operation.⁴¹

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Because PMCs proved to be more flexible and quicker to deploy qualified personnel, the provision of such companies directly contracted by the EU to be included in contingency planning for BGs could solve many of the problems currently faced by these forces. For example, on 27 December 2005, the Council approved the UN request for EU assistance in supporting the Mission of the UN to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) during the 2006 elections. Although a full BG could have been deployed, a 2,400 soldiers *ad hoc* force was created with contributions from all EU members, in order to share the burden of the operation. While a BG would have implied a rapid, light and preventive deployment in the DRC, this operation, which took four months to realise; revealing the limits of the European rapid response force.⁴²

Given that some EU BGs will be composed of contingents from a number of different EU states, the incorporation of an organised and trained PMC into such a formation would arguably be less difficult than the integration of units from some smaller, newer or non-NATO member states.⁴³ In a partially privatised peacekeeping scenario, EU expeditionary missions of the future could involve synergies between private companies and BGs, responding efficiently to those tasks and goals assessed by the ESS and Headline Goals.

Technical Services and Operational Support

PSCs could help EU operations in efficiently developing technical services and operational support, as requested by the Headline Civil Goal 2010. Technical services include IT services (for example the implementation and support of IT infrastructure), systems support (i.e. the support and operation of military systems) and equipment MRO (equipment maintenance, repair and operation), where some companies or divisions specialise as a distinct activity.⁴⁴ Operational support includes facilities management (from administration to equipment support), logistics (from supply chain consultancy to management and operation of procurement and supply systems for

military bases and operations), training, and a range of intelligence services (from surveillance to counter-terrorism).⁴⁵

In Sierra Leone, the South African PMC Executive Outcomes (EO) deployed in field operations with long-range reconnaissance, surveillance and signals jamming and intercepting capabilities that easily outclassed anything fielded by the rebel forces of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF).⁴⁶ However, future military forces could have access to sophisticated technology and expertise, equaling non-state combatants. Thus, unlike the armed forces of many EU member states, major PMCs have remained up-to-date with technological developments in the US military. Therefore, the employment of technologically advanced PMCs may offer EU military forces both a 'means to bridge some of the gaps identified in the Union's combat and force protection capabilities and remain interoperable with US forces on operations.'⁴⁷

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Training

As far as the ESDP goal to optimise training and deploy professional soldiers is concerned, a PSC could both provide joint training for European forces as well as take part or lead ESDP training operations around the world. Training could be in specific systems (e.g. with simulation software), but also weapons training and rifle ranges operations. In 1994, for instance, the US licensed a PSC to provide training to the Croatian military during the Balkan War. Shortly after, the newly trained Croatian militia won a military success that ultimately ended in a negotiated settlement and the Dayton Accords. Through a PSC, the US was rapidly deployed international civilian police, as is also the case of the Operation Iraqi Freedom, where private companies provided, *inter alia*, training to the Iraqi Army and police forces.⁴⁸ Yet, Military Professional Resources Incorporated (MPRI), one of the biggest military firms based in the US, has had government-promoted contracts for training and consultancy in Croatia and Colombia (for instance).⁴⁹ Similarly, Vinnell has considerable training contracts in the Middle East, including Iraq, and DynCorp has had many in Latin America.⁵⁰

More considerably, within the UN, many bodies, such as UNHCR, the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Food Programme

(WFP), the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) and the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) have relied on PSCs' expertise. If BGs, EMF, EUROFOR, EGF, EU-ROCORPS (etc), were to be sufficiently trained by PMSCs, not only could the efficiency and reliability of such forces be enhanced, but also the costs would be reduced while avoiding many bureaucratic passages and political uncertainties.

Lower Costs

As far as costs are concerned, if the EU is publicly financing provision of security services with member states' resources, transferring the provision to private companies can be advantageous.

The costs of private provision may be lower because PMSCs have more flexibility than military forces and can deliver the same service with fewer people and less equipment.⁵¹ As shown above, ESDP missions rely heavily on member states' funding, and the provision of cheaper services from the private industry might enhance the possibility to nimbly deploy, for instance, EU peacekeeping operations.

Moreover, costs are also lowered since PMSCs often hire already trained personnel and do not provide the personnel support and benefits provided to soldiers by the state.⁵² In any event, even the slightest transfer of some services to the private sector could help the EU save money for its operations.

POSSIBLE CONCERNS

Although interviews with officials both from governments and firms indicate that PMSCs employ well-trained, highly motivated, professional staff, there are many other concerns with the outsourcing of security services. For the purpose of this work, only those concerns related to the potential use of PMSCs for ESDP tasks will be analysed.

First, even though the use of private contractors is usually promoted as a cost saving solution, it is not clear that outsourcing reduces expenses. That cost-efficiency can be a problem is especially interesting because one of the main arguments to shift from public to private security providers is the belief that private companies can

offer services at a better value.⁵³ Studies of privatisation found that competition among private companies assures lower costs. However, in reality, 'there is often collusion among firms competing for long-term contracts,⁵⁴ which leads to opportunistic behavior (e.g. firms offering less than what they really are later disposed to bid). Though outsourcing logistical support can save costs, particularly when contractors face competition and have the flexibility to hire locally, there are many situations when competition and/or flexibility are missing, precluding low-cost services.⁵⁵ Overpricing is also common as costs and fees are frequently left open in contracts because of the uncertainty of the conflict.⁵⁶ Furthermore, given that many areas of military outsourcing are dominated by a few major firms, once a long-term contract has been stipulated it creates a 'bilateral monopoly' where the supplier is in the position to increase charges and lower quality. Once a long-term service has been contracted, the customer can lose the capacity to effectively monitor the service provider, thus excluding another prerequisite for the maintenance of low-costs.⁵⁷

Second, a potential obstacle to the use of PMSCs by the EU is the lack of transparency and public accountability, among the most frequently discussed problems in the governance of PMSCs in national states. Both are essentially 'normative concerns and can be explained by the observation that the fragmentation of functions and resources among public and private security providers clashes with persistent norms concerning responsible "government" and democratic decision-making processes.⁵⁸ Moreover, organisational responsibility (e.g. of the EU) is made more complex by the question whether accountability lies with the union itself or member states (or with both).⁵⁹ For instance, the UN has accepted responsibility only for forces acting under its authority, command and control. This means that it refuses to accept liability for unlawful acts committed by troops which are operating under a Security Council mandate but under the command or control of member states.⁶⁰ The same principle should apply to private individuals or contractors employed by international organisations, which implies that the organisation (the UN in this case, or supposedly the EU) should be responsible for unlawful acts committed by contractors acting under its authority and command. Similarly, if the contractors are employed by member states contributing to a UN/EU operation

and not directly by the organisations, then accountability should lie with those who have authority over the contractors. If neither states nor organisations have such control, then the issue has to be considered from the perspective of corporate responsibility.⁶¹ In conclusion, if the EU authorises a peace operation and intends to have some control over it, it has to bear the responsibility of unlawful acts committed by troops and PMC employees. That is why, in reality, organisations such as the EU do not actually exercise control over peace operations under their authority. Consequently, higher standards of control are desirable in order to allow the EU or UN to exercise a more effective command over PMCs by means of detailed contracts containing mechanisms of accountability.⁶² As argued by many scholars and policymakers, there is a need to regulate PMSCs both nationally and supra-nationally. The EU has adopted few regulation strategies of private security services which pave the way for a higher aim.

EU Regulation Strategies

First, the area of private policing, although regulated, to various degrees by member states, technically falls under the competence of the EU. According to several rulings of the European Court of Justice (ECJ), private security is part of the “economic sector,” falling under the regulation of the internal market of the EU. Although some recommendation papers have been adopted by the Council and pressure is constantly exerted by the Confederation of European Security Services (CoESS) and the trade union federation Uni-Europa, movements toward harmonised common European regulations on private policing have so far been slow.⁶³

Second, the EU has already used *ad hoc* Regulations at the Community level to control the export of private military services to certain destinations in response to civil wars and regional conflicts. Specifically, the transfer of technical services related to military equipment and activities has progressively been the target of EU restriction since the mid-1990s and Joint Actions have been adopted regarding the transfer of small and light weapons facilitated by PMSCs’ operations in developing countries (e.g. Council Joint Action 2100/401, Council Regulation 1334/2000 and 1236/2005, EU Council

Common Position 2003/469/CFSP, EU Council Joint Action 2002/589/CFSP).⁶⁴

Third, the EU has adopted the Code of Conduct on Armaments Exports which not only enhanced transparency concerning armament exports from the EU, but also contributed to a growing harmonisation of national arms export legislation within the Union which ultimately strengthens the regulation of private military services.⁶⁵

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Future Development of EU Regulation

The above concerns point to what is widely perceived as a general inadequacy in national and supranational regulation of the activities of private military and security contractors. Such regulation would help define PMSCs' role, assess the liability of individuals and companies and increase the transparency and accountability of their services to democratic scrutiny.⁶⁶

The development of EU codes and standards for the governmental employment and application of private services could be considered as complementary to decisions adopted in the ESDP framework for interoperability, effectiveness, transparency and general good practice. This could happen by (following different lines of action) standardising rules and codes for governmental use of PMSCs on EU member states' territory and adopting joint concepts for the involvement of PMSCs in the planning and exercising phases for EU BGs and other European multinational forces. Moreover, joint concepts and plans for the mobilisation of PMSCs during operations undertaken abroad under the authority of ESDP by EU members should be settled. Finally, the EU 'should adopt codes and standards for the direct employment of PMSCs by the central institutions of the Union itself (e.g. as guards).'⁶⁷ All these approaches could be refined by a range of sub-components of regulation and standardisation based on acknowledged performances.

Overall, depending on the extent to which the chief conditions are present – competition, precision of requirements and effective monitoring – the efficiency of outsourcing is likely to vary. In some cases, for example technical support for complex systems, 'the company that designed the systems may simply be in a far better position to provide the activity than the military customer, to a degree

that outweighs other concerns.¹⁶⁸ Nevertheless, the assertion that private provision necessarily implies better value can be questioned on many grounds, both theoretically and pragmatically.

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The EU is facing a gap between its security ambitions and the reality of its military capabilities. It remains to be seen whether initiatives to promote greater defense integration and role specialisation will successfully enable EU member states to rise to the challenge of playing a global security role. PMCs could play an increasingly important function in supplying support services to the expeditionary forces critical for effective European power projection. As shown, PMSCs provide a wide set of services that proved supplementary to ESDP's priorities, including the achievement of effective rapid response forces, increased operational and technical capabilities, and the development of training, logistic and administration, as outlined in the EES, the Headline Goal 2010 and Civilian Headline Goal 2010.

While contracts for these firms might exclude direct combat roles, the character of modern warfare suggests that their exclusion in practice will become increasingly difficult. PMCs should have the opportunity to play a vital and legitimate role in the front line of EU intervention forces (e.g. in cooperation with BGs), particularly if EU regular armed forces and European multinational forces prove to be unequal to the task.

Even if a PMSC would be integrated into EU peacekeeping operations, it might never be possible to eliminate all the tensions between a commercial organisation seeking to maximise profit and the security objectives of a contracting organisation. Policymakers, rather than assuming *a priori* that outsourcing security services saves money, should establish investigative procedures, including oversight costs and real spending on long-term contracts, to reveal actual costs. They need to evaluate the economic and political implications of privatising and, if its conceded that employing PMSCs could be a helpful element in managing EU defense goals (easing constraints especially on deployable resources and manpower), 'ESDP's ambitions should manage to reach a common understanding

on the pros and cons of outsourcing security and best practice for applying it.’⁶⁹

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