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Contribution of EUROMIL on the discussion document on elements for an international regulatory framework on the regulation, monitoring and oversight of the activities of private military and security companies

About EUROMIL

The European Organisation of Military Associations and Trade Unions (EUROMIL) is an umbrella organisation composed of 34 military associations and trade unions from 22 countries. It is the main Europe-wide forum for cooperation among professional military associations on issues of common concern. EUROMIL strives to secure and advance the human rights, fundamental freedoms and socio-professional interests of military personnel of all ranks in Europe and promotes the concept of "Citizen in Uniform". As such, a soldier is entitled to the same rights and obligations as any other citizen. The organisation is an ECOSOC-accredited NGO.

EUROMIL fully supports efforts aiming at further developing the international framework regulating the activities of private military and security companies (PMSCs). In this regard, the organisation welcomes the discussion document on elements for an international regulatory framework on the regulation, monitoring and oversight of the activities of private military and security companies drafted by the open-ended intergovernmental working group on private military and security companies and would like to highlight or add certain discussion points to the debate.

Discussion points on PMSCs

EUROMIL considers that security and defence are first and foremost the responsibility of the states. Governments should thus put the necessary instruments in place to deal with security and defence matters and ensure that the adequate resources are available.

Confronted with the increased number and use of private military and security companies in the last decades globally, states should nowadays adopt a clear international regulatory framework on the regulation, monitoring and oversight of the activities of PMSCs.

EUROMIL notes that PMSCs are often hired by governments to perform specific tasks at national or international level. It should however be avoided that PMSCs are used instead of the regular armed forces to avoid parliamentary control or civilian oversight.

It should also be avoided that less investment is being made in the equipment, training and personnel of the regular armed forces because PMSCs could be



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employed in a more cost-efficient way. Properly investing in the national armed forces would avoid creating the need for PMSCs.

If employed, activities of the PMSCs must be coordinated with those of the regular armed forces in order to avoid putting missions and lives in danger.

EUROMIL finally believes that those who work for PMSCs should enjoy the same living and working conditions as any other worker. This is the only way to avoid the creation of a new type of mercenaries.

PMSCs personnel should receive adequate training and education, including on human rights and international humanitarian law.

Finally, parliamentary oversight and democratic accountability is key.

EUROMIL stands ready to support the activities of the IGWG where relevant.

For further information, please contact the EUROMIL Office by email: euromil@euromil.org or phone: +32.2.626.06.80