

# GOVERNANCE

BASEL INSTITUTE ON GOVERNANCE

Conference «Non-State Actors as Standard Setters: The Erosion of the Public-Private Divide» | February 8-9 2007 | Hotel Hilton Basel, Switzerland

## **Africa Double Challenge: responding to internationalised security systems and regulating private military forces**

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The single largest issue introduced by the evolution of military services by the private sector is the degree to which corporations are now transcending the power of governments, rising as an influential variable within international and regional diplomacy, and redefining sovereignty in the 21st century. Advocates of the industry claim they are economically efficient and point towards the failure of the UN and the system of world governments to cease violence, genocide and civil war around the world. Those who are cautious of the emerging industry see this market as an encroachment into inherent government functions and question the real economic efficiency heralded as a true result of privatization. And there are, of course, many in between, who see benefits and drawbacks to the variety of services out there now on the world market.

Although it is clear that Private Military Forces (PMFs) fill an important role in the global security market, it is also clear that they do not always respect the national and international standards of armed conflict. Very few countries have laws regulating PMFs and where regulations exist, they range from a laissez-faire approach to an international regulatory system and even an outright ban on PMF activity.

This paper interrogates the role of demobilised forces in countries coming out of conflicts or responding to Security Sector Reform (SSR) programmes and the rising of PMFs in Africa and seeks to highlight the challenges that governments will face in the attempts to regulate these private enterprises.