

Making the UN Mercenary Convention applicable for the challenges of the 21st century

Background

The United Nations Mercenary Convention (full title: the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries). Is a resolution first drafted in 1989 as resolution 44/34. It went into force on the 20th of October 2001.

The resolution, which has been ratified by 46 member states, directly prohibits the recruitment, training, use and financing of mercenaries as defined by article one of the resolution (in short, a non-national of the party using the soldier fighting in a hostile conflict for personal gain).

The convention is generally considered as strong in wording but weak in practice, partially because of its lack of ratification by some important parties which make use of mercenaries (for example Russia, the USA and many Middle eastern countries). It is also weakened by the montreaux document, which shares many of its signatories with the convention yet does not fully ban mercenaries. It is often considered more relevant as it has been ratified in september of 2008 and is thus significantly newer.

Questions to consider

Has my country ratified the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries?

Has my country ratified the Montreaux document?

Does my country make use of mercenaries?

Is my country actively threatened by a country which makes use of mercenaries?

Is my country part of a military alliance which either uses mercenaries or is affected by countries using mercenaries?

Resources

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-convention-against-recruitment-use-financing-and>

<https://www.international-alert.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Security-Mercenary-Issue-UNOCHR-EN-2001.pdf>

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/4498149>