

Galilee Model United Nations Conference 2018



Security Council

Research Report

A clear universal definition of non-state military actors has yet to exist but a mostly agreed upon definition by DCAF (The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces) states: “A non-state armed actor is defined as any organized group with a basic structure of command operating outside state control that uses force to achieve its political or allegedly political objectives.”

In other words, a non-state military actor is an organization that is independent of any sort of government control and not formally linked to any country that uses military means to achieve political aims.

The objective of a non-state military actor could be to seize territories for their control, or to cause instability and insecurity for political aims without necessarily taking over power.

The use of terms to define a non-state military actor are controversial and depends solely on the opinion of the person who is using them. For example, non-state military actors can be seen as “liberation movements,” “freedom fighters,” or “revolutionaries” by some, and at the same time, as “rebels,” “insurgents,” or “terrorists” by others.

The existence of non-state actors is evident throughout history, but never have they been as powerful and threatening as they are now. The reason for this change is globalization; not only has it provided funding opportunities, facilitators and force multipliers for these actors, it has also allowed states to outsource their actions to non-state actors. In addition, it has allowed them to develop transnational social capital and induce support and alliances on a wider scale.

Many factors play a role in the creation of a non-state military actor. The main mechanisms for the formation of a non-state military actor are:

1. A mechanism of oppression: The existence of political opposition in the country is natural and crucial. The existence of violent repression applied by the government turns these political oppositions into military actors.
2. The second mechanism is prompted when neo-patrimonial settings encounter disaster. Individuals who feel excluded from clientelistic networks of political class begin to perform violent actions opposed to state agencies.
3. This formation of non-state military actors is due to open political violence. In this case, the military actors are originally created by the state during times of war, in order to achieve what government forces are incapable or unwilling of achieving.

At some point, these armed forces break free from government control, becoming non-state military actors

In the past century, the world has witnessed a mass increase in non-state military actors around the globe, in countries such as Indonesia, The Ukraine and the Philippines, but most distinctly, in the Middle East and Africa.

The importance of tackling this issue lies in the importance of these groups in political conflicts. Most of the conflicts waging nowadays involve one or several non-state military actors fighting state forces or other non-state military actors. Non-state military actors have become an integral part of most internal and external disputes. For example, in 2010, there were 32 major conflicts worldwide, non-state military actors were a great part of all of them.

A very clear example of the major role non-state military actors play in conflicts is Syria. Although the main focus in the Syrian crisis is ISIS, in reality there are plenty other non-state military actors playing major roles in the conflict. For example, there are dozens of Anti-Assad Rebel Groups, such as The General Staff of the Military and Revolutionary Forces, The Syria Islamic Liberation Front, which currently consists of around 20 rebel groups, The Ahfad al-Rasoul Brigades, The Asalawa-al-Tanmiya Front, Ansar al-Islam Gathering, Durou al-Thawra Commission. Other than this, there are the hardline Islamist factions such as Ahrar al-Sham, Al-Qa`ida and the Salafi-Jihadi Hardliners, in addition to the Syrian Kurds and the PKK. Also there are a number of non-state and foreign-linked actors in Syria that fight for the al-Assad regime.

The UN recognizes non-state military actors as a threat to global peace. In the past years, the UN has worked on expanding its regulations in order to more efficiently fit the threats posed by non-state military actors and their terrorist activities.

To this day, there have been 13 conventions on the responsibilities of member states to combat terrorism. Also, the UN has established written legal documents on how to handle violent NSAs and their usage of terrorism.

Many steps have been taken by the non-governmental organization Geneva Call in order to tackle this issue. Since non-state actors are not state controlled, they lack legal capacity to take

part in relevant international treaties. For that reason, the Geneva Call has taken initiative by soliciting non-state actors to sign ‘Deeds of Commitment’ to ban particular activities violating humanitarian norms. Since 2000, Geneva Call has engaged around 100 armed non-state and to date 63 of them have signed at least one of Geneva Call’s Deeds of Commitment.

Since the UN Security Council is the main guarantor of international peace, it carries great responsibility of finding sustainable solutions to tackle non-state military actors and the threat they pose to international peace. While forming your resolutions address the structural context in which these groups emerge and gain power, the political, societal, or economic policies that drive conflict and allow such groups to gain a foothold in society. Also address the threat these groups pose on security and government stability within and outside the state they operate in.

Questions to consider:

- Are there non-state actors operating in your country? How do they affect the country?
- How does your country deal with violent non-state actors?
- How do non-state military actors affect global peace?
- How do non-state military actors mobilize?
- How do non-state military actors acquire and maintain funding?
- What is the relationship non-state military actors have with civilians?
- Do non-state military actors have the ability to become parts of functioning states if they gain power?
- What solutions do you suggest to tackle the problem?

Helpful links:

<https://www.diritto.it/non-state-actors-law-of-armed-conflict/>

https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9780230281479_13

<https://www.law.upenn.edu/live/files/5815-finkelsteincontemporary-armed-conflict>

<https://www.stabilityjournal.org/articles/10.5334/sta.er/>

https://csuchico-dspace.calstate.edu/bitstream/handle/10211.3/180576/Binzafran_Duaa_thesis_summer_2016.pdf?sequence=1

<http://www.indiandefencereview.com/news/terrorism-in-the-21st-century-battling-non-state-actors/>

https://watermark.silverchair.com/ogw003.pdf?token=AQECAHi208BE49Ooan9khhW_Ercy7Dm3ZL_9Cf3qfKAc485ysgAAAAUwggGhBgkqhkiG9w0BBwagggGSMIIBjgIBADCCAYcGCSqGSib3DQEHATAeBgIghkgBZQMEAS4wEQQMqVkFkEqObq-zNGsDAgEQgIIBWL8Ma-Q5FvV1A5-62Od3YoED6KFUM7BeCF_kc4zJQ9N7tL4tLexwywij5h1T2z9Fs-BDcpwrwkK6h1wClEptLNBTfIEmN3Dnr6vp9fJVzDuWf4E1FMpwNR-3AFR519E7pMoaQhVFiWfzvWiT0yGV18rR9T7KrPCZgVVskHFiRhrwhOV8U9Y2j93Ydxrt8K-yHM5eh-IhSSlon-5Zgua6LAyr7nw7pZyA5cmXuRB9pKh3aVjtv7GoBGavDDu8sR3AvK2Gs1H23fUQjkWHzavOPCucycexOYrar7LBL2YWXxZOVYhKJ2DuU0Ci1fPkWQVzXdgXIOM_KZyTBvVnNntlcHrojRfsGhBOK1y6171IZ8kPBTqqKvxn6z9ubi5d-rMNabI5j1cBzzHDzfJQoRVsAXNyG15T6CkQZXmFhtbErm71kiCn0ZBKDKjk9Jgx1utkUriE6lzdbU3g