Delegates of the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime,

Private Military Contractors (PMCs) are private companies that provide paramilitary, security, and logistical services around the globe.¹ The United Nations itself used PMCs for security during its humanitarian operations such as disaster relief in conflict zones. The reliance on PMCs however, has raised concerns about the lack of clear accountability and the uncertain statuses of these companies under both national and international law. These concerns are even more troubling because PMCs have been involved in a number of well-publicized instances of human rights abuses.² These companies are independent military corporations that provide services to national governments, and private systems, as well as international organizations. Not only do they constitute a significant aspect of the military industry, but they are also extremely controversial.

There has been a pervasive increase in the growth of civilian private security services, as well as the activities of these companies.³ The growth of these companies can be coupled with the growth in their jurisdiction and responsibilities. Varying by state, civilian private security now encompasses many of the functions traditionally addressed by state security.

The growth of PMCs can be due to a few reasons, such as:⁴

- Growth in crime as well as growing fear of crime
- The inability of government policy to provide the services that people and organizations demand
- Privatization programs that expand private-sector involvement
- The growing risk of terrorism

Although there are not necessarily specific policies regarding PMCs, there are many standards regarding state security that may be applicable to these companies. While PMCs

¹ [http://www.privatemilitary.org/private_military_companies.html](http://www.privatemilitary.org/private_military_companies.html)
² [https://scholarship.law.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1949&context=jil](https://scholarship.law.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1949&context=jil)
⁴ [https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/Article/2031922/mercenaries-and-war-understanding-private-armies-today/](https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/Article/2031922/mercenaries-and-war-understanding-private-armies-today/)
provide enhanced security and protection to states, the lack of centralized codes of conduct and legislation make these companies difficult to control, and result in a huge gap in state security. States with non-regulated or inadequately regulated civilian private security services face a number of issues including: human rights abuses, corruption, organized crime groups, illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, as well as trade in conflict resources. In some states, these PMCs have been known to affiliate with certain political parties, ethnic groups, paramilitary groups, or organized crime groups. The failure to properly regulate PMCs causes a pervasive abuse of authority, inadequate legal accountability, and noncompliance with laws.

As delegates of UNODC, it is your responsibility to address this issue that is causing a huge security gap, as well as an abuse of human rights, political corruption, and lack of accountability in the international community.

Please consider the following questions as a starting point for your research:

1. What is your country’s position on PMCs, and has it ever used the services of PMCs?
2. What rules/regulations should the UNODC recommend regarding PMCs and how can PMCs be made accountable for their actions?
3. Should the functions of responsibilities of PMCs be limited to certain types of work in conflict zones?
4. How can we address the issue of corruption in connection with the private security industry?

Remember that YUNMUN has a zero tolerance for plagiarism and all papers will be checked via Turn-It-In. All delegates should read over the YUNMUN handbook’s plagiarism policies before handing in their papers.

If you have any questions feel free to reach out to me at tjpeled@mail.yu.edu. I’m looking forward to reading your position papers!

Tammie Peled
Chair, UNODC, YUNMUN XXXII