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The financing of contemporary mercenarism: resources, routes, and regulation

In recent years the operations of mercenaries and other comparable service providers such as private military and security companies (PMSC), have come to light more frequently, nevertheless there are still many unanswered questions surrounding the phenomena. The relevant regulatory frameworks, are of limited use given the changes in the nature of these actors and how they have been used in recent decades. Attention has been paid to, for instance, recruitment practices and the involvement of mercenaries and PMSC in non-international armed conflicts, but there are still issues that remain opaque. The financing of mercenarism is one area of concern. While the connections between mercenaries and PMSC and the exploitation of natural resources are well known, less is known about the intermediaries, routes, and resources involved in funding mercenarism. What is clear is that financing methods have evolved, especially in light of the growing significance of cryptocurrencies. This paper examines the channels exploited by mercenaries, their clients, and enablers, and questions whether existing regulatory provisions around the financing of mercenaries and related actors are fit for purpose.

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International Relations and International Law

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No

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