

**Project Title:** Private Military and Security Contractors (PMSCs) and Human Rights Law

**Date:** 2011

**Location:** University of Nottingham

**Unit:** Security and Human Rights

**Core staff:** Professor Nigel White, Dr Aris Georgopoulos, Kerry Senior (Project Officer)

**Funder:** European Union

### **Project Summary**

This project investigates the regulation and accountability of PMSCs, as well as States and organisations employing or hosting PMSCs, under human rights law and international humanitarian law.

The Unit has recently participated in a consortium of seven European universities, funded under a grant provided by the European Union within the seventh Framework Programme (FP7) for research and development, to consider the issue of European regulation of PMSCs (Priv-War project). This culminated in the consortium (including Professor Nigel White and Dr Aris Georgopoulos from Nottingham) presenting their recommendations on European Regulation of PMSCs to members of the European Commission, European Parliament, EU member states, representatives of Iraq, Afghanistan, the AU, the UN, the US, the industry and NGOs at the European Commission, Brussels, in April 2011.

### **Activities**

The main publications emerging from the project are *War by Contract*, edited by Francesco Francioni and Natalino Ronzitti and published by Oxford University Press in 2011; and *Multi-Level Regulation of Private Military and Security Contractors*, edited by Christine Bakker and Mirko Sossai and published by Hart in 2012.

Written submissions were also made to the UK Foreign Office's consultation on the regulation of PMSCs and the Foreign Affairs Select Committee in 2009. Discussions have been had in 2010-11 with members of the UN Working Group on Mercenaries, a body which has drafted a convention to regulate the activities of PMSCs, currently before the Human Rights Council.

In 2011, Professor White presented papers on current international initiatives to regulate PMSCs at conferences in New York (John Jay College of Criminal Justice) and at King's College London (Department of War Studies), both of which involved industry representatives as well as those of government and civil society. The Unit will continue to develop this area, by, for example, examining the role of PMSCs in counter-terrorism activities such as rendition, detention and intelligence gathering.