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The role of private military and security companies : corporate dogs of war or civilians operating in hostile environment ? / Frauke Renz

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Abstract:	Private Military and Security Companies perform a wide range of roles during non-international armed conflicts. While many of those roles have been assessed thoroughly, the roles of contractors involved in combat air patrol missions have remained understudied. Major militaries worldwide are increasingly relying on drone warfare and make use of private contractors throughout the process. It is thus essential to assess the legal status of those contractors under international humanitarian law to determine their rights and how those correspond to their contractual obligations. This article argues that contractors analyzing intelligence are likely to directly participate in hostilities while those piloting and operating the drones potentially perform an inherently governmental function and thus blur the line between the public and the private sector. Their work might even qualify as membership of an armed group with a continuous combat function, thus depriving them of the revolving door benefit.
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