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What are 'armed non-state actors' ? : a legal and semantic approach / Annyssa Bellal

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Abstract:	<p>The terms 'armed non-state actors' (ANSAs), 'organized armed group', 'insurgents' or 'terrorist groups' are not defined in international treaties or international customary law. However, there are legal and political consequences attached to these terms. As an effort to better understand the concept of an ANSA itself and its regulation under international law, this chapter proposes to further reflect on what are ANSAs, by proposing a critical analysis of each of its constitutive terms: 'armed' v. 'non-armed', 'state' v. 'non-state', and 'actors' v. 'individual'. We will see that a multiplicity of meanings and legal consequences can be drawn from each of these apparently straightforward words, which perhaps shows that the concept of an ANSA is not as well understood under international law as one would hope.</p>
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