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Time to Wake Up: Importance of Recognizing and Regulating Private Military Forces

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Oral Presentation O7.1

**TIME TO WAKE UP: IMPORTANCE OF RECOGNIZING AND
REGULATING PRIVATE MILITARY FORCES**

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Contracted soldiers have been fighting for U.S. since American Revolution. However, compared to 10% they accounted for the entire military force during World War II, they occupied nearly 50% of entire American military force in places like Iraq. In 2010, among 38,200 military workforce, 207,000—more than 50%—of them are contracted forces. In dealing with Somalia piracy, the private security companies have proved to be so effective that even the International Maritime Organization has issued guidance about hiring private military companies on board for security. However, private military and privatization of armed forces still trigger great concern, sometimes outright protests, against them. With situations in Syria, Iraq, and other places I illustrate that, against the backdrop of new forms of global security threats, it is more important to recognize and harness the power of private forces rather than simply conclude the necessity of utterly banning them.