

UN Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination

and

Security Council Report

Side Event to the 77th UN General Assembly

‘The human rights challenges of private military and security companies and mercenaries at sea’

**Friday 4th November 2022
13.30-14.30 (EDT New York)**

The UN Working Group on the use of mercenaries and Security Council Report will co-host a discussion on the human rights challenges presented by the activities of mercenaries, mercenary-related actors, and private military and security companies at sea. This hybrid event follows the presentation of the Working Group’s thematic report to the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly ([A/77/268](#))

Background

In its report, the Working Group on the use of mercenaries highlights violations of human rights perpetrated by private military and security companies, mercenaries and related actors in the maritime context. Private military and security companies, in particular, have increasingly been deployed at sea in recent years as a direct response to the challenge of piracy in multiple geographical regions, and often in conjunction with public security actors. The isolated nature of the marine environment and non-existent or weak regulatory frameworks create a situation where the lack of monitoring and oversight enable human rights abuses of seafarers perpetrated by private security personnel to flourish. Similarly, labour rights of private security personnel themselves are also at substantial risk. Nevertheless, accountability for violations is absent. The proliferation and weak regulation and management of weapons at sea are also of concern. Proper oversight and regulation of private military and security companies operating in the maritime context is urgently needed, in particular to ensure that victims of abuses at sea perpetrated by such actors can gain access to justice and effective remedy.

This event will explore some of the key human rights trends and challenges in relation to the use of private security in the maritime context in conversation with **Dr Sorcha MacLeod** (Chair of the UN Working Group on the use of mercenaries).

To register for in-person or online participation email: OHCHR-mercenaries@un.org

Venue: Security Council Report, 711 Third Avenue, Suite 1501, New York, NY 10017

The event will be held in English.