Private Security Governance Observatory:
Promoting good private security governance in Africa

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What is the Private Security Governance Observatory?

Network of African civil society organizations (CSOs) that seek to share knowledge and reinforce their organizational capacity to promote good governance of the private security sector:

• Established in 2016
• Initiated and supported by Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)
• CSOs share a concern for security and human rights, and are interested in promoting oversight and accountability of private security providers
• Main focus is on the regulation of private security companies (PSCs)
Purpose of the Observatory

The Observatory provides tools to strengthen CSOs’ capacities in the good governance of private security and offers a platform for them to share their experiences and good practices on the topic.

The objectives of the Observatory are:

• To foster an enabling environment for CSO network building and to establish a CSO community of practice, encouraging the exchange of knowledge and good practices;

• To support the capacity of CSOs to engage effectively with national authorities, international organisations and companies in order to support more effective oversight and accountability of private security;

• To identify and facilitate entry points for civil society advocacy and monitoring to contribute to accountability mechanisms at national, regional and international levels.
Governance structure of the Observatory

Regional Steering Committee

Francophone Network

Anglophone Network

LOCAL Action

Collective experience sharing & Lesson learning

DCAF
Reach: Observatory network across Africa

Francophone Network
- 11 Countries
  - Burkina Faso, Cameroun, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, DRC, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo.
- 46 CSOs

Anglophone Network
- 7 Countries
  - Tanzania, Ghana, Liberia, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Sierra Leone
- 15 CSOs
CSOs have the potential to undertake a crucial role in promoting good governance of the private security sector. They are a key actor, having the capacity to interact – or to facilitate interactions – with all pertinent stakeholders, be it as human rights defender, as the voice of community, or as a facilitator.

The main roles of CSOs can include:

- Knowledge building and sharing lessons learnt;
- Awareness raising of and participation to the formulation of national policies;
- Monitoring of the industry;
- Complaints handling and assistance to victims;
- Engage with government to foster information sharing and develop oversight and accountability mechanisms (as recommended in MD Good Practice 21)
Key challenges faced by many CSOs

- Lack of expertise and capacity amongst CSOs
- Lack of trust and/or transparency between CSOs and the security sector
- Poor collaboration or cooperation amongst CSOs
- Tradition of secrecy surrounding the security sector
- Prioritisation of national security concerns over civil liberties and human rights
- Too little donor support for transparency and democratic accountability of the security sector
Some lessons learnt

- **Local Ownership**: Ensure that CSOs play a meaningful role in monitoring and oversight of the Private Security Industry at the international, regional, national & local level.

- **Relationship building**

- **Understanding CSO challenges on the ground**

- **Capacity building & ID entry points**

- **Local Ownership**

The Observatory Network

Ensure that CSOs play a meaningful role in monitoring and oversight of the Private Security Industry at the international, regional, national & local level.
Observatory/CSOs can be a link essential to the success of the implementation of the MD in our countries.
Thank you for your attention

More information at: http://www.observatoire-securite-privee.org
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