

The good, the bad, the ugly.

Why privatisation in
NATO missions backfires

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Date: 09-06-2016

Wordcount: 8064 words

Abstract

This thesis examines the relation between NATO member states and the deployment of private military and security companies (PMSCs) in NATO missions. The phenomenon of PMSCs and the deployment of PMSCs has been extensively researched. The deployment of PMSCs by NATO member states in NATO missions has not been researched as much. This thesis provides three hypothesis to test whether the deployment of PMSCs by NATO member states should be increased. The ISAF NATO mission is analysed using an revelatory case study, in order to provide an answer to the question why NATO member states deploy PMSCs in NATO missions. Over the course of the ISAF mission, the quality and quantity of deployed PMSCs varied, making it debatable whether the deployment of PMSCs in NATO mission was beneficial. Research points out that NATO member states deploy PMSCs due to their financial, political, and military advantages. The deployment of PMSCs reduces the financial and the political costs of participation, but does not provide military advantages that outweigh the disadvantages.

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1. Introduction

In modern warfare not only states fight for influence in international affairs. More actors are pulled into military operations by states and military alliances to act on their behalf at the battlefield. Private military and security companies (PMSCs) are such actors which can be found in conflict areas around the world. Since the early 1960s and their presence is rapidly expanding. Member states of the Northern Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), a military alliance for Northern American and European states, use PMSCs in military operations as well leading to good, bad, and sometimes ugly results. In this introduction the rise of PMSCs is outlined, followed by the presentation of the research puzzle, and the associated research questions.

PMSCs

Since the 19th century the deployment of military forces motivated by personal gain, referred to as mercenaries, is considered illegitimate (Minow, 2005). With the emergence of the nation state, states and their military forces were assigned special status in relation to security at both the national as the international level. The special status of states in relation to war and security was formalised by various conventions, treaties, and charters such as the Montevideo Convention (1933) (Stenner, 2014) Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928), the UN charter (1945), and the Geneva Conventions (Krahmann, 2013). At the end of the 20th century recruitment and deployment of military forces motivated by personal gains turned into the deployment of private military and security companies (PMSCs) with commercial motives. The use of PMSCs in conflict areas has expanded over the past 20 years both in numbers of company employees and in frequency of deployment (Leander, 2005).

In this thesis a PMSC is defined as a non-governmental actor who offers military services such as consultancy, intelligence, logistics, or/and support to military operations. The act of deploying PMSCs in NATO missions is defined as the contracting of PMSCs by a NATO member state for the purpose of supporting that member state's national army. Throughout the thesis, 'national forces' refers to the military forces of the respective NATO member state.

Research puzzle

The phenomenon of the rise and use of PMSCs by states has been topic of multiple studies. The deployment of PMSCs in NATO missions is hardly researched. NATO missions are military crisis-management operations under NATO command. The legitimate use of force is defined as proportional force used by the state. There is little known about why organisations

such as NATO allow the deployment of PMSCs by NATO member states, given the clash with the state's monopoly on violence and the great influence PMSCs have on the outcomes of military operations (Hammes, 2011). This thesis focusses on the question why NATO member states deploy PMSCs in NATO missions, and what the associated consequences are for the NATO mission.

Research questions

The relation between PMSC deployment by NATO member states and NATO missions is studied by formulating the following research question and sub questions:

What motivates NATO member states to deploy PMSCs in NATO missions?

Sub research questions:

1. *What tasks do the deployed PMSCs have in NATO missions?*
2. *What military and security tasks do PMSCs take over from national armies?*
3. *What are the financial consequences of the PMSC deployment in NATO missions?*
4. *What are the political consequences of the PMSC deployment in NATO missions?*
5. *What are the military consequences of the PMSC deployment in NATO missions?*

These research questions will be analysed via a representative case study of a NATO mission.

2. Theoretical framework

In this section the theoretical framework of the thesis is presented. The historic, ideological, and market perspectives on the rise of PMSCs are presented, followed by the construction of hypotheses. An outline of the used methodology is next, followed by an motivation on the selection of the case.

Rise of PMSCs

History

Scholars such as Halpin (2011) and Singer (2005), explain the rise of PMSCs through the decline of the role of the nation state and the end of the Cold. The disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, took away a major source of military tensions across the world, leading to decreases in defence budgets and downsizing of military forces (Stenner, 2014). Together with advanced electronic military equipment replacing man power, the decline in demand for national forces can be explained through the collapse of the Soviet Union (Baum & McGahan, 2013; Halpin, 2011). Often experienced and well-trained, these redundant former soldiers turned to PMSCs, who were able to select from a worldwide pool of job seekers those with the best expertise. PMSCs thus became able to quickly mobilise high-level military forces to take over military and security tasks of national forces (Hammes, 2011). The privatisation of government tasks throughout the 1980s (Sullivan, 2010), led to the privatisation in the national military as well (Markusen, 2003).

Ideology

The rise of PMSCs can be explained from an ideological perspective. Liberalisation and privatisation where meant to bring efficiency to government institutions (Markusen, 2003). The wave of privatisation stemming from USA president Ronald Reagan in the 1980s led to the outsourcing of government tasks such as postal services, railways, as well as the contracting of private companies. This ideology of liberalisation also lead to the outsourcing of military and security government tasks (Sullivan, 2010; Fahn & Hadjer, 2015). Influential states such as the United States of America (USA) play an important role in the emergence, deployment and legalisation of PMSCs in security situations around the world (Krahmann, 2013). In this thesis a norm is defined in the words of Gregory Raymond, that norms are ‘generalised standards of conduct that delineate the scope of a state’s entitlements, the extent of this obligations, and the range of its jurisdiction’ (Björkendahl, 2002, p.13).

Market

The rise of PMSCs in contemporary politics also relates to economic principles such as market demand and supply. States deploy PMSCs because they are considered to be less expensive than national troops (Fahn & Hadjer, 2015). The market for private military services, expanded over the years due to increased demand from various actors such as governments, NGO's, and international organisations, and correlating increased supply of services provided by PMSCs. This led to increased availability and competition among PMSCs, lowering prices overall, making PMSC deployment even more advantageous for states (Leander, 2005).

Mercenary

PMSCs and mercenaries share characteristics. There is no fully agreed upon definition of 'mercenary' (Bures, 2005; Petersohn, 2014) nor 'PMSC' (Bures, 2005; Minow, 2005). Various scholars have nevertheless differentiated both concepts based on their tasks in combat situations (Petersohn, 2014). A mercenary is often defined as a fighter 'participating in combat for pay' (Petersohn, 2014, p.476), and has three characteristics (Bures, 2005):

- mercenaries are external to the military conflict;
- the motivation for participating in the conflict are private gains; and
- mercenaries participate in combat situations.

The Geneva Conventions prohibit the deployment and use of mercenaries under the rule of Additional Protocol 1 (1977) (Krahmann, 2013). A precise definition of a PMSC is difficult due to differences in corporate structure, goals, and services (Stenner, 2014). Just like mercenaries, PMSCs are often foreign to the conflict, and are motivated by private gains. Under current norms and regulations private military contractors are not allowed to engage in combat situations, except in self-defence cases such as ambushes (Leander, 2005).

Hypotheses

In the article of Fahn & Hadjer (2015) it is stated that financial, political, and military factors are the three parameters determining whether states will deploy PMSCs. Financial, political, and military factors help to break down the motivations of states for deploying PMSCs. These three parameters, are used to generate hypothesis related to the motivations of member states to deploy PMSCs in NATO missions.

Financial factors

The financial advantages of PMSC deployment for military purposes in the short and long run are widely proclaimed by scholars and government institutions (Fahn & Hadjer, 2015; Pattison, 2008; Halpin, 2011). The quality of PMSCs can be equal to that of national armies, and PMSCs are able to perform the tasks of national armies for less in the short run (Fahn & Hadjer, 2015; Sullivan, 2010). Contrary to national forces, PMSCs are subject to the competition and bidding of other PMSCs. In order to be awarded a contract by a state (or another actor), PMSCs have to offer the lowest price possible. National forces are not subject to this competition against other military actors, and thus have less incentive to reduce the costs of their deployment. This basic functioning of the market for force leads to lower prices (Leander, 2005). In the long run PMSCs are financially beneficial as well. National armies are expensive. The average training costs of a UK infantry soldier are £ 34.000 (UK army secretariat, personal communication, January 21, 2015). For a USA infantry soldier that is about US\$ 44,000 (Olick, 2002). This in combination with pensions and social security benefits makes national forces relatively expensive in the long run (Fallows, 2015; Giraldi, 2015). PMSCs provide a cheaper alternative: the costs of PMSC deployment are short term and the contractors do not have to receive training or benefits at the expense of the tax payer in the long run (Halpin, 2011). In times when national forces are not as much needed, it is hard to decrease the amount of national forces due to their contracts ensuring benefits and potential future needs (Sullivan, 2010). While the defence spending of NATO member states is steadily decreasing (Statista, 2016a), NATO member states have great military ambitions on the international stage (AIV, 2007; Mattelea, 2016). Thus member states have to find ways to perform the same tasks for less money (The American Interest, 2016). Hence the hypothesis:

H1: If the defence budget of NATO member states decreases, the number of deployed PMSCs in NATO missions is increased.

Political factors

Fahn & Hadjer (2015) and Hammes (2011) state that PMSCs decrease the political costs of executing military actions and operations. Sometimes states pursue policies that are unpopular, leading to political opposition towards these policies. The greater the political opposition, the greater the political costs of executing this policy. The deployment of PMSCs can reduce the political costs of participation in NATO missions by reducing the amount of

deployed national forces (Singer, 2005), replacing national forces in dangerous situations (AIV, 2007), and by performing tasks national forces are not mandated to execute, thus limiting public debate about the mandate of national forces (Fahn & Hadjer, 2015).

NATO member states are vulnerable to domestic political pressure to related to participation in NATO missions (Silverstone, 2002). Domestic opposition towards NATO missions increases (Saikal, 2006; Kitchen, 2010), NATO member states have to find ways to participate in NATO missions the same tasks with less political costs. By deploying PMSCs, less national army personnel is involved (Fahn & Hadjer, 2015) and shortages of national forces are filled (Singer,2005). Hence the hypothesis:

H2: If domestic political pressure in NATO member states against participation in NATO missions increases, the number of deployed PMSCs is increased.

Military factors

Another justification of PMSC deployment by states is their military professionalism (Halpin, 2011). The professionalism of PMSCs becomes clear due to the quality of PMSCs, and the practical advantages PMSCs have over national forces. PMSCs have qualitative advantages over national armies because they tend to recruit already highly trained and experienced forces regardless of their nationality due to the higher salaries (Hammes, 2011). PMSCs can be qualitatively as good or even better than national forces (Leander, 2005). Adding to that is the fact that PMSCs have various military advantages over national forces such as rapid deployment capabilities (Hammes, 2011; Sullivan, 2010), familiarity with local population and customs (AIV, 2007), and providing and maintaining military equipment (Singer, 2005). In general PMSCs are increasingly capable of taking over military tasks of national forces. Hence the hypothesis:

H3: If PMSCs are equally or better capable of executing military operations in NATO missions, the tasks of national forces which are outsourced to PMSCs are increased.

Methodology

A qualitative analysis of existing literature is conducted and the single case study method is used to research potential changes in the amount of deployed PMSCs in the ISAF NATO mission. The time and space bound nature of a case study allows the comparison of the

deployment of PMSCs throughout the period, making it possible to compare the motivations for PMSC deployment within a NATO mission. This comparison within the case helps to better test the constructed hypotheses. This research is explanatory in nature as it explains how motivations for PMSC deployment in NATO missions (independent variable), change the number of deployed PMSCs (dependent variable) during the ISAF mission. Results from the analysis of the case study are gathered and structured in order to either reject or accept the hypotheses.

Case selection

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO's military operations and missions have expanded to non-NATO territories (Kitchen, 2010), such as Afghanistan. The globalisation of security threats to NATO member states and the financial constraints for defence expenditures of NATO member states challenge the NATO alliance to find ways to conduct military missions with less resources (Wittmann, 2010). The ISAF mission is one of the recent NATO missions in which new tactics to cope with these challenges have been implemented, such as the deployment of PMSCs.

The ISAF is a revelatory case because it is one of the NATO missions taking place during the rise of PMSCs, thus being one of the few cases in which the phenomenon of PMSC deployment in NATO missions can be found. The selected NATO mission is the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) (2001 - 2014) (NATO, 2015a). The majority of NATO member states participated in the ISAF mission and due to the fact that the mission has ended recently, the contemporary status of PMSC deployment in NATO missions can be analysed.

A qualitative content analysis of written sources is the best methodology to analyse the phenomenon of PMSC deployment by NATO member states. This qualitative analysis provides the opportunity to merge the findings of multiple scholars into objective answers to the research questions.

The used literature can be researched by other scholars, increasing the dependability of this research.

The credibility of this research is based on primary sources such as reports of governmental organisations, news articles, and datasets related to the deployment of PMSCs in the ISAF mission, and secondary sources such as peer-reviewed articles of scholars.

The transferability of the findings towards other NATO missions is good, given that the presented hypotheses will help to develop a method or model structuring the motivations for PMSC deployment by NATO member states.

Ensuring high conformability of this research might prove to be a challenge, because literature can be differently interpreted by other scholars.

3. Results

ISAF case study

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was a military mission from 2001 – 2014 issued by United Nations Security Council resolution 1386, which came under full NATO command in 2003. The main objective of the ISAF mission was to support the Afghan government, by setting up an effective internal security system, to prevent insurgents from uprising, and to eliminate international terrorist threats. During the ISAF mission 51 nation states participated, leading to a 130,000 strong force at its peak. The ISAF mission steadily expanded its reach from the surroundings of Kabul in 2001 to Afghanistan as a whole in 2006. ISAF forces were met with fierce resistance from insurgents especially in the East and South of Afghanistan (NATO, 2015a). In the ISAF case study PMSCs were used by NATO member states (Hammes, 2011)

Results related to the sub research questions

1. *What tasks do the deployed PMSCs have in NATO missions?*

In the ISAF mission the tasks of PMSCs varied greatly among PMSCs and evolved during the missions. The number of deployed PMSCs has (likely) increased over the course of the ISAF mission, given the increased demand for their services (Shameen, 2010). The majority of services provided by PMSCs provided in the ISAF mission were tasks such as logistic services, consultancy, equipment maintenance, infrastructure projects, the training of Afghan forces, and logistics support (AIV, 2007; Hammes, 2011; Krahan, 2013). Tasks of PMSCs in the ISAF NATO mission involving military force, were related to the protection of strategic objects (mainly of NATO bases and strategic infrastructure like supply routes) and providing support to NATO member states forces in military operations (Hammes, 2011).

2. *What military and security tasks do PMSCs take over from national armies?*

The military and security tasks that PMSCs take over from national armies in the ISAF mission are focused on the protection of strategic objects and support for national forces, for example the protection of infrastructure projects, NATO bases, and supply missions (AIV, 2007; Hammes, 2011). PMSCs have increasingly become involved in combat situations during the ISAF mission, such as being under direct fire and being targeted by improvised explosive devices (Hammes, 2011; Isenberg, 2012b). PMSCs have not officially been

contracted to execute military operations themselves. This raises the question to what extent PMSCs were unofficially contracted to perform combat tasks, and to what extent NATO member states controlled unofficial PMSC involvement in combat situations.

3. *What are the financial consequences of the PMSC deployment in NATO missions?*

The deployment of PMSCs has had both positive and negative financial consequences for NATO member states during the ISAF mission. The deployment of Afghan PMSCs helped to strengthen economic development of Afghanistan, but during the ISAF mission PMSCs did not always live up to the expectations of reducing financial costs of deployment. The lack of monitoring capabilities has shown to be problematic and the disruption of market competition limited the price reduction of PMSC deployment.

PMSCs were deployed by NATO member states due to their perceived costs effectiveness (Hammes, 2011). However, the costs effectiveness varied per PMSC and did not account for all deployed PMSCs in the ISAF mission (Hammes, 2011). The costs effectiveness of PMSC deployment was occasionally limited due to a lack of financial oversight in the business of PMSCs (AIV, 2007), subcontracting (Chlosta, n.d.), and the disruption of market competition (Hammes, 2011). After protests from the Afghan government against the use of international PMSCs, the increased deployment of Afghan PMSCs led to more jobs for unemployed Afghans (Hammes, 2011). This stimulated the economic development of Afghanistan (Chlosta, n.d.).

The lack of financial monitoring of PMSC deployment in the ISAF mission was problematic. Top commanders of NATO member states are seldom fully aware of the amount of deployed private contractors (Vine, 2014). The deployed PMSCs rarely provide insight in their way of operating, making it hard for NATO member states to check on the number of deployed employees, their quality of equipment and expertise, and to check for corruption practices (Chlosta, n.d.). For instance, a Canadian-led construction project was outsourced for US\$10 million to Watan Risk Management, an suspected Afghan PMSC (Isenberg, 2012a).

Another problem is subcontracting. Subcontracting is the practice of PMSCs outsourcing their contract onto other PMSCs. This limits the monitoring capabilities of NATO member states even further because the companies are wary of sharing such data. Many subcontracted

PMSCs are not registered by ISAF authorities, decreasing transparency and oversight even further (Chlosta, n.d.). The increased deployment of local contractors was partially financed with international aid dedicated to development of Afghanistan. The Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief estimates that 40 percent of the international aid has been spend on PMSCs and sub contracted PMSCs, leading to high profits for contractors before the aid (if any) reached the Afghan population (Hammes, 2011).

Over the course of the ISAF mission, market competition, expected to lower the price of PMSCs operations, was not always stimulated by NATO member states. In 2005, the USA military awarded contracts to only three PMSCs (Triple Canopy, DynCorp International, and Xe (formely known as Blackwater)), who continued to have the contracts for securing protection of USA strategic objects at least till 2010 (del Prado, 2010). In the absence of competitive bidding PMSCs did not try to lower the costs of their deployment, unnecessarily increasing the costs of PMSC deployment. Market competition was occasionally blocked by PMSCs initiative as well (Hammes, 2011). In 2010, DynCorp International was refused continuation of their contract related to the training of Afghan police forces. DynCorp International took legal steps to protest the loss of the contract, effectively keeping the contract until all legal steps were exhausted. Although the PMSC DynCorp International failed to provide the quality of services at the price they were contracted for, General Stanley McChrystal, then-commander of the ISAF forces, was unable to contract better and probably cheaper alternative PMSCs (Hammes, 2011). This distorted the market for private military and security services leading to the deployment lacking the qualifications for executing their contract while better options were available.

4. What are the political consequences of the PMSC deployment in NATO missions?

PMSCS are deployed by NATO member states to reduce the political costs of participation in NATO missions (AIV, 2007) (Hammes, 2011). In the ISAF mission, PMSCs delivered on the expectation that national forces can be retreated from dangerous conflict zones due to PMSC support. This limited the amount of casualties sustained by national forces is limited. The increased deployment of PMSCs by the USA military lead to a decrease in political costs. Contractors absorbed over 53% of the casualties in the first two quarters of 2010 (Hammes, 2011). These contractor deaths were not counted as USA casualties, and did not result in domestic political discussions. PMSCs were able to replace the sustained casualties, without

the political discussion whether the deployment of additional troops was worth it (Hammes, 2011).

There are negative political consequences to PMSC deployment in the ISAF mission as well. The deployment of PMSCs by NATO members is met with international criticism. This criticism is mostly based on the questionable legitimacy of PMSCs in NATO (combat) operations (del Prado, 2010), and the involvement of PMSCs in human rights abuses (Shameem, 2010). The outsourcing of military force to PMSCs is a sensitive political issue because increased military power of PMSCs challenges the ability of NATO member states to execute effective control over the conflict area (AIV, 2007). The use of force in theory is limited to states, in order for them to ensure sovereignty and compliance to laws. PMSCs have competed with the NATO member state forces over control of territories (Hammes, 2011). Insurgents and rebel groups show similarities to the deployed PMSCs, given the fact that they too challenged the state in controlling its territory to enforce the law. This raises the question whether deployed PMSCs are any different from the insurgents they have to fight once the national government has no full control over them. As became clear during the ISAF mission, the line between the insurgents that the Afghan government and NATO member states had to fight, and the PMSCs NATO member states deployed was occasionally thin (Hammes, 2011; del Prado, 2010).

The deployment of international contractors instead of local contractors led to local resistance against international PMSCs deployed by NATO member states (Hammes, 2011). The lack of acceptance from the Afghan population decreased the legitimacy of deployed PMSCs. The deployment of Afghan contractors did not help the political objective of ensuring a working political system in Afghanistan, a danger for which ISAF commander general David Petraeus warned in 2010. NATO member states seldom knew how the PMSCs interacted with the local population (Hammes, 2011). Some of the Afghan contractors turned out to be allied to Afghan warlords who, due to the contracts of NATO member states, gained significant influence over the areas where they were deployed, and not seldom acted against the interests of NATO member states (Wells, 2011). This clash of political interests between ISAF forces and deployed PMSCs led to the establishment of a USA led Central Command's Armed Contractor Oversight Directorate. This institution concluded that the deployment of PMSCs is inconsistent with the counterinsurgency strategy (del Prado, 2010). Various scholars such as DeWinter-Schmitt, (2013) and Hammes, (2011) and agencies such as AIV (2007) and the US

Congress (Schwartz & Swain, 2011), urged NATO member states to increase transparency related to PMSC deployment,

In the ISAF mission PMSCs were involved in these human rights abuse cases were seldom refused future contracts (Hammes, 2011), nor punished for their wrongdoings (del Prado, 2010). PMSC involvement in human rights abuse scandals, such as the death of suspected terrorist Abdul Wali at the hand of private contractors in 2003, or the murdering of Afghani citizens by Blackwater security guards in 2010 (Shameem, 2010), decreased the fragile legitimacy of PMSC deployment further. PMSCs were excluded from the laws of the host state (AIV, 2007) in order to prevent the imprisonment of private contractors. Instead, international laws regarding PMSCs and the national laws of the contracting state were used. International laws regarding PMSCs proved to be troublesome because there are no clear regulations (AIV, 2007) and national accountability systems were insufficient (Hammes, 2011).

The effectivity of NATO missions was endangered by this decline of local support. In the ISAF mission, Afghan locals were often unable to differentiate between international military forces of NATO member states and private contractors employed by NATO member states (Hammes, 2011), leading to the association of NATO member state forces with human rights abuses. The lack of accountability mechanisms for PMSCs, together with the lack of local contractors, corruption practices of PMSCs, and their involvement in human rights abuses led to local resistance against the deployment of PMSCs by NATO member states and other participating states in the ISAF mission (Chlosta, n.d.), harming the political objective of ensuring local support for the ISAF mission (Hammes, 2011). Nevertheless, locals generally considered the deployment of PMSCs an necessary evil (DeWinter-Schmitt, 2013).

The deployment of PMSCs by NATO member states did lower the political costs in relation to domestic pressure against participation in the ISAF mission by reducing the amount of national deployed forces, and the amount of casualties sustained by national forces. The deployment of PMSCs had negative political consequences due to international opposition towards the outsourcing of the monopoly on the use of legitimate violence, the lack of deployment of local Afghan forces, and the involvement of PMSCs in human rights abuse cases harmed political objectives of ensuring local support for the ISAF mission.

5. *What are the military consequences of the PMSC deployment in NATO missions?*

In general PMSC were able to take over various tasks of NATO forces during the ISAF mission. PMSCs were deployed for military reasons due to their professionalism and advantages such as familiarity with local customs, rapid deployment, and services customised to the needs of the national forces (Isenberg, 2012a). PMSCs helped to secure and protect strategic military objectives such as primary supply lines to Pakistan (Hammes, 2011), the protection of NATO compounds (AIV, 2007), and the deployment of PMSCs allowed national forces of NATO member states to undertake operations elsewhere.

Whether a takeover of tasks by PMSCs was military advantageous is debatable. PMSC deployment by NATO member states has led to increased military dependency on PMSCs, has led to various cases of friendly fire, and led to the need for additional protection of (Afghan) contractors.

NATO member states are reliant on the services provided by PMSCs in order to execute military operations in the ISAF mission (del Prado, 2010). By outsourcing former national forces tasks, such as intelligence gathering, supply delivery, and operational support, the resources and structures dedicated for comparable national tasks were reduced or dissolved. NATO member states who lack the ability to resurrect these structures on short notice, increasingly deploy PMSCs to fill those gaps (Hammes, 2011).

The lack of monitoring in the deployment of PMSCs by NATO member states themselves and by their partner states leads to negative military consequences in relation to NATO's military objectives (Chlosta, n.d.). The lack of the monitoring of PMSCs gave rise to worrying trends of friendly fire between PMSCs and national forces of NATO member states or Afghan security forces such as the armed standoff of contractors from Watan Risk Management and Canadian observers (Isenberg, 2012a), and of militias operating under the banner of PMSCs. PMSCs such as ArmorGroup, have deployed militias under the command of Afghan forces (Hammes, 2011).

Local militias have been contracted by NATO member states such as the US, as PMSCs under the Village Stability Operations program in order to influence local power structures to eventually strengthen the power of the Afghan government (Isenberg, 2012b). However this

has posed threats to both Afghan forces as well as NATO member state forces, as these militias tended to serve their own interest (Hammes, 2011). Instable situations in which local power structures were distorted due to NATO's PMSC deployment were the result, leading to the strengthening of Afghan warlords, and the weakening of the (local) Afghan government. The Afghan warlords occasionally acted against NATO interests (Hammes, 2011).

Local contractors provide additional military threats in the ISAF mission due to the increased targeting of Afghani contractors by insurgents. Local contractors are loyal to the ISAF forces and thus they are increasingly targeted (in 2010 PMSC employees were 2.75 times more likely to be killed in combat situations) (Isenberg, 2012b). For example, in the Helmand province the Taliban attacked a project which deployed 1,200 contractors, leading to PMSCs being involved in combat situations and leaving 21 of the contractors killed (Isenberg, 2012b). This places a moral and military burden on NATO commanders to ensure safe working conditions for the local contractors, resulting in the occupation of national forces unable to perform other tasks, neutralising the advantage of troops replacement by PMSCs (Hammes, 2011).

PMSCs in general have increasingly become involved in combat situations (Hammes, 2011; Isenberg, 2012b), leading to unsafe working conditions, leading to unsafe working conditions, friendly fire incidents, problems with the Afghan authorities, and Afghan population. The Advisory Council on International Relations (2007) argues that NATO member states have to ensure safe working conditions for the contracted PMSCs, leading to additional military costs for protection and quick and safe evacuation of these contractors.

Hypotheses evaluation

The analysis of the ISAF NATO mission provided insight in the role of PMSCs deployed by NATO member states during NATO missions. As a consequence the results of the ISAF case study are used to determine whether the proposed hypotheses can be accepted or rejected.

H1: If the defence budget of NATO member states decreases, the number of deployed PMSCs in NATO missions is increased.

In the last four years of the ISAF mission, all NATO member states with the exception of the (eastern) European states Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, and Romania, decreased

their military budgets (Statista, 2016a; NATO, 2015b). The increase in defence budgets of Eastern European states correlates with the development of military tensions in Eastern Europe due to military activities from Russia (Von Hammerstein, 2016; Jones, 2016). The increase of defence budgets is more likely to be related to threats from neighbouring states than to participation in the ISAF mission. The role of tensions with Russia is highlighted by the fact that the European states who increased their defence budgets did not contribute more than 79 national troops to the ISAF mission, except for Romania who deployed 600 forces (NATO, 2015a).

Nevertheless, the defence budget of the US, the largest employer of PMSCs during the ISAF mission (Shameem, 2010), rose from 1,140 billion USA dollars in 2001 to 1,711 billion USA dollars in 2014 (Statista, 2016b). The expenses of USA participation in the ISAF mission in Afghanistan increased from 14,7 billion USA dollars in 2003 to 88.3 billion USA dollars in 2014, the year in which the ISAF mission ended (Statista, 2016b).

The defence budgets of most NATO member states have decreased over the course of the ISAF mission. There are no estimates available of the number of deployed PMSCs by other NATO member states it is difficult to determine whether there is a relation between the decline in national budgets of NATO member states, and the number of deployed PMSCs. The increase of PMSCs deployed by the USA between 2008 and 2011 from (respectively 3,689 to 18,971 private contractors, an increase of 400%) (DeWinter-Schmitt, 2013), and the increase of both the USA national defence budget, and the expenses of USA participation in the ISAF mission in that period do not make an acceptance of the hypothesis likely. In the absence of reliable quantitative data on the total number of deployed PMSCs over the course of the ISAF mission, the hypothesis can neither be accepted nor rejected.

H2: If domestic political pressure in NATO member states against participation in NATO missions increases, the number of deployed PMSCs is increased.

Participation in the ISAF mission was met in multiple NATO member states with increasing political opposition (Irwin, 2011; Kitchen, 2010; Van Liebergen, 2011). NATO member states politicians were not always able to convince their parliaments and citizens of the necessity of ISAF participation.

In Germany popular support for participation in the ISAF mission has always been under the 50% over the course of the ISAF mission (Van Liebergen, 2011). In 2004, 52% of surveyed Europeans supported the presence of their national forces in Afghanistan (German Marshall Fund of the USA, 2004). In a polling of the (German Marshall Fund of the USA, 2009), the majority of the surveyed European nations wanted to reduce the amount of deployed national forces. The USA however increased the deployment of its national forces by 34,000 troops (Tyson, 2009), and pressured the other NATO member states to increase their troop presence (German Marshall Fund of the USA, 2009). This increase in the amount of participating USA forces was announced when public opinion towards American participation in the ISAF mission was decreasing (Statista, 2013). These additional troops were supported by an increase of private contractors. Between 2008 and 2011, the estimated number of PMSCs deployed by the USA increased respectively from 3,689 (making up 69% of the total USA forces) to 18,971 private contractors (DeWinter-Schmitt, 2013), allowing the USA to participate in the ISAF mission with less domestic protests (Hammes, 2011). There seems to be a correlation between the number of deployed PMSCs and the increase of domestic opposition against USA participation in the ISAF mission. Although the amount of PMSCs overall was likely increased during the ISAF mission, estimates of similar PMSC deployment by ISAF participants among which are NATO member states, are unknown, especially of PMSC activity in the period 2001 – 2008 due to insufficient monitoring (DeWinter-Schmitt, 2013). Overall, NATO member states experienced a (sometimes small) increase in domestic opposition against participation with the prolonging of the ISAF mission (Van Liebergen, 2011). Over the course of the ISAF mission the number of overall deployed PMSCs has likely increased, given increased demand for services provided by PMSCs (Shameem, 2010). The unavailability of precise data on the deployment of PMSCs by NATO member states other than the US, makes it difficult to determine whether this correlation is also causation. Hence, the hypothesis can neither be accepted nor rejected.

H3: If PMSCs are equally or better capable of executing military operations in NATO missions, the tasks of national forces which are outsourced to PMSCs are increased.

During the ISAF mission PMSCs deployed by NATO member states have proven to be capable of being equally capable of executing military operations, the quality of provided services did vary among different PMSCs (Hammes, 2011). It remains questionable whether the ability of PMSCs to take over military tasks of NATO member states is a parameter for

the increased PMSC deployment throughout the ISAF mission. PMSCs have been involved in human rights abuses (Shameem, 2010; Hammes, 2011), armed stand-offs with national forces of other NATO member states (Isenberg, 2012a), and corruption practices (Chlosta, n.d.). PMSCs occasionally acted directly against the interest of NATO member states (Hammes, 2011), and the deployment of PMSCs proved counter effective with NATO's counterinsurgency strategy (del Prado, 2010).

The increased deployment of local PMSCs in the second half of the ISAF mission, led to various complications for NATO member states such as insufficient levels of experience of the local contractors, and questionable loyalty towards the NATO member states who deployed them (Hammes, 2011). These disadvantages of both international and local PMSCs raise the question whether PMSCs are capable of executing military operations professionally, and thus whether the ability of PMSCs to take over tasks is the reasons for additional deployment. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected.

4. Conclusion

In this chapter the answers of the five sub questions are combined to answer the main research question. The answer is followed by a plea against the deployment of PMSCs by NATO member states, and an suggestions on how to limit the need for PMSCs. The initial expectations are discussed, followed by suggestions for further research.

Answer to the main research question

Financial, political, and military factors motivate NATO member states to deploy PMSCs in NATO missions.

Financial motivations

Financial motivations for PMSC deployment by NATO member states are based on the perception that PMSCs are less expensive than national forces in performing (military) tasks. This perception is due to the lesser costs of deploying PMSCs instead of national forces in the short run and the absence of high expenses in the long run. PMSCs are perceived to be less expensive because they compete with other firms to win a specific contract, thus lowering their prices. In order to be awarded with the contract, PMSCs try to limit the costs of executing this task, making their deployment cheaper than national forces who do not compete with others over the contract. PMSCs are perceived to be less expensive as well in the long run.

Political motivations

NATO member states are politically motivated to deploy PMSCs due to domestic pressure against the participation in NATO missions. Domestic pressure forces NATO member states to reduce the number of deployed national forces and the casualties those forces sustain. These forces are replaced by private contractors who execute the same tasks, allowing the states to participate with less internal national constraints. The deployment of local PMSCs strengthens economic development of Afghanistan and creates goodwill among the Afghan population, thus supporting political objectives of gaining (local) political support for the ISAF mission.

Military motivations

Military motivations for PMSC deployment in NATO missions are attributed to the PMSC's ability to support national forces by taking over various tasks. PMSCs provide better salaries to their employees than national forces, thus attracting well trained and experienced contractors. have the option to deploy rapidly, and to customise their service to the wishes of

the state. PMSCs who employ local contractors provide an additional advantage due to their familiarity with the area and local customs, thus providing an additional military advantage for their deployment.

Conclusion hypotheses

The presented hypotheses forming the theoretical framework of this thesis were not accepted. H1 can neither be accepted nor rejected given the absence of data on the overall deployment of PMSCs by NATO member states. The relation between the increase of both the USA national defence budget and the increase of the number of PMSCs the USA deployed, suggest that the decrease of national defence budgets is not needed in order to increase the number of deployed PMSCs. H2 cannot be accepted or rejected either. The absence of data on PMSC deployment by NATO member states throughout the ISAF mission made it difficult to analyse the relations between the decline in domestic political support for participation in NATO missions, and the increase of deployed PMSCs. H3 is rejected. In the ISAF mission, deployed PMSCs turned out to vary in the quality of provided services and occasionally lacked the ability to execute their tasks. Nevertheless PMSCs (incapable or not) have been increasingly been deployed during the ISAF mission mostly due to political and financial reasons.

5. Discussion

Reducing the deployment of PMSCs (Honours extension)

The consequences of PMSC deployment in NATO missions are mostly translated into practical consequences, and the advantages and disadvantages of PMSC deployment. From a normative perspective PMSC deployment is not a good idea because it leads to the loss of sovereignty. The importance of state sovereignty is explained, followed by arguments about why PMSCs challenge the state's sovereignty in theory, exemplified with experiences from the ISAF mission. The section concludes with suggestions for NATO member states on how to reduce or end PMSC deployment in NATO missions.

The sovereignty of a state is important and should not be sourced out. The sovereignty of a state can be divided in internal and external sovereignty. Internal sovereignty is the ability of a state to ensure the compliance to the law system within its territory through the use of force (Stenner, 2014). The monopoly on the use of military force by the State is an essential tool in stability of a nation. The enforcement of the law system ensures internal stability and equal treatment of all, which is fundamental for Western society such as a democratic political system (Heywood, 2014). This internal sovereignty and ability to enforce the law system is threatened as soon as other actors have the ability to use violence: the state might not be able to dominate the other actor resulting in the inability to enforce the law (Heywood, 2014; Stenner, 2014), and thus cannot hold actors accountable for the illegitimate use of force. In this respect terrorists, warlords, insurgents, and PMSC's are all a threat to the monopoly on the use of military force for the national state.

PMSCs are such a secondary actor who threaten the internal sovereignty of the state. Depending on the company and the tasks they get contacted for, the employees of PMSCs are armed for self-defence. Armed employees are given the ability to use force in order to perform the tasks they are delegated. These tasks, such as protecting areas from third parties, can clash with the state's right to enforce the law within its territory (Stenner, 2014). This is troublesome, especially in states such as Afghanistan, where national forces already have trouble with law enforcement and effective governance (Hammes, 2011). In contrast to national law enforcement actors, PMSCs are not linked to a nation and thus do not have the same motivations for the use force as a nation or the NATO alliance. This leads to questionable loyalties to the employer of the PMSCs, and the possibility of PMSCs turning

its back on the NATO member state (Hammes, 2011). The deployment of PMSCs by NATO member states forces the host state to allow private actors in its territory. Actors, who not seldom turn out to be allied to the insurgents the host state is fighting (Hammes, 2011).

Besides the normative obligations against PMSC deployment, there are practical dangers of PMSC deployment as well. As can be concluded from the ISAF case study, PMSCs can switch their loyalty to other actors, are not always as well experienced and equipped as the PMSCs claim to be, and their deployment clashes with NATO financial, political, and military objectives.

NATO member states should increase their defence budgets, better justify their participation in NATO missions to their populations, and should use different methods than the deployment of national forces to contribute to NATO missions. These measures will increase domestic support for participation in NATO missions, while limiting the need for PMSC deployment. Increased defence budgets allow NATO member states to contribute more and better equipped troops to the NATO missions. Better justifications why the state should participate in NATO mission will increase the domestic support of both the parliament and the population. The reduction of political opposition supports NATO member states in participating NATO missions without having to outsource various tasks to PMSCs. NATO member states can consider different methods of participation without having to put national forces at risk such as delivering air support, financial aid, or intelligence. NATO member states can limit the deployment of PMSCs in NATO missions. If NATO and its member states are unable to execute missions without the use of PMSCs, they should wonder whether they should participate in NATO missions at all.

Initial expectations

The initial expectation was that PMSCs are steadily replacing NATO national forces in NATO missions due to their financial, political, and military advantages. This expectation is partly proven correct. On the one hand the conducted research has shown that the deployment of PMSCs has increased steadily during the course of the ISAF mission. On the other hand, domestic and international criticism has challenged this increase of PMSC deployment, and various actors, including NATO officials, have expressed their concerns related to the deployment of PMSCs by NATO member states.

Research on sensitive military topics

This thesis is based on qualitative primary sources such as government reports, news articles, and secondary sources such as peer reviewed articles of scholars. Nevertheless there are limitations to the conducted research. The topic of PMSC deployment by NATO member states in the ISAF NATO mission is highly specified topic. This, in combination with the fact that the emergence of PMSCs in NATO mission in general is relatively new, limits the amount of available (qualitative acceptable) sources. The sources about the PMSC deployment in the ISAF mission are mostly focused on the USA and its deployment of PMSCs. Other NATO member states are rarely researched, reducing the amount of sources available to compare the deployment of PMSCs by other NATO member states. Another factor limiting the conducted research is the sensitivity of military operations. In the name of national security, NATO member states are not eager to provide information on the topic of PMSC deployment in NATO missions. The states that do provide information are legally requested or forced to do so by controlling institutions, for example the United States house congress. PMSCs themselves are cautious to provide information on their employees, tasks and objectives, mandates, and/or contract details. This leaves gaps in needed data on the amount of deployed PMSCs.

Suggestions for further research

Further research has to be conducted to test the three used hypotheses on PMSC deployment by NATO member states can be accepted or rejected. Further testing of the presented hypotheses will contribute to the creation of a theory and/or a model which will structure the relation between financial, political, and military parameters, and the motivations for NATO member states to deploy PMSCs in NATO mission. Other interesting topics for further research are the role PMSC lobbyists have in shaping perceptions of the (dis)advantages of PMSC deployment, and what the long term consequences of PMSC deployment in NATO missions are for the host state.

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