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**Kelimelerin Gücü:
Türk Dış Politikasında Söylem**
*The Power of the Words:
Discourse in Turkish Foreign Policy*
Gökhan Koçer

**Global Governance of Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crimes:
Challenges and Complexities**
Terrörizm ve Ulusötesi Organize Suçların Küresel Yönetimi: Zorluklar ve Karmaşıklıklar
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**Changing Role of Private Military Contractors
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Selçuk Denek

**Orta Doğu'nun Kırmızı Jeopolitiği Bir Dini
Terör Organizasyonu Olarak DAES**
*The Red Geopolitics of the Middle East:
ISIS as a Religious Terrorist Organization*
Bora İyiat



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ARAŞTIRMA MAKALESİ / RESEARCH ARTICLE

Changing Role of Private Military Contractors after the Cold War

Selçuk Denek¹

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Abstract

In recent years, with the globalising world, countries are trying to obtain too many military equipment such as nuclear weapons, continental rockets, and high-tech armours. On the other hand, every service is becoming more private which used to belong to the government in history. After the cold war era, security details such as border security, presidential protection, abroad activities, intelligence, and security strategy are provided by private organisations. This study tries to explain what is 'cold war?', what is a private military company? What is the change for the private military industry after cold war?

Keywords: Cold War, Private Military Companies, Private Military Industry

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Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönemde Özel Askeri Şirketlerin Değişen Rolü

Öz

Küreselleşen Dünya ile birlikte son yıllarda birçok ülke nükleer silahlar, kıtalararası balistik füzeler ve yüksek teknoloji silahlar gibi gereğinden fazla askeri materyale sahip olmaya çalışmaktadır. Diğer taraftan, geçmişte devletlerin yapmakla sorumlu olduğu tüm hizmetler artık özel sektör tarafından yapılır hale gelmeye başlamıştır. Soğuk savaş döneminden sonra ise sınır güvenliği, devlet başkanlarının korunması, sınır ötesi faaliyetler, istihbarat ve güvenlik stratejileri gibi askeri konular artık özel sektör kuruluşları tarafından karşılanmaktadır. Bu çalışmada “soğuk savaşın ne olduğu”, “özel askeri şirketlerin ne anlama geldiği” ve “soğuk savaş sonrası dönemde özel sektörün sunduğu güvenlik endüstrisinin değişimi” ile ilgili konular açıklanmaya çalışılacaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Soğuk Savaş, Özel Askeri Şirketler, Özel Güvenlik Endüstrisi

Introduction

After World War II, there were two political blocks in the world. The first one was the USA and the second one was the Soviet Bloc. These two sides created a new system and a new political situation which is called the Cold war. With all these transformations, world politics became more stressful and full of tension with the development of too many military arms such as nuclear, biological, chemical, and high-tech weapons. Both sides always improved new strategies against each other. The cold war continued until the collapse of the Soviet Union. During the cold war, the USA and Soviet Bloc threatened each other by showing their power which included nuclear weapons and long-distance missiles. However, military technology was improving at an enormous speed at the time that the world has never seen. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, countries all over the world reduced their military spending which was redundantly high during the cold war.

On the other hand, all over the world, some countries started using Private Military Companies (PMCs) to protect themselves rather than depending on the states' military. Especially, the USA and the UK focused on PMCs to protect themselves and to implement their foreign policy in problematic areas. PMCs are not formal state organisations and can act more flexible and independent than the armies of the states. Because of that, governments use PMCs where they would like to intervene and invade without any formal and

international responsibility. For those reasons, governments focus on PMCs more than regular armies after the cold war. Furthermore, neoliberalism started to spread out all over the world after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The effects of liberalism on governments and the militaries led PMCs to become more common and popular. In light of this information, this article will try to explain cold war, private military companies and private military industries.

1) What is the cold war?

The term “cold war” does not define an actual war such as WW1 and WW2. Cold war indicates the period which points a struggle on global power based on the ideological concept between the USA and the Soviet Union after WW2. In that period, the USA became a hegemonic power representing liberal values, whereas the Soviet Union representing socialism. When Gorbachev took Control of the Soviet Union, he implemented transparency (Glasnost) in the political area, and transformation (Perestroika) in the economic area but these attempts failed due to various reasons. That situation resulted in severe consequences in world politics and the Soviet Bloc’s regime. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, East and West Germany were united, regimes in Eastern Europe started to change and Warsaw pact collapsed. Problems that occurred after the Gulf War period caused a complicated situation for the region’s future. As soon as Slovenia and Croatia declared that they break off from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Yugoslavia got into an internal war and dispersion process. After the Soviet Union collapsed, ‘Commonwealth of Independent States’ was founded (Ciftci, 2009). If we try to give a detailed definition of cold war, we could say that the cold war is a fear and balance policy without any real war activity between the USA and the Soviet Union, that is created by using the other states and groups, generating local conflicts and regional battles, internal conflicts, exporting new regimes, spreading their ideas and benefits with ideological propaganda and provocation, and fostering permanent tension and arming (Kantarci, 2012).

Consequently, the Cold war is a political case between two ideologies which are socialism and liberal thought. The two poles in the cold war era were the USA and the Soviet Union. They always threatened each other by using their alliance. During the Cold War, several countries tried to strengthen their military and obtain new weapons in order to protect themselves against another pole.

2) What is a Private Military Company?

After the Cold War, the period called ‘the new world order’ started with the ‘great promise’ of the USA which triumphed as the

sole hegemonic power. This promise is about spreading democracy all over the world. The great promise realised by creating a new world which is full of injustice, poverty, and violence. The great promise consisted of political and military tools implementing humanitarian intervention and governance. On the other hand, with 9/11, the USA gave up the humanitarian and democratic tools and a new concept called “just war” emerged to deal with terrorism and rogue states (Zabci, 2004). After 9/11, the Private military companies had a new and great opportunity and this situation was a perfect milestone for them. When United Nations lost its former power, and when there was a judicial emptiness about international and national law for PMCs, the organisations called Private Military Companies whose only goal is profit, find a perfect opportunity to be active. History of a mercenary is as old as the history of war.

On the other hand, PMCs are a fact for about the last 20 years and PMCs are going to become a vital part of international security. These companies are in a full of the secret industry which is the centre of a cryptic relationship existing in a political and commercial network which is not still exactly known in details. PMCs fulfil a particular job in the global market. These companies are based on profit, and they provide professional services which are about military and war. PMCs fulfil essential services for a military skill such as ‘logistic support, operational tactic attacks, strategic planning, obtaining and analysing secret intelligence, operational support, defence and battle in conflict areas, military training and technic assistance for the military’. PMCs generally located in the USA, the UK, and South Africa and they are generally active in Africa, Latin America, and Asia (Zabci, 2004). PMCs usually have experienced soldiers who are retired from the army (Brooks, 2000). If a soldier is retired or kicked out from the army, he might try to find a new job which needs his skills about war or any other military stuff. PMCs are the perfect opportunity for those people. After the Cold War era, all over the world, countries which could not protect their border, presidents, and citizens with their army, began to look for new protectors which indicate PMCs. It means that states could not ensure their people’s safety in the border of the country or an international area (Wulf, 2011). Because PMCs are profit based companies, anyone, any organisation, or any state could hire them, if they pay enough money, to use for whatever they want. For example: If a state or an organisation has a security problem about something, PMCs provide the military support, and the main point is that the support is not supplied by another country or an organisation such as UN, it is provided by the global market (Singer, 2001).

Singer has a clear definition of PMCs, and he summarised all the things we try to explain. “PMCs are profit-driven organisations that trade in professional services intricately linked to warfare. They are corporate bodies that specialise in the provision of military skills - including tactical combat operations, strategic planning, intelligence gathering and analysis, operational support, troop training, and military technical assistance.” (Singer, 2001: 186). PMCs are working in a difficult position. It is hard to define the activity which could be the correct things to do for PMCs. These security companies could provide all the equipment for military operations such as high-tech weapons (Prado, 2011). PMCs could also supply strategy, logistic, and any other services for those hiring them.

On the other hand, PMCs are not only for active security or attack staff; they are also for inactive security (Prado, 2011). We could easily understand that PMCs have an incredible impact on international and national security issues since the Cold War. PMCs have enhanced their role in the international area which is not based on two spheres. All over the world, with insecure atmosphere, weak states, actors which are not related to states, have to look for powers called PMCs to supply them security which could not be provided by national armies (Alexandra et al.,2008: p. 1-2.). According to Singer:

“PMFs are ordered along pre-existing corporate lines, usually with a clear executive hierarchy that includes board of directors and shareholdings. This creates a tested, efficient, and more permanent structure that can compete and survive in the global marketplace.” (Singer, 2003: 45)

With all these explanations, PMCs are great organisations for those who seek security and military support. On the other hand, PMCs have some problematic issues. According to Frost ‘These include their lack of accountability, and transparency, a suspicion that they pose a threat to human rights, a suspicion that they will be able to circumvent international humanitarian law, and many others’ (Frost,2008: p.43). In addition to this, the increase of PMCs in the global market and global war areas result in too many unethical situations all over the world for the law of war (Runzo,2008: p. 56).

Consequently, PMCs are profit based organisations and anybody or any organisation could hire them to protect themselves and to use their power to get what they want. PMCs are different from mercenaries because PMCs are organisations that have a structure, hierarchy, policy, accounting or any other regularity for a private company but mercenaries are individuals. PMCs appeared after the cold war era when the world was lacking security. Increasing insecure

areas and situations have a significant impact on PMCs' development. PMCs do not only provide weapons, but they also provide strategy, logistic support, planning or any other military and security issues. As a result, according to Singer (2001: p.201-202) "the industry is divided into three types: (1) military provider firms which focus on the tactical environment such as control, command, leadership, and experience, (2) military consulting firms which provide advice and training such as strategic, operational, and organizational analysis, and (3) military support firms which provide supplementary services such as logistics, technical support, and transportation." If an organisation or a state would like to invade or intervene somewhere, they could use PMCs for humanitarian purposes, but they could also use PMCs for only politic intentions. Last but not least, there could be an essential problem about human rights and international law for war when PMCs are active in any area. As a result, PMCs were the war trend in that era, and they are still used all over the world for any purposes.

3) Private Military Industry During and After Cold War

In the 1990s, international interest for PMCs appeared along with activities of 'Executive Outcomes' which is famous in the private military industry and has a relationship with international energy and mining companies (Zabci, 2003). Especially after the Cold War, private military and security industry have changed substantially. The industry was getting bigger than the 1990s. This industry had only 3000 contractors who were working for the USA in Iraq after the 1990s. The value of these contractors was about 300 billion dollars. In Iraq, about 50000 staff who are related to PMCs are working for the USA. Private military industry supplies logistic, strategy, and battle issues in around 110 countries. This industry could be hired by the UN, non-governmental organisations, states, rebel groups, and any other organisations which need tools for war or security (Steinhoff, 2008: p.19). In the Cold War era, a number of states allied with the USA or Soviet Russia. These two blocs determined world politics at that time. For those reasons, states support one of the powers to provide them with military based equipment. The weak states could not defend themselves in a dangerous situation which indicates national conflicts and global threat. Each bloc protected their allies against each other. However, when the Soviet bloc was collapsed, there was no power to provide security for allies of the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, the same problem also applied to the allies of the USA. Since there was no threat of the Soviet Union, the USA started to decrease the support provided to its allies. (Alexandra, 2008: p.89). All of these explanations mean that the USA won the

Cold War and there was no threat streaming from socialism. With these incidents, neo-liberalism could get an excellent opportunity to be active. Eventually, PMCs appear on the global market to sell their services and military tools for whoever needs because weak states need protection and they could buy any military tools or hire any security services easily. We said that privatisation increased with neo-liberalism after the Cold War, and it makes the international area more free for PMCs. As we know, according to capitalism or neoliberalism, the free market makes the companies better, and PMCs which are private profit based organisations could improve themselves faster than governmental military. PMCs provide modern military tools better, cheaper and faster than formal military (Brooks & Cherov, 2008: p.120). In addition to this, after the Cold War, PMCs became more popular.

On the other hand, the USA and the UK could easily use those PMCs to intervene in any region or area to support 'humanitarian and democratic!' structure or government. If they hire PMCs to intervene, no international organisation could prove that the intervention is originated from those countries because they are not a formal military organisation, and they are not formally related to any government. Anyone who has money or any resources to pay the bill for security services could hire PMCs. If a war or a war-like situation is occurring in somewhere operated by the PMCs, the UN could not implement any sanctions or penalties to countries who are actually responsible.

First PMC was founded by British Special Air Services' staff in the 1960s (Ballard, 2007: p.43). As we said, PMCs increased after the Cold War. According to Ballard:

"One can see that the emergence of PMCs is not a recent phenomenon. However, in the post-Cold War era, the private military industry has become a force unlike any in the past. Never before have private companies been so advanced and organised. Thus, since the end of the Cold War, the use of PMCs has grown exponentially, and such firms now play a pivotal role in international relations." (Ballard, 2007: p.43).

After the Cold War, without two centre power, national and regional conflicts rise too much. However, there were too many powerful weapons which were oversupply from the Cold War, all over the world. In addition to these, as soon as the Cold War ended, big powers of the world reconstructed their armies, and with this progress, millions of military staff start to work for private organisations (Ballard, 2007: p.44). PMCs do not only supply regular weapons or security services but they also could provide high tech

weapons or tools for military such as ‘the B-2 bomber, F-117 stealth fighter, Apache helicopter, KC-10 refuelling tanker, U-2 reconnaissance plane and the unmanned Global Hawk reconnaissance unit’ which are used in Iraq (Yeoman, 2003). With all this information, we could easily claim that PMCs and their roles have changed after the Cold War. Wars and conflicts which happened after the Cold War era particularly appear in the weak states which have socio-economic and political problems. These conflicts and wars are left on the PMCs’ control, and the weak states think that using PMCs is a benefit from international resources. In that situation, the remarkable point is that PMCs’ fundamental skill is combat, conflict, and fight (Yalcinkaya, 2006). PMCs make money from combat activities which causes too many problems, and thus it makes their legal existence controversial. Because PMCs prefer the presence of conflicts and wars rather than peace to sustain their profit, the basis of PMCs is opposing the peace (Shearer, 1998: p.73). Another proof for that case, Akcinaroglu and Radziszewski (2012: 815) claim that “most PMCs strive for insecurity because it allows them to expand their profit. We argued that as business ventures PMCs strive to secure profit, but that opportunity structures greatly determine their behaviour”. As a result, it could be claimed that PMCs are not only used for humanitarian aims, security, or war, but also they are used for profit, political aims, and ideological goals.

Conclusion

PMCs do not have an old history as mercenaries. Mercenaries have been used for decades, but PMCs are active for about 40 years. PMCs became popular after the cold war. In the cold war era, the two blocs create their security system to protect their allies and themselves. PMCs were not used too much in wars or conflict areas during the cold war. There were not too many PMCs during the cold war era. Even if they were active, they did not have great capacity, quality, and activity as after the cold war. They might only work for superpowers during the cold war, but after the cold war, everyone could use PMCs. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, neoliberal ideas spread all over the world for any issue and area to be active. Neoliberal thought promotes privatisation in all areas such as military, security, etc. With those developments, PMCs appeared on the global market to perform their capability. After the cold war, the activities of PMCs skyrocketed because the underdeveloped states lacked the means to provide their own security. PMCs could be hired by anyone, any organisation or any states because they are profit based companies which do not have political or ideological thoughts. PMCs only think of their own benefits, not public or humanitarian

benefits when they sign a contract. PMCs which appeared after the cold war have the excellent capability because they could provide weapons and security better, cheaper, faster than governments' military which needs too much bureaucracy to be active.

Furthermore, PMCs could also supply more qualitative and high-tech military tools than a regular army. Furthermore, PMCs' activities are not formally related to any states, and it is basically impossible to find out who rented them. For that reason, PMCs could intervene or invade any area without any formal letter or permission. On the other hand, PMCs could create unsecured areas or situations to make a profit which is not ethical.

Consequently, after the cold war, PMCs have undergone too many changes by enhancing their organisations, improving capabilities, being more active in any areas, developing more qualified military tools, making more profits, having more freedom, being more flexible, providing tools cheaper, and faster. On the other hand, PMCs are not always used for good things. They are also used for political and ideological aims. With all these explanations, it could be claimed that PMCs are great companies and they became the war and security trend in the global world after the cold war.

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