

Women, Peace and (Private) Security: Accounting for corporate actors in the perpetration and mitigation of gendered and racialized violence

Convenors:

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The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) framework, established through UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), is widely recognized as one of the most significant tools to recognize the impact of conflict on women and to address gender equality towards the prevention of violence within the realms of peace, justice and security. However, while the WPS agenda has largely focused on states, multilateral institutions, women's organizations as well as national and non-state militaries, the framework has not yet systematically paid attention to and included corporate and private actors and their relationship to gendered and racialized violence. Academic scholarship on gendered and racialized violence specifically and WPS more broadly, too, is still limited in the analysis of the role of corporate actors in perpetrating, mitigating or inhibiting violence in (post)conflict countries. This workshop therefore aims to go beyond state-centric and institutionalist frameworks, shifting the attention to the underexplored but exponentially growing link between global corporate actors, such as private military and security companies (PMSCs) and transnational corporations (TNCs), and gendered and racialized violence. Research shows that corporate actors cannot be considered neutral global players but rather constitute an emerging challenge to international peace and security shaping (post)conflict contexts. PMSCs have perpetrated gendered and racialized violence, including sexual abuse, trafficking and rape and TNCs have increasingly been criticized for being involved in the forceful displacement of local, largely Indigenous, populations from resource rich territories through e.g., their collaboration with armed groups.

The goal of this workshop is to 1) engage in important knowledge exchange across disciplinary and experiential thinking, 2) begin to collectively establish new ways of thinking about how to advance the WPS agenda that considers the role of market actors and market logics that increasingly underpin war transitions towards peace and 3) build a strong community of like-minded scholars and practitioners through regular knowledge exchange and mentoring in writing that extends beyond the workshop.

We invite scholars from various disciplines, including, but not limited to, international relations, political economy, security studies, political geography, political science and anthropology. Submitted abstracts may address the following subjects:

- Gendered/racialized perspectives on natural resource extraction, conflict and corporate actors
- The private security industry in (post)conflict settings and its gendered/racialized implications
- Accountability of the private industry in national and international security frameworks
- The global North-South divide: Gendered/racialized workings of neoliberal security policies.