

District Security Committees and the oversight of Private Security Organisations in Uganda: A Case of Wakiso and Kampala Districts

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Abstract

Reliance on private security organizations to complement the state security architecture has become a norm in contemporary public law and order management. This norm has resulted in an unprecedented growth of the private security sector, hence necessitating legislative and oversight interventions. In several states, there are different levels of and actors in the oversight of private security that have not been fully understood. This article presents the findings of the study on the oversight role of Uganda's District Security Committees (DSCs) over Private Security Organizations (PSOs). It is based on 50 in-depth interviews involving members of DSCs, PSO supervisors, PSO supervisors at police headquarters and private security contractors in Wakiso and Kampala districts.

The article argues that, although Uganda has an elaborate legal framework for the oversight of PSOs at the different levels, there are many gaps at the district level, which should be addressed to ensure improved accountability and effective service delivery in the private security sector. The article is organized as follows: Part 1 provides the conceptual and contextual backgrounds to the discussion on the private security sector. Part 2 delves into the legislative and oversight frameworks for the private security sector in Uganda to foreground the discussion on the role of DSCs. Part 3 provides an analysis of the mechanisms used by the DSCs to oversee the activities of PSOs. Part 4 examines the challenges militating against DCSs' effective oversight of PSOs. Part 5 is a conclusion that also puts forward some recommendations for improvement of the oversight of PSOs at the district level.

Keywords: *Private security, private security companies, private security organizations, private military companies, private security industry*

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