

Geneva, 20 June 2022

Mr Simon Walker  
Chief, Rule of Law and Democracy Section  
Haut-Commissariat des Nations unies aux droits de l'homme (HCDH)  
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Palais des nations  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

Dear Mr Walker,

Following your invitation, we are happy to inform you that the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance - DCAF in cooperation with the University of Copenhagen would be honoured to contribute to the Fourth Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, which will be held on 24 - 25 November 2022.

The theme “Strengthening democracies to build back better: challenges and opportunities” is particularly relevant as many countries have introduced emergency measures to support the use of private security in public health responses to the pandemic. These emergency provisions restricting freedom of movement and assembly, authorising harsh stop, search and detention powers, and imposing severe curfews, are also at risk of enduring, and are likely to impact the most marginalised.

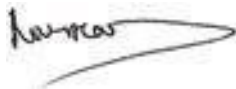
An important part of DCAF and the University of Copenhagen’s most recent work has been on the impact of the pandemic on the security sector, and in particular on the private security industry. With increased reliance by States and other actors on private security throughout COVID-19, human rights concerns linked to the industry intensified. Emergency measures implemented by states as a temporary response to the pandemic sanctioned new and sensitive roles for private security. Such measures facilitated easier recruitment and procurement of providers thereby increasing the risk of human rights violations occurring.

The Forum will provide an opportunity to reflect on the human rights impacts caused by private security governance during and following the pandemic and look at avenues for

strengthening regulatory frameworks to reverse the current trend of reducing protections and safeguards linked to the industry.

Kindly find an elaboration on the topic in the attached document. We look forward to our continued cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



*On behalf of DCAF*  
Jean-Michel Rousseau  
Deputy Head of Division  
Business and Security Division  
Geneva Centre for Security Sector  
Governance - DCAF



*On behalf of the University of Copenhagen*  
Dr Sorcha MacLeod  
Associate Professor & Marie Skłodowska Curie Fellow  
Centre for Private Governance (CEPRI)  
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Annex: Input on the topics to be discussed during the fourth session of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, under the theme “Strengthening democracies to build back better: challenges and opportunities”: *Private security, the rule of law, and human rights during and in the aftermath of COVID-19*