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## Role of NSA (Non state actors) in the ICBL (International campaign to ban landmines)

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### ***Abstract***

The purpose of this research article is to highlight the efforts of the global community organisations in limiting the acts of NSAGs in using APMs. At the advent of the end of world war, majority of armed conflicts were no longer fought between states but it took place within the territory of a single state, involving one or few non state actors (hereinafter referred to as NSA). In such conflict, NSAG (non state armed groups) challenged the peace building process of a state with violent and aggressive acts. The life of civilians is endangered at the cost of their lives. NSAG have committed severe violation of IHL which included the rigorous use of APM (Anti-personnel mines)<sup>1</sup>. APMs are indiscriminate and considered inhuman weapons. Inspite of adoption of Ottawa Treaty in 1997, there was no sign of cooperation by NSAG in the use of APMs. Global norms of banning NSAG to use APMs have significantly failed.

***Keywords: NSAG, NSA, APM, DoC, Geneva call, Landmines***

<sup>1</sup> Rogers James E. The International Deployment of Shame, Second best responses, and Norm Entrepreneurship: The Campaign to ban landmines and the Landmine Ban Treaty - The University of Arizona – Arizona journal of International and Comparative Law

## Introduction

Geneva Call<sup>2</sup>, an NGO based in Switzerland has taken the pioneering initiative in engaging NSA to comply with the norms of IHL and Human Rights Law. It began with the development of a Deed of Commitment<sup>3</sup> (DoC) for Adherence to a total ban on APM and for cooperation in mine action. Through signing DoC armed groups commit themselves to stop use, production, stockpiling and transfer of APM. In addition to a ban on APM and general idea of humanitarian norms, DoC also specifies implementation and monitoring mechanism. Geneva Call involves NSAG directly in obligation to observe humanitarian norms.

In June 2009, representative of 28 NSAGs<sup>4</sup> met in Geneva and discussed possibilities for binding armed groups to IHL. 41 groups from Asia, Africa and Europe have signed DoC The engagement of Geneva call towards bringing the NSAGs towards compliance<sup>5</sup> on use of APMs was astounding in two manner-

- It functioned as a norm entrepreneur unlike other NGOs or organisation.
- DoC has established an innovative mechanism with which NSAGs can commit themselves to Humanitarian laws.

The very notion of an adherence to mine ban norm by NSAG<sup>6</sup> seems at the first glance to contradict conventional assumption that NSAG have in principle only limited interest in accepting norms. The success of Geneva Call signified that NSAG can no longer be considered as a hindrance to peace building governance of a country.

During the last decade NSAGs have played a major role in majority of armed conflicts which caught the eye of the international community. Violations of IHL norms, unprecedented use of APMs, created a deadly plague which scourges the entire humanity as weapons of mass destruction. The APMs<sup>7</sup> have been designated as the cruelest and most insidious weapons of our age. Every day in some part of the world civilians are killed and maimed by these mines.

The role of NSA has been much more ambivalent because through the use of military force, they attack the core function of a state which inevitably hampers the peace building process of

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<sup>2</sup> LANDMINE MONITOR REPORT 2000 Toward a Mine-Free World available at <https://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/pdfs/g/general/lmmon2k.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.un.org/disarmament/anti-personnel-landmines-convention>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/38576/full\\_version.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/38576/full_version.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Verlinde, Patrick; Lewis Adam Miles-*The joint multi-sensor mine-signatures project: an opportunity for testing data fusion algorithms!* [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4049721\\_The\\_joint\\_multi-sensor\\_mine-signatures\\_project\\_an\\_opportunity\\_for\\_testing\\_data\\_fusion\\_algorithms](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4049721_The_joint_multi-sensor_mine-signatures_project_an_opportunity_for_testing_data_fusion_algorithms)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/GICHD-resources/info-documents/guide-to-mine-action-2014/GICHD-guide-to-mine-action-2014-Abbreviations.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Alternatives to Anti-Personnel Landmines <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA418691.pdf>

a nation. In view of the Geneva Call's<sup>8</sup> experience concerns and motives articulated by NSA is fundamental. One such instance was SPLM formed in 1983 to fight the structural differences between the north and south Sudan. SPLM has since been deemed as one of the first NSAG in signing a peace treaty in 2005 to established themselves as part of joint government of national unity.

However, considering NSAGs and its use of APMs as a major threat to non armed civilians has been of paramount consideration to the international community. They inhibit the economic development of a country in long term and destroy the infrastructure of a country. The goal towards building a mine free world is far from being achieved in reality. APMs have always been of strategic importance to NSAGs and the complete renunciation of the deterrent use of it by the armed groups would come at a great cost of their survival.



<sup>8</sup> Geneva 24th and 25th March 2000 International Conference Centre of Geneva CIG Geneva [https://www.genevacall.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2013/11/20000325\\_engaging\\_nsa\\_in\\_landmine\\_ban\\_pioneering\\_conference1.pdf](https://www.genevacall.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2013/11/20000325_engaging_nsa_in_landmine_ban_pioneering_conference1.pdf)