



INTERNATIONAL STABILITY OPERATIONS ASSOCIATION

isoa code of conduct

Version 13.1

Preamble: Purpose

This Code of Conduct seeks to establish consistent ethical standards for members of International Stability Operations Association operating in complex environments so that they may contribute their valuable services for the benefit of international peace and human security.

Additionally, Signatories will be guided by all pertinent rules of international humanitarian and human rights laws including as set forth in:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- Geneva Conventions (1949)
- Convention against Torture (1975)
- Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions (1977)
- Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (1977)
- Chemical Weapons Convention (1993)
- Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (2000)
- Montreux Document on Private Military and Security Companies (2008)
- International Code of Conduct for Private Security Providers (2010)
- UK Bribery Act (2010)

Signatories are pledged to the following principles in all of their operations:

1. Human Rights, Property and the environment

- 1.1. Signatories shall respect the dignity of all human beings and adhere to all applicable international humanitarian and human rights laws.
- 1.2. Signatories shall take appropriate measures to minimize loss of life and destruction of property and cultural elements, and harm to the environment.

2. Transparency

- 2.1. Signatories shall operate with integrity, honesty and fairness.
- 2.2. Signatories shall, to the extent possible and subject to contractual and legal limitations, be open and forthcoming on the nature of their operations and any conflicts of interest that might reasonably be perceived as influencing their current or potential ventures.
- 2.3. Nothing contained in this Code of Conduct shall require Signatories to disclose information in violation of: applicable law; contractually required confidentiality; or any legally recognized privilege.

3. Accountability

- 3.1. Signatories, understanding the unique nature of the complex environments in which many of their operations take place, fully recognize the importance of clear and operative lines of accountability to ensure effective peace and stability operations and to the long-term viability of the industry.

- 3.2. Signatories shall support effective legal accountability to relevant authorities for their actions and the actions of their personnel. Signatories shall proactively address infractions, and to the extent possible and subject to contractual and legal limitations, cooperate with official investigations into allegations of contractual violations and breaches of international humanitarian and human rights laws.

- 3.3. Signatories shall take legally appropriate action if their personnel engage in unlawful activities. For serious infractions signatories should report such offences to the relevant authorities.

4. Clients

Signatories shall only work for legitimate, recognized governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and lawful private companies.

5. Safety

Signatories, recognizing the often high level of risk inherent to operations in complex environments, shall strive to operate in a safe, responsible, conscientious and prudent manner and shall make their best efforts to ensure that their personnel adhere to these principles.

6. Personnel

6.1. Personnel: Rights

- 6.1.1. Signatories shall act responsibly and ethically toward their personnel and provide instruction on applicable legal framework(s) and guidelines on ethical conduct.
- 6.1.2. Signatories shall ensure that personnel are fully informed of risk associated with their employment, as well as terms, conditions and significance of their contracts in accordance with clearly defined company standards.
- 6.1.3. Payment of different wages to various nationalities shall be based on merit and national economic differential, and shall not be based on racial, gender or ethnic grounds.
- 6.1.4. Signatories shall not retain the personal travel documents of their personnel against their will.
- 6.1.5. Signatories shall always respect the right of personnel to terminate their employment.

6.2. Personnel: Resourcing

- 6.2.1. Signatories shall conduct all reasonable due diligence when vetting personnel to be fit, medically and psychologically, to perform their duties according to the terms of their contract.
- 6.2.2. Signatories shall, where appropriate, seek personnel that are broadly representative of the local population, while respecting the age-minimum standard of 15 years of age as defined by the International Labor Organization Minimum Age Convention (1973) for hiring. In the hiring

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of armed security personnel, Signatories shall respect the age-minimum standard of 18 years of age as defined by the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (1989).

- 6.3. Signatories shall provide their personnel with requisite equipment and materials along with proper supervision and training to compel them to conduct themselves humanely with honesty, integrity, objectivity and diligence and to not violate international humanitarian and human rights laws.
- 6.4. Signatories shall speedily and professionally comply with lawful requests from the client for cancellation of a contract and for safe extraction of deployed personnel.
- 6.5. Signatories shall not engage or allow their personnel to engage in the act of trafficking in persons.
- 6.6. Signatories shall not engage in sexual exploitation or abuse.

7. Insurance

Foreign and local personnel shall be provided with health and life insurance policies appropriate to their wage structure and the level of risk of their service as required by law.

8. Control

- 8.1. Signatories shall endorse the use of detailed contracts specifying the mandate, restrictions, goals, benchmarks, criteria for withdrawal and accountability for the operation.
- 8.2. Operations shall be predicated on missions mandated by a legitimate authority in accordance with international law.

9. Ethics

Signatories shall be responsible for establishing a corporate culture that promotes awareness of and adherence by all personnel to the principles of this code.

10. Support of International Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Society

- 10.1. Signatories recognize that the services relief organizations provide are necessary for ending conflicts and alleviation of associated human suffering.
- 10.2. Signatories shall, to the extent possible and subject to contractual and legal limitations, support the efforts of international organizations, humanitarian and non-governmental organizations and other entities working to minimize human suffering and support reconstructive and reconciliatory goals of peace and stability operations.

11. Rules for the Use of Force

- 11.1. Signatories that could potentially become involved in armed hostilities shall have appropriate Rules for the Use of Force established with their clients before deployment, and shall work with their clients to make any necessary modifications should threat levels or the political situation merit change.

- 11.2. All Rules for the Use of Force shall be in compliance with international humanitarian and human rights laws and emphasize appropriate restraint and caution to minimize casualties and damage, while preserving a person's inherent right of self-defense.

12. Weapons Accountability

- 12.1. Signatories using weapons shall emphasize on accounting for and controlling all weapons and ammunition utilized during an operation and for ensuring their legal and proper accounting and disposal at the end of a contract.
- 12.2. Signatories shall refuse to utilize illegal weapons, toxic chemicals or weapons that could create long-term health problems or complicate post-conflict cleanup and will limit themselves to appropriate weapons common to military, security or law enforcement operations.
- 12.3. Signatories shall only obtain weapons through legal channels and shall not engage in illicit arms trading, and shall comply with United Nations arms embargos.

13. Partner Companies and Subcontractors

Due to the nature of complex environments, Signatories often employ the services of partner companies and subcontractors to fulfill the duties of their contract, therefore:

- 13.1. Signatories shall select partner companies and subcontractors with the utmost care and due diligence to ensure that they comply with all appropriate ethical standards, including the ISOA Code of Conduct.
- 13.2. Signatories shall encourage the recognition of and compliance with the standards contained within the ISOA Code of Conduct by partner companies, subcontractors and the industry as a whole.

14. Application and Enforcement

- 14.1. This Code of Conduct is the official code of ISOA. Signatories shall maintain the standards laid down in the ISOA Code of Conduct in addition to the standards and provisions of Signatories' codes of conduct.
- 14.2. The enforcement of the ISOA Code of Conduct is guided by the ISOA Enforcement Mechanism, the complaint system available to the public at-large. Signatories who fail to uphold any provision contained in this Code may be subject to dismissal from ISOA.
- 14.3. Signatories shall endeavor to inform personnel, clients and subcontractors of the ISOA Code of Conduct and ISOA Enforcement Mechanism. Signatories shall endeavor to publicize both to local communities.
- 14.4. Signatories shall have an effective mechanism for personnel to internally report suspected breaches of international humanitarian and human rights laws and violations of other applicable laws or the ISOA Code of Conduct. Signatories shall not retaliate against any person who reports in good faith and on reasonable grounds such suspected violations.

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