Pro-Government Militias Database (PGMD) Codebook
Version 2.0 – May 2018

INCOMPLETE DRAFT

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Uganda

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Sudan

Serbia

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Acknowledgement

The PGMD v2.0 is funded by the European Research Council under the European Union’s Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) / ERC Grant agreement n° 336019. The first version of the PGMD was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), UK, RES-062-23-0363, with additional support from the Working Group “Human Rights, Governance and Conflict” at the Centre for the Study of Civil War (CSCW) at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO). We are particularly grateful to our research assistants Gelila Enbaye, Shirin Ernst, Berit Haupt, Paula Jöst, Florian Postel, and Antje Roth.
Introduction

The Pro-Government Militias Database (PGMD) v2.0 contains information about organised armed groups that are identified by documentary, media and other publicly available sources to be pro-government but are not part of regular state security forces. Consistency across sources is checked, but no further claims are made about the accuracy or completeness of this information from these publicly available sources. For some groups there is substantial reporting and information, for others less information is available and there is more missing data.

The information covers 180 countries during the time period from 1981 to 2014 and is not restricted to on-going conflicts. The main unit of observation is the pro-government militia (PGM).

Other labels used for such groups are “militias”, “paramilitary groups”, “irregular forces”, “death squads” or “vigilantes.” Additionally, the dataset includes some private military companies, which are also labelled “military contractor”, “private security company” or “private military firm,” if they satisfy the definition of pro-government militias outlined below and were identified in the search process.

Operational Definition of a Pro-Government Militia (PGM)

We define a pro-government militia as a group that

1. is identified by the source as pro-government or sponsored by the government (national or sub-national),

2. is identified as not part of the regular security forces,

3. is armed and

4. has some level of organisation.

Criterion 1: The group is identified by the source as pro-government or sponsored by the government, either national or sub-national. Evidence that a group does not oppose the government or that the group shares an enemy with the government is not sufficient for it to be considered pro-government.

Our focus is on national governments and the individual ministerial or institutional links between the government and the militia, but if a group is identified as allied with or backed by a sub-national government and the national (e.g. federal) government is neutral in its position towards this group, it is included as a PGM. However, if sources describe the national (e.g. federal) government as opposed to this group, then it is not classified as a PGM.

We focus on domestic groups, meaning pro-government groups that are active within their own borders. Groups can be sponsored or trained by other countries, but they need to be linked to the government of the territory in which they are active. For private military companies, this means that they are recorded as being present in the country
they are operating in, i.e. the country for which they contracted to operate on the government’s side.

**Criterion 2**: The group is not the regular state security force as described in government information or other sources on armed forces and police, although the group may operate with the regular state security forces, or even be composed of members of the security forces organized clandestinely as an unofficial or informal group (death squads). This relationship with the regular forces might include, in addition to sharing of personnel as in the above example, information sharing, joint operations or training. Not identified as PGM are therefore the police, regular military forces or special units that are part of the military.

**Criterion 3**: The group is armed and equipped for violence, but does not have to commit violence to be included. This criterion is not limited to firearms; some groups are equipped with machetes or clubs.

**Criterion 4**: The group has some evidence of organisation (for example an identifiable leader, or name, or a geographical, ethnic, religious or political basis) to exclude a “flash” or spontaneous mob.

When an existing group fails to fulfil any of these criteria, then the group is coded as terminated as a PGM according to our definition. The motives of the individual members of the PGM, or motives of the PGM as a group, whether financial, ideological, religious, or ethnic, are not a criterion for identifying a PGM according to our definition.

### Importance of the Project

Pro-government militias can supplement the regular state security forces, and are sometimes referred to as force multipliers. Because of the increasing role of non-state actors generally, and the significant presence that they have had in conflicts across countries and cultures, it is important to collect information on these types of groups and seek to improve transparency on their links to governments. Militias or irregular armed groups are sufficiently common to be described in international law. Article 4 of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War provides some protection for “members of other militias and members of other volunteer corps … belonging to a Party to the conflict...”. Article 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court separates the organised violence of these types of groups both from mob violence and from the government authorities. By focusing on these organisations, the PGMD allows researchers and policymakers to obtain a more comprehensive estimate of the repressive apparatus of a country than that provided by relying on the size of formal security forces alone.

### The Missing Data Problem

The PGMD contains open source information about pro-government armed groups obtained from LexisNexis searches of news sources from around the world.
include transcripts translated into English in BBC World Summaries of local news, Agence France Presse, Xinhua General News Service, and major international newspapers. Search terms included “government militia”, “paramilitary”, “government death squads”, “government irregular forces”, and “vigilante” and returned numerous documents, many of them off-topic. While this broad search strategy was heavily labour-intensive, we reduced the risk of missing information. Still, we expect that one problem with the dataset is the likely under-representation of pro-government militias.

As we rely on news sources to describe the link of a group to a government, the other difficulty is the potential misspecification of a PGM’s relationship to the government by the source. Using multiple sources through LexisNexis across time is likely to reduce this problem. If the source is ambiguous about the relationship between the national government and the group, or if different sources contradict each other in their classification of the link between the government and the group, more information is sought from country-specific sources and academic research.

**Structure of the Database**

The PGMD v2.0 consists of a relational data structure that links different tables representing various aspects of the data, from information about the armed groups themselves, such as their membership and target characteristics, to the documentary evidence researchers used to create the dataset. The relational structure allows separate data matrices to be constructed for any combination of these tables.

The main unit of analysis of the PGMD v2.0 is the pro-government militia. The PGMD v2.0 codes a variety of group characteristics, which are time-invariant for the lifetime of the group. This online relational data structure is the most comprehensive version of the data. In addition to this version, we have prepared two downloadable datasets:

1. The PGMD v2.0 Group Data file uses the group as the unit of analysis and contains basic information on each group;

2. The PGMD v2.0 Country-Year Data file uses the country-year as the unit of analysis and contains basic information on the activity and existence of PGMs per country and year.
PGMD Variables

Variables in the PGMD Group Data

Country name
The country where the PGM is active and the country to whose government the PGM is linked. If a PGM operates in a disputed border region that is subject to competing claims by more than one country, then this region is treated as being part of the country that the PGM is from and claims sovereignty over.

PGM name
The name used in the source to identify the PGM or name of the private military company (PMC) where a group can be identified as such. If the PGM is unnamed, the coders have assigned a descriptive name. Repeated non-specific mentions of militias in a country are included under one PGM if there is no necessary reason to consider that the source is referring to a new or separate militia.

Name assigned by coder
This variable indicates with a Yes/No value whether the PGM name was assigned by the coder rather than taken from the sources.

PMC
This variable identifies whether the group is a private military company or a private security company. If the group is identified as a PMC, then all recorded information about this group refers to the PMC’s activities in that particular country. For example, if a report lists year X as the year in which the PMC was formed, but lists year Y as the year in which the PMC became active in the country of interest, then we record year Y as date of formation.

The Creation of PGMs

Date formed or first mentioned
This variable records the exact date when the PGM was formed or first mentioned or the contract started. The group might have been newly created on this date or an already existing group might have become a militia as defined in our criteria outlined above. For example, if a rebel or opposition armed group becomes pro-government because of a change in government, then this variable codes the date of becoming pro-government, not the earlier date in which the group formed as a rebel organisation.
In some cases it might not be clear who or which group forms the government for a particular time period. To identify the government, which is necessary to be able to identify an armed group as being pro-government, we rely whenever possible on the coding decisions and case description provided by Archigos: A Database of Political Leaders (see Goemans, H. E., et al. 2009. "Introducing Archigos: A Dataset of Political Leaders." Journal of Peace Research 46(2): 269-283.)

The information on creation of the PGM is recorded as precisely as possible. If a source refers to a range of time instead of a specific time point (for example referring to ‘the 1980s’ instead of a specific year), then the earliest time point of the given range is coded (e.g. ‘the 1990s’ is coded as 1990, etc). The format in which the date is presented is YYYY-MM-DD.

**Degree of accuracy of date formed**

As we code an exact date for ‘date formed’, this variable indicates the level of detail the information on PGM formation is based upon, whether the sources reported the exact day, the month, the year or the decade. If the date formed refers to the date of the first mention of the group rather than the date it was actually formed, then degree of accuracy is coded as the year.

**Did the PGM exist as a group before becoming a PGM?**

This variable assesses whether the PGM existed as a group, irrespective of the kind of group, prior to becoming a PGM as defined above. The PGM could have existed as an unarmed group, like the Malawi Pioneers initially set up to work on agricultural development, or armed grass roots self-defence group, like the Rondas Campesinas in Peru, or armed rebel group. If the sources do not refer to a group that preceded the PGM, we code the absence of such information as indication that the PGM did not exist as a group before becoming a PGM unless we have reason to assume the contrary (yes, no, unclear, no information).

**If the PGM existed as a group before, was it armed?**

This variable assesses whether the PGM existed as an armed group prior to becoming a PGM according to the PGM definition laid out above (yes, no, unclear, no information).

**Former rebel group**

This variable indicates whether the PGM was coded as a rebel group in that country before becoming a PGM. The information on the rebel group is taken from the UCDP Actor Dataset v.2.2-2015 (http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/ucdp_actor_dataset/). If the group previously existed as a rebel group, this field records the ID from the UCDP Actor Dataset. If the sources do not mention a rebel group that preceded the PGM, we code the
absence of such information as indication that the PGM did not exist as a rebel group before becoming a PGM unless we have reason to assume the contrary (UCDP ID, other, no, unclear, no information).

**Did the government create the PGM?**
This variable indicates whether the PGM was created or formed by the government (yes, no, unclear, no information). If a government arms a pre-existing group and/or aligns with a pre-existing group, then we do not code this as the government creating that PGM.

**If the government create the PGM, which institution was the main actor?**
This variable provides more specific details on who created the PGM, given that the PGM was created by a government actor (president/prime minister, sub-national executive, governing party, military, unclear, no information).

**Successor group**
In some cases a group undergoes a name change or the PGM itself is transformed into a new PGM. If a PGM has a successor group, then the name of this successor group is listed in this field.

**Details of PGM formation**
This text field presents additional information and details about the origins of the PGM whenever available.

**The Dissolution of PGMs**

**Date dissolved**
This variable records the date when the PGM was dissolved or the contract ended. A group is coded as being dissolved when it no longer fulfils any of the above identified criteria. This includes the disarmament or banning of the group by the government or its integration into the regular security forces. If a president or party ceases to be in government, then the PGMs affiliated with them also cease to be PGMs. Also, if regular forces, such as the police take action against or are in conflict with the group and if members are imprisoned for their group activities, we no longer classify the group as being pro-government, unless there is evidence of continued support by the executive (e.g. coup prevention). Groups can also cease to be classified as PGMs as a result of a border change. For example, armed groups linked to the Indonesian government were active in East Timor, fighting the independence movement. These pro-Indonesia groups
end in our dataset with the establishment of the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor created by the UN Security Council in October 1999. Even though some of these groups were still active within East Timor after this date, they were then linked to the Indonesian government. Therefore, they were not active in their own border anymore and no longer fit our definition of a domestic pro-government militia.

If the leader of a PGM changes and the group still operates under the same name, we do not code this PGM as terminated. The same is true, when the leader of a PGM creates a new splinter group, while the original group continues to operate under the same name but with a new leader, as in the case of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army – United. The group splintered in 1994 and its leader Riek Machar renamed his small group of supporters. Lam Akol broke with Riek Machar and became the new chairman of SPLM/A-United.

In some cases it might not be clear who or which group forms the government for a particular time period. To identify the government, which is necessary to be able to identify an armed group as being pro-government, we rely whenever possible on the coding decisions and case description provided by Archigos: A Database of Political Leaders (see Goemans, H. E., et al. 2009. "Introducing Archigos: A Dataset of Political Leaders." Journal of Peace Research 46(2): 269-283.)

The information is recorded as precisely as possible. If a source refers to a range of time instead of a specific time point (for example referring to ‘the 1990s’ instead of a specific year), then the earliest point of the given range is coded (e.g. ‘the 1990s’ is coded as 1990). The format in which the date is presented is YYYY-MM-DD.

**Degree of accuracy of date dissolved**

Similar to the variable on degree of accuracy of date formed, this variable provides information on what level of detail the information on the termination date is based upon, whether the sources reported the exact day, the month, the year or the decade. When the end of a government is chosen as end date for the PGM, we code as accuracy of date dissolved the year, unless there is information that the PGM existed until the end of this government.

**Termination type**

We code details of why the PGM was coded as terminated. Reasons for termination are when one (or more) of our operational definition criteria cease to apply. We code the type of PGM termination as change in government, border change, PGM defects, government defects, integrated into regular forces, or disarmed.

**PGM becomes rebel group**

We record whether a PGM becomes a rebel group after it ceases to be a PGM. This variable indicates whether the PGM became a rebel group after being a PGM. The
information on the rebel group is taken from the UCDP Actor Dataset v.2.2-2015 (http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/ucdp_actor_dataset/). If the group turned into a rebel group, this field records the ID from the UCDP Actor Dataset. If the sources do not mention a rebel group that form from the PGM, we code the absence of such information as indication that the PGM did not turn into a rebel group unless we have reason to assume the contrary (UCDP ID, other, no, unclear, no information).

**Termination**

This text field presents additional information and details about the termination of the PGM whenever available.

**Successor group**

In some cases a group undergoes a name change or the group itself is transformed into a new PGM. If a PGM has a successor group, then the name of this successor group is listed in this field.

**Link to Government**

**Government relation**

This variable describes the relationship that the PGM has with the government. While all groups in the database are pro-government, they vary with respect to the degree of formality and visibility of the link. In some instances the government tries to keep the group at arm’s length, while in other cases governments openly include these groups in legislation, reports and official documents. As an effort to capture this type of proximity to the government we use two categories, informal and semi-official PGMs. The main distinction between these two groups is how formally acknowledged the link is between the government and the PGM.

**Informal PGMs**

Informal PGMs are described as pro-government, government militia, linked to the government, government-backed, or government-allied. They may be armed or trained by the government. The key difference between informal and semi-official PGMs is that the link to informal PGMs is not officially or formally acknowledged. ‘Death squads’, even when closely linked to the government, are normally informal and clandestine, and are categorized as informal PGMs. Examples include the Janjaweed in Sudan, the Young Patriots in Cote d’Ivoire, the Ansar-e Hezbollah in Iran and the Interahamwe Militia in Rwanda during the early 1990s.

**Semi-official PGMs**

A semi-official PGM has a formally and/or legally acknowledged status, in contrast to the looser affiliation of informal PGMs. A semi-official PGM might be sub-ordinate to the regular security forces, but is separate from the regular police and security forces. As
such, the link between the PGM and the government is more formal and institutionalized, for example by being recognized and acknowledged in official and legal documents of the state. But the group is identified as a distinct organisation from the regular security forces as with Village Defence Committees in India.

Paramilitary does not enter the PGM dataset when the term paramilitary is used to refer to regular forces, i.e. police units with military status, as in the case of the French gendarmes or Italian carabinieri.

**Government link**

This variable specifies the nature of the link between the PGM and the government authority to indicate which part of the state controls the PGM. A PGM can have multiple links to government. We identify four possible links:

*Person/Minister*

The PGM is linked directly to a specific person, such as the president or a minister. For example, this might be the case if a PGM was created directly by the president.

*Political party*

The PGM is linked to a political party.

*Name of Party Link:* if the PGM is linked to a political party, then the name of that party is recorded in this variable.

*State (institution)*

The PGM is linked to an institution of the state, such as the executive, including the defense ministry.

*Military (institution)*

The PGM is linked to the military. If a PGM is linked to the institution and the state is a military regime, then the link is both state (institution) and military (institution).

*Sub-national government*

The PGM is linked to a sub-national government, such as a state in a federal system.

**Equipment or training**

We record whether the PGM has been trained by government forces or has received equipment, such as arms or provisions, from the government. **PLEASE NOTE** that this variable does, therefore, NOT only code training by the government. This variable does NOT distinguish whether the PGM received training OR equipment from the government ONLY. Therefore, this variable CAN NOT be used to measure one of these two elements separately.
Joint operations or shared information
We record whether the PGM has received information from the government related to the PGM’s mission or whether the PGM has carried out operations jointly with the government, for example with regular police or army units. Information sharing captures the government sharing information with and passing information on to the group. If a group passes information on to the government (which the government might not have requested nor potentially have wanted to have), without the government sharing information, then this does not classify as information sharing.

Shared personnel
We record whether members of the security forces are also active members of the PGM. Examples of such personnel overlap are instances where soldiers out of uniform participate in death squads.

Types of material support
We record the sources of material support that the PGM has received. Multiple sources of material support are possible. As the range of sources was unknown prior to the search, coders could add categories of support as they found them. We record a wide range of sources of finance, payment, supply or maintenance, including among others corporations, landowners and foreign governments.

State sponsor
We record if a foreign country is reported as supporting the PGM financially or materially, such as providing training, weapons or payment.

Other connection
This text field captures any other reported connection not identified under the above categories.

PGM Characteristics
Location
This field records the main location of PGM activities as precisely as the sources allow.
**Force strength**

This information consists of two fields. We record minimum and maximum figures for the force strengths of the PGM. If only one figure is given by the source, then we record this figure as maximum. Since the data are time-invariant, we capture estimates of force strength when the group was at its largest, not estimates of smaller sizes that only refer to an early time period, for example. If PGM is a PMC, force strength refers to the staff of the PMC that were active in the particular country, not the strength of the PMC as a whole.

**Membership**

This field records the characteristics of PGM members described in the sources. Any type of membership is recorded, irrespective of the importance of a particular characteristic relative to the whole group. Multiple categories are possible. Examples of membership include ethnicity, religion, ideology, children, security forces and urban.

**Primary membership**

While the variable *Membership* identifies any characteristics of the PGM members, the variable *Primary membership* captures the main feature that defines and characterizes the group’s members. This variable is constrained to identify one of seven possible membership characteristics, which are explained below. Information on the purpose or the behaviour of the group is not used to infer membership characteristic. For example, if a PGM is created by a political party or incumbent to intimidate opposition voters during elections, then the primary membership of this PGM is not automatically political.

*Local*: the defining feature of the PGM members is that they are civilians that are recruited, stationed, and active within their communities. PGMs with primary local membership are deployed in the same areas they are recruited from. If the evidence suggests that they are not active within their own communities, then primary membership is not coded as local. If there is no information on deployment but only information on PGM members being locally recruited, we assume that they are also primarily locally deployed and hence code primary membership as local. Similarly, if the sources refer to local deployment within a specific town or region, without further specifying where the members come from, we assume that they are locally recruited, unless there are indicators that would suggest otherwise. Examples include the Edo State Vigilante from Nigeria.

*Ethnic*: The defining feature of the PGM is that their members are recruited along ethnic lines. This does not imply that they are recruited from only one ethnic group. An example is the Interahamwe Militia in Rwanda.

*Religious*: The defining feature of the PGM is that their members are recruited along religious lines. An example is the Ismaili Militia in Afghanistan.
Ideological: The defining feature of the PGM members is that they share a common ideological identity or a common ideological goal, such as the Revolutionary Committees in Libya.

Nationalist: The defining feature of the PGM members is that they share a common nationalistic goal. An example of nationalist membership is the Patriotic League in Bosnia-Herzegovina or several militias in Indonesia fighting against the independence of East Timor.

Political: The defining feature of the PGM members is that they share a common political goal or political identity. Examples include PGMs that are formed by political parties and where their members share a common political goal. Examples are the Young Pioneers or the Young Democrats in Malawi.

Non-civilian: The defining feature of non-civilian PGM members is that they are off-duty militias or are drawn from parallel forces. They might be regular police or military if they act outside their formal organization, or former members of the regular security apparatus and mercenaries. PMCs are coded as having non-civilian members, as they consisted of paid mercenaries. Examples include the Ninjas in Algeria and Indonesia or the Commando Rodrigo Franco in Peru.

If none of these characteristics fit the description of the group, primary membership is either coded as other, unclear, or no information.

If a PGM belongs to an umbrella PGM, for which primary membership can be clearly identified, we code the same primary membership for this individual PGM if there is no further information about primary membership of this PGM or no details that would suggest otherwise. The same counts the other way around. If we have information on primary membership for individual PGMs, which are grouped together in an umbrella PGM, for which we have no information about primary membership being different, we use the same primary membership for the umbrella PGM as well (see the Pro-Integration Fighters PPI from Indonesia as an example).

If members of one (previous) PGM also belong to or move to another PGM, we do not automatically code the same membership of this new group as for the old one. For example, the first PGM might be characterized by ethnicity but consists also of non-civilians. Some of the non-civilian members might be mobilized for a second PGM. If they are recruited due to their experience in violence rather than due to their ethnicity, the primary membership of the second PGM would be non-civilian and not ethnic like in the first PGM.

Alternative primary membership

Some PGMs have two equally important defining features of their membership, where one cannot clearly rank one above the other. In these cases, we identify an alternative primary membership, using the same categories as for the variable “primary membership” listed above. This variable is only filled in if it seems to distort the presentation of the PGM membership if only one primary category was selected. It does
not provide a ranking. If for one PGM both primary membership and alternative primary membership are coded, then both are judged to be of equal value. Examples are the Awakening groups in Iraq, with primary membership being coded as ethnic and religious, and the Anti-Maoist vigilantes in Nepal, for which primary membership is identified as local and ideological. For most PGMs, this variable is left blank.

**Ethnic membership**

If membership is identified as ethnic, then we identify the name of the ethnic group as given by the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) dataset (Cederman, Min, Wimmer, 2009, "Ethnic Power Relations Dataset", 2014 version online at http://www.icr.ethz.ch/data/epr). If the group given by our sources is mentioned as a sub-group of an EPR-identified group, we list the EPR group as the main group and provide the name of the sub-group in the field “Other”. If we cannot identify a group, we use the Ethnolog website to try to match the name of the ethnic group. If our sources do not provide a specific name for the ethnic group, we try to establish a link via other connections, such as leader of the group.

**Quality of Information for Ethnic Membership**

If the PGM is recorded as having ethnically based membership and we have identified the name of the ethnic group, we identify with this variable whether the information about the name of the group was given by the PGMD sources or inferred through a link, such as the leader of the group (given, inferred, not applicable).

**Target**

This field records the group that is alleged to be targeted by the PGM. Multiple targets are possible. As the range of alleged targets was unknown prior to the search, coders could add categories of target as they found them. The list of possible targets is wide-ranging. It includes, for example, ethnic groups, civilians, unarmed political opposition and armed opposition groups.

**Ethnic Target**

If target is identified as ethnic, then we identify the name of the ethnic group as given by the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) dataset (Cederman, Min, Wimmer, 2009). If the group given by our sources is mentioned as a sub-group of an EPR-identified group, we list the EPR group as the main group and provide the name of the sub-group in the field “Other”. If we cannot identify a group, we use the Ethnolog website to try to match the name of the ethnic group. If our sources do not provide a specific name for the ethnic group, we try to establish a link via other connections, such as the ethnicity of the opposition group that is targeted.
Quality of Information for Ethnic Targeting
If the PGM is recorded as targeting an ethnic group and we have identified the name of the ethnic group, we identify with this variable whether the information about the name of the group was given by the PGMD sources or inferred through a link, such as the ethnicity of the targeted opposition group (given, inferred, not applicable).

Intimidation of Ethnic Group
If purpose is identified as intimidation of ethnic group, then we identify the name of the ethnic group as given by the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) dataset (Cederman, Min, Wimmer, 2009). If the group given by our sources is mentioned as a sub-group of an EPR-identified group, we list the EPR group as the main group and provide the name of the sub-group in the field “Other”. If we cannot identify a group, we use the Ethnolog website to try to match the name of the ethnic group. If our sources do not provide a specific name for the ethnic group, we try to establish a link via other connections, such as the ethnicity of the opposition group that is being intimidated.

Quality of Information for Ethnic Intimidation as PGM Purpose
If the PGM is recorded as having the purpose to intimidate an ethnic group and we have identified the name of the ethnic group, we identify with this variable whether the information about the name of the group was given by the PGMD sources or inferred through a link, such as the ethnicity of the targeted opposition group (given, inferred, not applicable).

Purpose of PGM
We record the purpose of the PGM. Multiple categories are possible. As the range of purposes was unknown prior to the search, coders could add categories of purpose as they found them. Examples of purpose include the protection of state institutions, protection of the leader, protection of national borders and integrity or self-defence and security.

Other
This text field records any information about the PGM that is not captured by the above variables.

Pieces of Evidence
The Database contains over 3,500 key sources that have informed the coding decisions. To improve transparency of our coding decisions, each coding decision is supported
with one piece of information. For reasons of parsimony we did not include all reports on PGMs that we found but only included in the database one item for each (or multiple) coding decisions. The pieces of evidence can be accessed via the online PGMD for each PGM.

PGM Activities
For each PGM we record each year for which we found evidence of PGM activity. Examples of such activities include anything from training exercises, to operations and acts of violence. This indicator is used to generate several country-year variables.

Datasets
The online PGMD is the most complete version of the data and allows users to access the information, including the pieces of evidence, using various filters. Two files are available that contain the core information and are downloadable in ready-to-use formats.

PGMD Summary File
The PGMD Summary File uses the pro-government militia as the unit of analysis. It contains the following variables:

TO BE COMPLETED

PGMD Country-Year File
This dataset uses the country-year as the unit of analysis. It contains the following variables:

TO BE COMPLETED

Interrupted PGMs
Some PGMs fall out of our definition as being a PGM and then become a PGM again. This special cases are listed below, since the setup of our dataset only allows for one start and one end date.

Sudan
Fertit Militiamen 1987-01-19 until late 1990, restart again in 1997
Afghanistan
Ittehad Islami; 29/06/1992 - Sept 1996, Dec 2003-
Jamaat Islami: Jan 1979-Sept 1996; Feb 2002-

Congo-K

Haiti
Ton Ton Macoutes Type 1: 12 Feb 1986-02-12 until 1991-02-97; 1991-09-30 - 1994-10-19

Iraq
Popular Army/ Jerusalem Army was a PGM from 1970-01-01 to 1991-02-28 and from 1992-07-02 until 2003-04-09.

Nepal

Pakistan

Bangladesh
Bangadesh Chhatra League: 23 June 1996 - 12 July 2001; 6 Jan 2009-

Somalia
Raskamboni/ Raas Kaambooni, 20/08/2012 – 31/01/2013, 01/09/2013-

Country Notes
Below we provide information about specific countries and PGMs as additional information on the coding decisions.

Afghanistan
For Afghanistan, we assume that our data suffers from under-reporting and therefore underestimates the number of PGMs in the country.
A number of private security/military companies have had contracts in Afghanistan to provide a range of security and security-related services including training of the Afghan
National Police and Afghan National Army, logistical support, maintenance, intelligence, de-mining, and poppy eradication. These companies include DynCorp, World Security Initiatives, MPRI, Aegis, Global Risks Group, Armour Group, Ronco, Saladin Security, Gardaworld. One source has identified 90 Afghan and foreign companies by name, but estimates the total number of companies operating in Afghanistan is as high as 140 (see Ulrike Joras and Adrian Schuster eds., Private Security Companies and Local Populations: An Exploratory Study of Afghanistan and Angola, Swisspeace, April 2008). In 2007, the Afghan Interior Ministry estimated the number of private security companies at 60 with some 11,000 weapons (“Private guns for hire,” National Post, 22/11/2007). These companies are not the principal focus of this research project and search procedures. There is a separate and well-established literature on these companies (see Peter W. Singer. 1997. Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military. Cornell University Press; Deborah Avant. 2005. The Market for Force. Cambridge University Press).

The UN/Japan Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration and Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups programmes in Afghanistan have had unintended consequences. By June 2008 the government claimed to have disbanded 300 illegal armed groups (see UN, Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme). To avoid these programmes, one option for government officials and heads of militias is the device of a private security company – see Sherzai in the database. Foreign-owned companies also use local militias and by one estimate ‘80% of PSC staff in Afghanistan have a militia background” (see Swisspeace 2008, 13).

**Burundi**

The militia ‘Sans Echec’ is not included in the database. This group is a Tutsi militia, supporting the Tutsi military but fighting against the Hutu government. They supported Buyoya’s election campaign in 1993, but he came second in the election. The group was dissolved when Buyoya took power in a coup in 1996, so they ceased to exist at the time when they would have become a PGM.

**Brazil**

Batalhão de Operações Policiais Especiais (BOPE) and the Pacification Police Units (UPPs) were not included in the database as they appear to be part of the regular forces. Off-duty policy militias, such as the League of Justice and the Rio Das Pedras were not included in the database because the national government does not support them (despite some support from some local governments).

**Chile**

The militia ‘Trizano’ is excluded due to insufficient information. There is some evidence that it is a death squad linked to the government (see eg. NYT 20 Nov 1987).

**Colombia**

The militia ‘Black Eagles’ (Aguilas Negras) is excluded due to insufficient evidence on link to government. The Washington Post (2008-09-25): "All this reinforces the suspicion about a connection between some people close to Uribe and some very
unsavory characters,” said Michael Shifter, a senior analyst who tracks Colombia for the Inter-American Dialogue, a policy group in Washington.

**Comoros Islands**

The Presidential Guard is not coded due to lack of information. Appears to be regular forces and, at time, anti-government.

**Cote d’Ivoire**

The militia ‘Patriotic Grouping for Peace’ is excluded. Although the group is linked to a member within the government, the group was banned by the government in 2003 (US State Department Report 2006), which is prior to the first date of the group’s mention.

Not included are the Dozos and the Amadé Ouérémi militia due to insufficient information on the link to the government.

For the following groups we were unable to gather sufficient evidence for coding:

- Patriotic Group for Peace / Group of Patriots for Peace (GPP)
- Front for the Liberation of the Greater West (FIGO / FLGO)
- Centre-West Security Front (FSCO)
- Association of We Patriots (AP-WE)
- Ivoirian Movement for the Liberation of Western Cote d’Ivoire (MILOCI)
- The Greater West Resistance Union (UPRGO)
- Resistance Front of the Greater West (FRGO)
- Anti-Terrorist Forces (FAT)
- MI - 24
- Rapid Intervention Force (FIR)
- Special Force for the Liberation of the African World (FS-LIMA)
- Patriots’ Union for the Total Liberation of Cote d’Ivoire
- National Coalition of Cote d’Ivoire’s Resistance Fighters (Conareci)
- People’s Liberation Force
- Union of Resistant Patriots of the Greater West (UPERGO)
- Union of Patriots for the Total Liberation of Cote d’Ivoire (UPLTCI)
- Group of Fighters for the Liberation of Cote d’Ivoire (GCLCI)
- CNLB
Croatia

Hrvatske Obrambene Snage (HOS) is not included because it was the armed wing of an opposition party and they did not appear to be active within Croatia.

Egypt

The ‘Highlander Militia’ is excluded due to insufficient information.

Ethiopia

- Jailbreakers: Not included due to very limited information; not clear whether group was armed or organized, government support unclear.
- Pro-Mubarak vigilantes: Unclear whether armed, information too sparse
- Army-backed vigilantes: information too sparse
- Green Shirts: information too sparse

Indonesia

The following groups, which were all active during the independence fight in East Timor, were not included due to insufficient information:

- Rajawali (Eagle)
- Firmi Merah Putih
- Saka Loromonu
- ARMUI Merah Putih
- Guntur Merah Putih
- Guntur Kailak
- Harimau Merah Putih
- Hametin Merah Putih
- Kaer Metin Merah Putih
- Darah Merah
- Jati Merah Putih
- Meo
- Morok
- Mahadomi
- 57/75 Junior

Iraq

The ‘Mujahideen Khalq’ organization is not included as it is an Iranian exile organization and the target is the Iranian regime.

Kenya

Kenya has a large number of political militias, which are generally linked to individual politicians, but are not clearly pro-government. These groups are not included. This applies to Mungiki, which was supposed to be financially supported by members of the
cabinet in 2007/08, but they are generally labelled as “outlawed”, are fought by the policy and the President is explicitly in opposition to the group. Hence, the group is not included in the PGMD.

The group ‘Kanga Squad’ is excluded as it is seen as part of regular police force.

**Mexico**

The ‘Political Investigations’ Group is not included as it is based on the testimony of one individual only.

**Mozambique**

‘Community Police’ is not included due to insufficient evidence of being pro-government.

**Myanmar**

Border Guard Force is not included since it appears to be a regular group within the military.

Ka Kwe Ye-kky is not included because this group was dissolved in 1973, prior to begin our database.

**Nepal**

In accordance with Polit IV coding for Nepal, we used 16 May 2006 as the end date of the King’s rule, when the legislature removed the King’s executive powers.

**Nigeria**

Multiple Nigerian groups are excluded:

- Awkuzu Community Vigilante: not included due to insufficient information about link to government.
- Biu Community Vigilante Group: not included due to insufficient information about link to government.
- Delta State Vigilante Group: not sufficient evidence on being armed.
- Hisba Guards: no indication that the group is armed.
- Kaduna State Vigilante Group: not sufficient evidence on being armed
- Kano State Vigilante Group: not sufficient evidence on being armed.
- Operation Sweep: Not included as a special force within the regular security apparatus.
- Operation Zaki: Not included as a special force within the regular security apparatus.
- Osun State Vigilante Group: not sufficient evidence on being armed.
- Robe State Vigilante Group: not sufficient evidence on being armed.
Philippines

The following groups were not included due to insufficient information on whether they were armed, linked to the government or existed after 1981:

- Negros’ Concerned Citizens’ Group to Fight Insurgency
- Remnants of God
- Ituman ("the BlackOnes")
- Putian ("The White Ones")
- Pula-Puti ("Red-White")
- Knights of Rizal
- Philippine Divine Missionaries for Christ
- Rock Christ
- White Rock
- Power of the Spirit
- Alpha Omega
- Walay Sapatos (No Shoes)
- Tres Cantos (Three Corners)
- Salvatore
- Dalan sa Langit (Way to Heaven)
- Missionaries for Social Transcendental Inc. (MSTI)
- Philippine Benevolent Missionaries Association
- Counter-Insurgency Command (CIC)
- Special Anti-Terrorist Group (SAGT)
- Kilusan Laban sa Komunismo (Movement Against Communism)
- New Filipino Crusaders
- Alsa Bayan
- Guerilyang Tagapagtanggol ng Masa (Guerrillas Protecting the Masses)
- Kilusan ng Pilipinong Magsasaka (Filipino Farmers Movement)
- People's Militia Force (PMF) in Central Luzon
- Guardian Angels
- Bagong Alyansang Makabansa (Patriotic New Alliance, BANSA)
- Alyansa ng Magsasaka Labansa Komunismo (Alliance of Farmers Against Communism, ALMAKA) in Nueva Ecija
- Peace and Order Brigade in Pampanga
- KILCOM (Movement Against Communism)
- Movement Against Violence in Bicol
- Yellow Union, an Aquino-loyalist group in Masbate
- KATAD (Kapatiran ng mga MindorefioTungo sa Adhikaing Demokratiko
- Brotherhood of Mindorefios Advocating Democratic Principles
- ANAKPAWIS on Mindoro
- Magic Eye
- Youth Intelligence Group (organized by the Quezon City OIC Mayor)
- Association of Democratic Vigilantes and Concerned Entrepreneurs (ADVANCE)
- United Vigilantes Association
- People’s Liberation Organization (PLO)
Romania

The ’Vigilante Miners’ are not included as there exists insufficient evidence of organisation.

Serbia

- Serbia is coded from 2006 onwards.
- The group “Bridge Watchers” is not included. They were a pro-Serbian government group active on the bridge dividing Kosovska Mitrovica and Mitrovica Hospital, Kosovo, just after Kosovo’s independence (17 February 2008, based on the Archigos dataset).
- RS Ravna Gora Chetnik Movement is not include. This group was only active in Kosovo and founded in March 2008, after Kosovo’s independence.

Sierra Leone

- The Civil Defense Force included various ethnic militias (Gbethis, Donsos, Kapras), which are not separately listed. The Tamaporo and Kamajors are separately listed due to some diverging characteristics that could be identified from the sources.
- Between May 1997 and March 1998 President Kabbah – allied with CDF – was not in capital. Given the annual coding, CDF is listed as pro-government in 1997 and 1998.
- From May 1997-Feb 1998 the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council controlled the capital and were backed by RUF. Therefore, during this time period, the RUF is considered to be a pro-government armed group.
- Sandline employed to counter RUF during this period, but not included in the dataset as RUF formed part of the government during this period.
- The Movement of Concerned Kono Youth MOCKY not included. Though anti-RUF, it is not clearly identified as pro-government.

Somalia

Somalia is coded in the PGMD starting 20 August 2012, when the Federal Government of Somalia took over power from Somalia’s Transitional Federal Government.
- The United Rahweyn Movement is not coded as a PGM due to insufficient information about the link to government.

Sudan

In 2005, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) granted South Sudan a semi-autonomous status and established peace between the Khartoum government and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). Nevertheless, the SPLM/A does not join the Sudanese army and is not pro-government after 2005, as it still supports the
idea of an independent South Sudan and does not work for the Khartoum government. Therefore, it is considered to be a rebel group and not a PGM. Some of the PGMs in Sudan merge with the SPLM/A after 2005 (South Sudan Unity Movement/Army, South Sudan Defence Forces, Murle Forces, Fertit Militiamen) and consequently become part of this rebel group. In this instance we code the PGMs as becoming rebel groups and the termination type as "PGM defects". The reported UCDP Actor ID in these cases is the actor ID of the SPLM/A. For further information, see also the pieces of evidence provided in the database for the South Sudan Unity Movement/Army, South Sudan Defence Forces, Murle Forces and Fertit Militiamen.

Thourjikany Forces is not included due to insufficient evidence; possibly small splinter group of the South Sudan Defence Forces (SSDF).

If the leader of a PGM changes and the group still operates under the same name, we do not code this PGM as terminated. The same is true, when the leader of a PGM creates a new splinter group, while the original group gets a new leader and still operates under the same name. This happened in the case of the Sudan People's Liberation Army – United. The group splintered in 1994 and its leader Riek Machar renamed his small group of supporters. Lam Akol broke with Riek Machar and became the new chairman of SPLM/A-United. For more information on this case, see also the details of termination and the pieces of evidence provided in the database for this PGM.

South Africa

- 31 Battalion and 32 Battalion are excluded as they appear to be part of regular forces.
- Koevoet is not included, as it is unclear whether this is a special unit within the regular forces; the group was integrated into police force in March 1990; active since 1979, evidence refers to activities only outside of South Africa.

Uganda

- The Black Mambas are not included in the database as they appear to be part of the regular forces.
- Operation Wembley is not included in the database as this appears to refer to a mission of regular forces and not a separate group.
- The Violent Crime Crack Unit (VCCU) is not included in the database as this appears to refer to a mission of regular forces and not a separate group.

Ukraine

Since the fall of President Yanukovych in February 2014, many splinter groups and battalions were fighting on the side of the Ukraine government against the separatists in the east of the Ukraine. For most of them, however, we could not establish a link to the Ukraine government and were therefore unable to include them in our dataset.
United Kingdom

There is evidence of collusion between security force units and members of the loyalist paramilitary group Ulster Defence Association in Northern Ireland in late 1980s in particular. Some individuals were linked to the British government at Force Research Unit level, but it is not clear that the group was. The group is also not identified as “pro-government” by the sources. This is clearly a difficult case but due to the absence of support for the group itself being pro-government, we did not include the UDA in the dataset.

Although there were government informers in the groups, the groups are not identified as pro-government and there is no evidence of government ministerial knowledge of the collusion (Guardian 18 April 2003).

United States of America

Evidence suggests that the State Defence Forces are unarmed, except for in Alaska. There is no documentary evidence of operations in which armed groups have been active.

Venezuela

Francisco Miranda Front was not included due to lack of information.

Yugoslavia

The Muslim Defence Force is not included as they are not pro-government.

Zimbabwe

The Upfumi Kuvadiki (Wealth to the Young) is not included due to insufficient evidence of the group being armed.