

Opening Statement by the International Code of Conduct Association (ICoCA)

*Sixth Session of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group
7 April 2025, Geneva*

Mr. Chair Rapporteur, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the International Code of Conduct Association (ICoCA), I would like to express our sincere appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the Sixth Session of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group. We commend the Chair Rapporteur and Member States for their continued commitment to elaborating the content of an international regulatory framework—without prejudging its nature—relating to the activities of private military and security companies.

ICoCA welcomes the revised fourth draft of the instrument as the basis for negotiation and looks forward to further contributing constructively to this session's discussions.

The International Code of Conduct Association is a multi-stakeholder initiative created to promote responsible provision of security services and to raise private security industry standards globally. Our mandate is to oversee implementation of the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers, a set of human rights-based principles for private security operations in notably complex or otherwise high-risk environments.

ICoCA brings together governments, private security companies, civil society organisations, and clients of security services. Our approach is grounded in accountability, transparency, and collaboration across sectors. Through certification, monitoring, capacity building and grievance mechanisms, we help ensure that security providers operate in line with international human rights and humanitarian law standards.

The need for such standards is clear. Private security actors operate in fragile contexts, conflict zones, and along sensitive points in global supply chains. When providers fail to act responsibly, the consequences can be serious—violations of rights, harm to local communities, reputational and legal risk for clients, and diminished trust in state and international institutions.

On the other hand, when security providers operate responsibly and in line with international norms such as those outlined in the International Code of Conduct, the benefits are widely shared. Communities are safer. Human rights are respected. Businesses can operate securely and sustainably. Governments and consumers can have greater confidence in the integrity of supply chains.

ICoCA supports this vision through practical, field-based engagement. Our work is global. In recent months, we have collaborated with stakeholders in the European Union, Latin America, Southern Africa, South East Asia and Ukraine. These initiatives focus on improving human rights due diligence, building local capacity, and enhancing accountability in private security operations.

The fourth draft instrument under negotiation today covers many of the same elements that ICoCA addresses through its mandate. These include licensing and oversight mechanisms, operational

standards, grievance processes, and public transparency—all critical tools in ensuring responsible conduct by security companies.

Given our extensive operational experience and engagement with both regulators and providers, ICoCA is well positioned to support States in addressing many of the practical challenges raised during these negotiations. We understand what it takes to translate principles into practice. We see how effective regulation, complemented by voluntary standards and credible oversight, can drive real change on the ground.

Looking ahead, we stand ready to work with governments on the implementation of the principles emerging from this process. ICoCA's experience since 2013 in fostering cooperation between public and private actors, and in setting recognized and credible standards globally, is a valuable existing resource for States seeking to operationalise the final instrument.

In closing, I reaffirm ICoCA's strong commitment to this process. We appreciate the open and inclusive nature of the Working Group and remain available to provide input and support. Our Association stands ready to assist the Chair Rapporteur, Member States, and other stakeholders during this session and beyond, drawing on our experience and expertise to contribute to raising security standards globally.

Thank you.