

## **Will to fight of private military actors**

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Résumé ou extrait : "In Syria, Ukraine, several African countries, and other conflict hotspots around the globe, private contractors are operating on behalf of, yet are ostensibly separate from, the Russian state. Reliance on these actors allows Russia to expand its military footprint while maintaining plausible deniability of direct involvement in major combat operations and competition short of armed conflict. The United States and its allies may be able to counter these actors and diminish their will to fight through cognitive maneuver, a concept that emphasizes changing minds and behaviors as a path to victory. An adaptation of the RAND-developed military will-to-fight model highlights opportunities to counter Russia's use of private military actors using cognitive maneuver. Accompanying multimethod qualitative analyses found potential vulnerabilities at the individual, team, organizational, state, and societal levels that could be targeted to diminish the motivation to fight among individual contractor personnel, the relationships between Russian private military companies and the Russian government and armed forces, and public opinion on the use of contractors and their treatment."

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