

## **GEOPOLITICS OF CONFLICT**

### **Instructor:**

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### **Overview**

The course is focusing on contemporary armed conflicts led by non-state actors. The aim of the course is to combine theory with case studies in order to provide students with key analytical instruments to engage with geopolitics and security studies both at the academic and policy level.

The course considers political and ethical debates raised by international interventions in the name of security, for the promotion of democracy, human rights or in order to strengthen political and economic institutions in the so-called “weak” or “failed states”. Case studies cover mainly Africa and Middle East.

Students will also learn how to analyze complex qualitative data from different sources. Through a number of practical exercises, they will be able to build diverse skills to pursue a career in an international organization, NGOs or a government agency.

### **Biography of the instructor**

Tatiana Smirnova has a PhD in Social Anthropology from School of Advanced Studies in Social Sciences (EHESS, Paris). She has been working on political violence in the Sahel region focusing on student movements in Niger and on insurgency in the Lake Chad region. Dr. Smirnova conducted her fieldwork in the southeastern region of Niger. She published in peer-reviewed journals such as *Africa* and *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*. Dr. Smirnova also worked as an international consultant for Transparency International, Search for Common Ground and Danish Refugee Council.

## CALENDAR AND SYLLABUS

The course is organized into two parts. Each week is a theatrical bloc devoted to a specific topic discussed through two classes: theoretical and general introduction - class n°1; a specific case-study - class n°2.

Week	Class	Date	Topic
<b>PART I. DEFINITIONS</b>			
1 . Key concepts	1	January 7	Introduction
	2	January 9	Post-cold war conflicts: “New” Wars?
2 . Greed/Grievance	3	January 14	Greed and Grievance
	4	January 16	Case studies: overview of political violence in Africa through 2000-2019
3 . Defining “terrorism”	5	January 21	Controversy on religion and violence
	6	January 23	Case study: Boko Haram <b>Map quiz on principal conflict zones to take in class</b>
4. Women in conflict	7	January 28	Feminism
	8	January 30	Case study: Peacekeeping operations, Women and Boko Haram
5. Targeting civilians	9	February 4	Targeting civilians
	10	February 6	Case studies: GIA and Al-Qaida
<b>February 9</b> <b>First response paper: What is violence and what makes it political?</b>			
6. Economies of insurgency	11	February 11	Perspectives on funding insurgency
	12	February 13	Case study: Jihadist groups and criminal networks in the Sahel
<b>PART II GEEPOLITICS OF INTERVENTION</b>			
7.	13	February 18	Thinking and theorizing Security after the Cold War

Analyzing non-state armed conflict	14	February 20	Case study: international interventions in Mali
		<b>February 23</b> <b>Critical review of a report</b>	
8. Peace operations	15	February 25	Peace operations
	16	February 27	Case study: MINUSMA and MNJTF
9. Responsibility to protect	17	March 10	Responsibility to protect
	18	March 12	Case study: NATO intervention in Libya
10. Private security	19	March 17	Private security
	20	March 19	Case study
11. Counterinsurgency	21	March 24	Counterinsurgency
	22	March 26	Case studies. Afghanistan war and conflict in Mali
		<b>March 29</b> <b>Second response paper:</b> <b>What could be the impact of international intervention on conflict?</b>	
12. Population movements and security policies	23	March 31	Population movements and security: European Union
	24	April 2	Case study: European Union- Africa policies
13. Measuring violence	25	April 7	Social network analyses
	26	April 9	Case study
14. New and returning actors	27	April 14	New and returning actors in conflict zones
	28	April 16	Case study. China, Turkey and Russia in Africa
		<b>April 19</b> <b>Third response paper:</b> <b>Analytical essay on current events</b>	
15. Concluding remarks	29	April 21	Conclusion