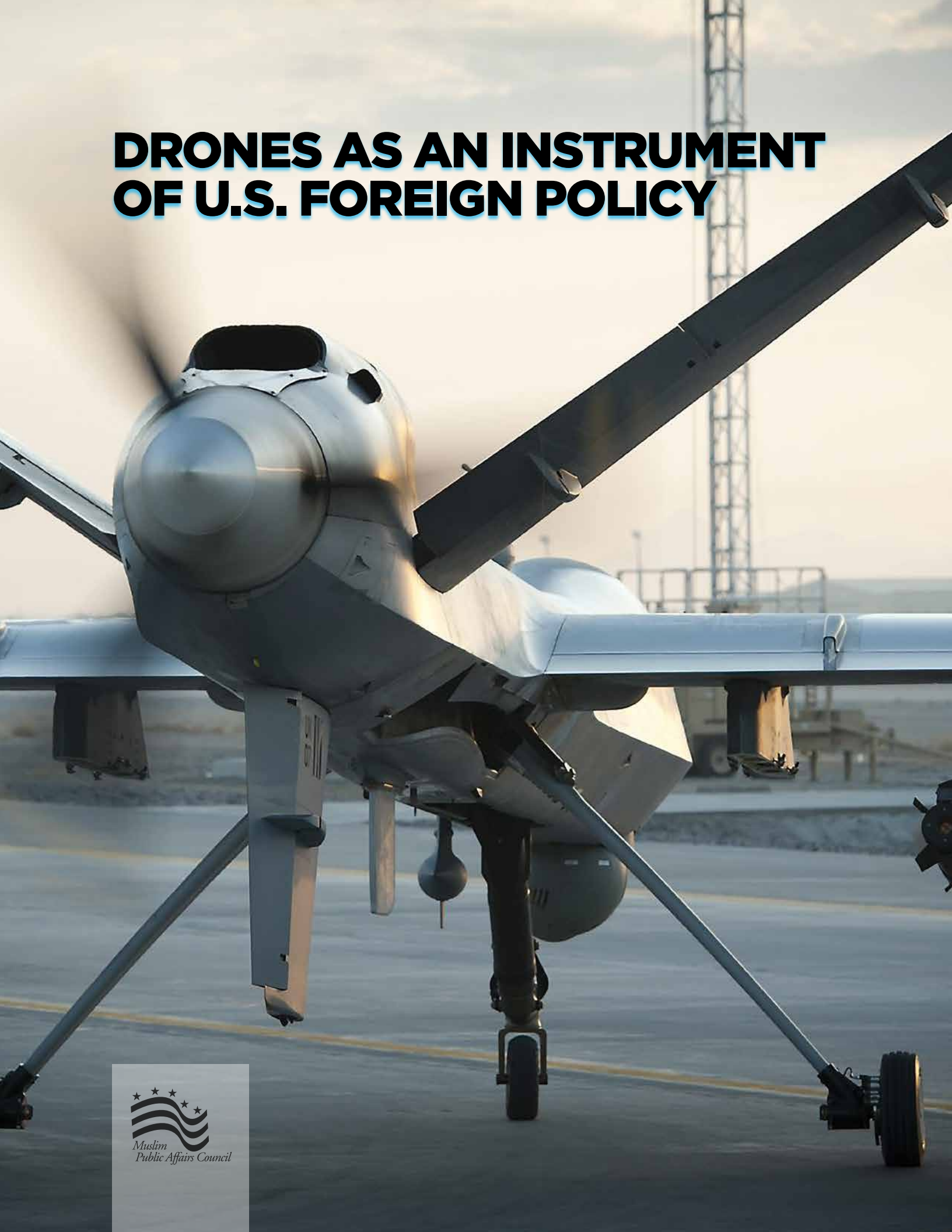


DRONES AS AN INSTRUMENT OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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The Muslim Public Affairs Council improves public understanding and policies that impact American Muslims by engaging our government, media and communities.

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Executive Summary

This paper aims to advance MPAC's commitment to represent and advocate on behalf of the Muslim American community in order to establish policy positions on the international use of drones. As drones have been used exclusively in Muslim-majority countries and even used to target Americans, there is an urgent need to analyze the use of drones and advocate for changes in how they are being used by the U.S. government.

The use of armed Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), or drones, as a tool to eliminate suspected militants abroad has gradually increased since 2001. The use of drones has primarily been driven by the Executive Branch in order to target alleged terrorists in a number of countries around the world. To date, no clear framework has been adopted, spelling out when drones can or should be used, and what process should oversee how and when drone strikes are conducted.

This paper focuses specifically on the U.S. government's drone program post-9/11 by analyzing the history, public perception, and international law considerations around the use of drones.

The key findings from this paper are:

- The use of drones has increased during President Obama's tenure without congressional or judicial oversight.
- Proponents of drones argue that they target specific individuals, eliminate the need for ground troops, and minimize civilian casualties.
- Critics of drone strikes argue that strikes lead to high civilian casualties, there is minimal oversight in the targeting process, and they inflame anti-American sentiment abroad.

- The current drone program provides little transparency over who is targeted or why, with too much reliance on Executive level decision-making.
- The targeted killings overseas of individuals — especially American citizens — appears to violate both domestic and international law.

Our Recommendations

Based on these findings, MPAC recommends five policy prescriptions to address the international use of drones.

1. **Judicial oversight**
A Drone Court should be established to oversee the targeting process.
2. **Congressional oversight**
Regular briefings about drone targets should be made along with congressional authorization to conduct strikes.
3. **Greater transparency and selective use of drones**
Drone strikes should only be used in extraordinary circumstances.
4. **International agreement on drones**
An international convention should be held to regulate drone usage.
5. **Congressional commission on drones**
A Congressional Commission should be established to systematically evaluate the efficacy of drones and provide additional policy recommendations.

The regulation of this technology as a tool in warfare is imperative, especially as its use is increasing both domestically and abroad. This technology will continue to proliferate and be used by both state and non-state actors. It is of critical importance that the U.S. government takes the lead in regulating this new technology in order to reign in its potential abuse, now and into the future.

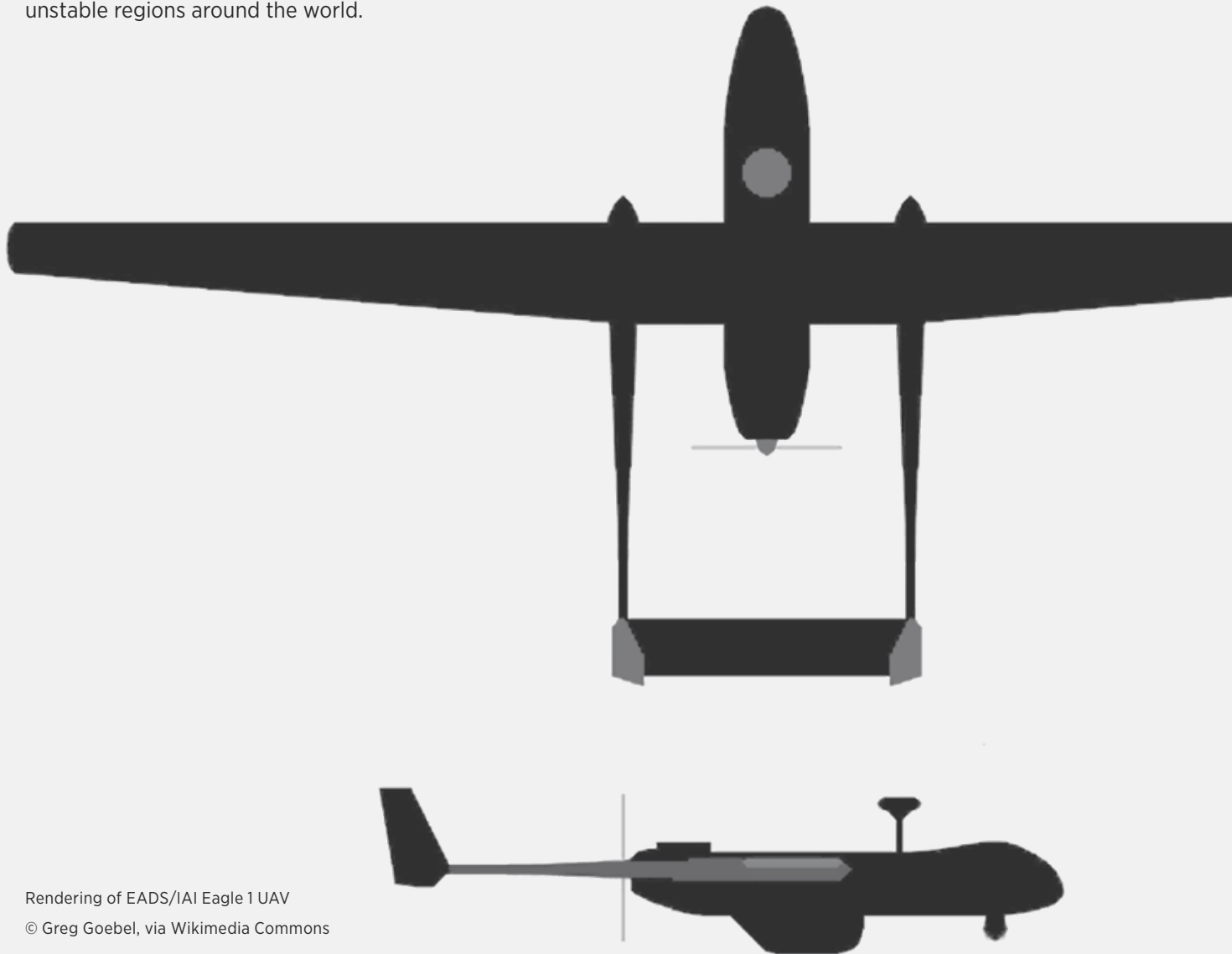
Introduction and Background

Drone warfare has become a method of war used by the United States to accomplish its strategic counterterrorism objectives around the world, including eliminating alleged terrorist cells or operatives. The countries where these strikes have occurred include Pakistan, Afghanistan, Yemen and Somalia¹. The deadly use of drones has led to widespread opposition in these countries², particularly because of the number of civilian casualties³ that occur as a result of these attacks.

Proponents of these strikes argue that they are an effective way to eliminate alleged terrorists in unstable regions around the world.

Opponents argue that they lead to high civilian casualties and there is no clear oversight in the targeting process. Yet the use of this new method of warfare highlights a number of increasingly complex and challenging questions.

This paper will examine the efficacy of the U.S. government's use of drones abroad, the current public debate, international legal issues involved, and conclude with policy recommendations for the continued use of drones by the U.S. government.



Rendering of EADS/IAI Eagle 1 UAV
© Greg Goebel, via Wikimedia Commons



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History

Drones have been utilized in various forms since World War I. Before 9/11, drones were primarily used overseas for surveillance and reconnaissance⁴. During the Cold War, the U.S. began using drones for reconnaissance missions over enemy territory⁵. After 9/11, the U.S. began using armed drones in combat operations beginning in October 2001⁶. The first known drone strike occurred in November 2001 in Afghanistan⁷. The goals of the early strikes in Afghanistan were to eliminate top Taliban and Al-Qaeda fighters⁸. Drones were seen by the U.S. as an alternative means to boots on the ground operations and an effective way to target and eliminate enemies.

The post-9/11 armed drone program was first used by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Afghanistan starting in October 2001, but in recent years, has increasingly been used by the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC). Although drones have been used in a number of countries⁹, the majority of drone strikes have occurred in Pakistan. According to the New America Foundation, a non-profit, nonpartisan public policy institute and think tank, there were a total of 351 drone strikes in Pakistan between 2004 and 2012¹⁰. More than 85

percent of these drone strikes (303) occurred under the Obama administration. While the goal of these strikes has been to eliminate alleged enemies of the U.S., the level of civilian casualties from these attacks has created widespread opposition to both drones and the U.S. as a country.¹¹

PROPOSERS: DRONES TARGET SPECIFIC TARGETS, MINIMIZE RISK OF CIVILIAN CASUALTIES

Proponents of drones argue that the United States is fighting a nontraditional enemy that hides amongst civilian populations and in countries that the U.S. is not at war with. Therefore, drones allow the U.S. to target enemies in a selective manner that minimizes risks for both the U.S. and its allies. Drones allow for the elimination of declared enemies without the cost of putting U.S. soldiers in harm's way, and they kill a lower ratio of civilians to combatants as compared to other methods of war¹². Many of these alleged enemies are in hard to access areas, which lead proponents to view drone strikes as a necessary tactic¹³.

Another tactical advantage of using drones is their ability to provide intelligence on enemies in real time. Drones can stay in the sky around the clock and, as new information is relayed to operators, this

information can be acted on. By acting on threats in real time, the U.S. is able to track threats and eliminate these threats at an opportune moment, thus providing additional safeguards to civilian casualties¹⁴.

Drones can stay in the sky around the clock and, as new information is relayed to operators, this information can be acted on.

In a leaked Department of Justice White Paper from February 2012 on the potential use of drones against U.S. citizens abroad, the department claims:

The President has authority to respond to the imminent threat posed by al-Qa'ida and its associated forces, arising from his constitutional responsibility to protect the country, the inherent right to protect the country, the inherent right of the United States to national self defense [sic] under international law, Congress's authorization of the use of all necessary and appropriate military force against this enemy, and the existence of an armed conflict with al-Qa'ida under international law¹⁵.

This statement lays out the legal rationale for the President's authority to use drones. By taking the fight to terrorists abroad, the government, in theory, is better able to protect the homeland from future threats.

CRITICS: DRONES' CIVILIAN CASUALTIES CREATE MORE ENEMIES THAN THEY KILL

Critics of drones argue that strikes lead to high civilian casualties with no clear oversight in the targeting process, and that the strikes themselves are not making the homeland safer. The Bureau of Investigative Journalism claims that between 430 and 999 civilians were killed by drone strikes between 2002 and 2013¹⁶. However, this number does not provide a full-picture of the actual casualties because the Obama Administration counts "all military-age males in a strike zone as combatants...unless there is explicit intelligence posthumously proving them innocent."¹⁷

Additionally, the U.S. conducts "signature strikes" based on patterns of behavior rather than targeting individuals with known terrorist connections.¹⁸ By counting all military aged-males and individuals killed by "signature strikes" as terrorists, the U.S. government inflates the total number of actual terrorists killed. This also makes it more difficult to calculate the exact number of civilians killed in a strike.

Critics of drones argue that strikes lead to high civilian casualties with no clear oversight in the targeting process, and that the strikes themselves are not making the homeland safer.

Critics also argue there is no clear oversight regarding who gets targeted. According to a *Washington Post* article published in March 2013:

The National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) will prepare lists of potential targets, which will be reviewed every three months by a panel of intelligence analysts and military officials. They are then passed along to a panel at the National Security Council, currently helmed by CIA director nominee [John] Brennan, and then to Obama for final approval. The criteria for addition to the list are determined personally by Obama, who also must personally approve all strikes outside Pakistan. Pakistan strikes are approved by the CIA director.¹⁹

As explained by the *Washington Post*, this internal process of deliberation does not include any transparent judicial or congressional oversight. Critics such as Peter Bergen, director of the National Security Studies Program at the New America Foundation, argue that drones have not really made America safer, particularly since the data on the strikes indicate 94 percent of people killed by drones are low-level targets.²⁰ If the U.S. is only able to kill low-level targets through the use of drones, then the overall utility and effectiveness of drone strikes comes into question.

Public Debate on Drones

The use of drones has been hotly debated by the public both in the U.S. and abroad. Domestically, the debate over drones revolves around whether or not it is an effective tactic. Internationally, the debate over drones revolves around their legality and the high number of civilian casualties. Both areas are crucial when considering what policy choices the U.S. should pursue.

DOMESTIC DEBATE

The domestic debate on the use of drone strikes revolves around who drones are targeting. While the majority (56%) of Americans support the use of drones against terrorists, most Americans are opposed to using drones against U.S. citizens suspected of being terrorists either in the U.S. or abroad.²¹

According to a Pew Research Center poll in 2013 (see Figure 1), Americans show firm bipartisan support for the use of drones.²² Although critics of drone strikes have been vocal in their opposition to the use of drones, Americans still continue to support the use of drones overall.

While most Americans support the use of drones, they are opposed to the use of drones targeting U.S. citizens. To date, the Obama administration has acknowledged that it has killed four U.S. citizens in drone strikes abroad.²³ However, the only known case of a drone strike purposely targeting a U.S. citizen is that of Anwar al-Awlaki. The al-Awlaki case and its aftermath highlight some of the serious constitutional and ethical issues involved with the use of drones.

Anwar al-Awlaki was a Muslim preacher who was born and raised in America. Although he spoke out against extremism in the aftermath of 9/11, he gradually developed more radical views and started delivering strong anti-American sermons. In 2004, he moved to Yemen and the U.S. government claimed that he became an operative of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). In 2010, he was

Figure 1

Bipartisan Support for U.S. Drone Attacks

U.S. condoning drone strikes...	Approve %	Disapprove %	DK %
Feb 2013	56	26	18 = 100
July 2013	55	34	11 = 100
Republican	68	17	15 = 100
Democrat	58	26	16 = 100
Independent	50	31	19 = 100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Feb. 7-10, 2013. Figures may not add to 100 % because of rounding.

put on President Obama's infamous 'kill-list'.²⁴ The inclusion of his name on the list authorized the Obama administration to carry out the extrajudicial killing of al-Awlaki. After a few unsuccessful assassination attempts — which led to civilian casualties²⁵ — the U.S. assassinated him on September 30, 2011.

By assassinating a U.S. citizen, the President appeared to violate the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. constitution, which makes it illegal to deprive a U.S. citizen of their right to life without due process. In a lecture in March 2012, Attorney General Eric Holder argued that killing al-Awlaki was legal and that “due process” was not the same as “judicial process.”²⁶ He claimed that if it is too difficult to capture someone who is a perceived threat, then the government can kill that individual after completing some form of internal deliberations. According to Holder, the constitutional guarantee of due process can be satisfied through internal deliberations by the Executive Branch, which does not require judicial review.

The killing of al-Awlaki raises a number of legal and ethical questions. Above all, did the Obama administration's internal deliberations satisfy the due process clause of the Constitution? Traditionally, innocence or guilt is determined through some form of judicial process that involves courts. This did not occur in the case of al-Awlaki, putting the legality of the al-Awlaki killing into question. The American Civil Liberties Union (A.C.L.U.) and other civil rights and legal advocacy organizations have argued that his killing was a violation of the Constitution and



A soldier watches as a Tarantula Hawk (T-Hawk) Micro Remote Piloted Air System (RPAS) hovers over the desert in Afghanistan.

© 2013 Crown
Photographer: Captain Dave Scammell



Supporters of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) hold a poster on the second day of sit-ins against U.S. drone attacks on May 22, 2011 in Karachi, Pakistan.
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international law²⁷. The ethical question of when the U.S. government is justified in targeting one of its own citizens for assassination also remains unresolved.

The lack of transparency regarding al-Awlaki's name — or others — being put on the President's "kill-list" is a novel interpretation of due process. Critics such as Glenn Greenwald, a journalist at *The Intercept*, have argued that President Obama's actions have essentially eliminated due process under the law and that the U.S. has regressed to a pre-Magna Carta era in which the Executive becomes judge, jury, and executioner.²⁸ The State Department's senior legal advisor, Harold Koh, argued that the President's action is justified because of the terrorist threat.²⁹ The *New York Times* also weighed in, arguing that the administration's legal justification is insufficient and that what is actually needed is judicial review involving courts.³⁰

The ethical issue of whether or not the U.S. government can target a U.S. citizen for assassination was raised recently in Congress. On March 6, 2013, Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) used a filibuster to block John Brennan's nomination to head the C.I.A. over the use of drones against U.S. citizens. Sen. Paul opposed Brennan's nomination in part because he wanted to make sure the U.S. government would not target an American citizen for assassination by drones inside the United States. Holder eventually assured him the U.S. could not legally do so, though

Holder's response made no mention of whether or not the U.S. had the *right* to assassinate U.S. citizens abroad.³¹ Although the Obama administration has stated that there are currently no U.S. citizens on the 'kill list,' it remains a possibility that the U.S. government will target its own citizens for assassination through drones in the future.³²

INTERNATIONAL DEBATE

There is widespread international opposition to the use of drones by the United States in countries that have been polled on this topic.³³ In Pakistan, the country that has borne the overwhelming brunt of U.S. drone strikes, only 5 percent approved of U.S. drone strikes targeting extremists.³⁴ According to a Pew Poll in May 2012 (Figure 2), 18 out of 19 countries polled disapproved of the U.S. conducting drone strikes to target extremists in countries such as Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia.³⁵

The use of drones has complicated U.S. foreign policy because of low public approval abroad, further alienating people instead of winning over hearts and minds. Global approval ratings of President Obama have dropped steadily since 2009, in part due to U.S. foreign policies, especially with regards to the use of drones.³⁶ In Muslim-majority countries, opposition to U.S. drone strikes is especially high. They hurt America's image in these countries and feed into anti-American animosity. The usage of drones by the U.S. is now a tool for terrorists to rally

extremist sentiment against the United States.³⁷ Drone strikes have had a deleterious impact on U.S. foreign policy in Muslim-majority countries, especially in Pakistan.

The use of drones has complicated U.S. foreign policy because of low public approval abroad, further alienating people instead of winning over hearts and minds.

Pakistan is a key ally in the region and the Obama administration has said it needs its support to combat terrorism, help rebuild Afghanistan, and help stem the tide of violent extremists. In spite of these mutually beneficial aims, the U.S. government continues to strain ties with Pakistan through the ongoing use of drones. The Pakistani government officially opposes the use of drones in its territory.³⁸ In fact, Ben Emmerson, the United Nations special rapporteur on counterterrorism and human rights, has noted that:

Pakistan has called on the US to cease its campaign immediately. In a direct challenge to the suggested legal justification for these strikes, the government of Pakistan has also made it quite clear during these discussions that any suggestion that it is 'unwilling or unable' to combat terrorism on its own territory is not only wrong, but is an affront to the many Pakistani victims of terrorism who have lost their lives.³⁹

The Pakistani government has publicly called drone strikes counterproductive to the mutual goal of

fighting terrorism.⁴⁰ However, various intelligence community sources claim that the Pakistani government is complicit in the use of drones.⁴¹ The seeming disconnect between the alleged private acceptance of drone strikes by the Pakistani government and its public repudiation clouds the overall legality and legitimacy of U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan.

Another complicating factor has been the disruption of daily life for many people in the most-targeted area of Pakistan, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). As an extensive Stanford-NYU report found:

The most direct impacts of strikes, in addition to injuries and killings, include property damage, and often severe economic hardship and emotional trauma for injured victims and surviving family members. Importantly, those interviewed for this report also described how the presence of drones and capacity of the US to strike anywhere at any time led to constant and severe fear, anxiety, and stress, especially when taken together with the inability of those on the ground to ensure their own safety.⁴²

Drone strikes are having a dramatic impact on the lives of many Pakistani civilians. Far from reducing the threat of terrorism, drone warfare has had the consequence of increasing the threat of terrorism to America and has hurt its overall image in Pakistan.⁴³ In addition, although there have been a few alleged high value targets killed through these strikes, many innocent civilians have also been killed in these strikes.⁴⁴



CIA unmaned drone in Pakistan.

International Law Issues

Drone strikes are being conducted in numerous countries around the world, yet the U.S. is not formally engaged in war with any of these countries. This raises a number of international legal issues. Additionally, there are a number of implications for other nations, if and when they begin to use drones.

INTERNATIONAL LAW

The international legal basis for the use of drones remains weak and is an area that exposes the U.S. to criticism at home and abroad. The international legal issues surrounding the use of drones are primarily related to questions of sovereignty and international law. Historically, sovereignty has been viewed as inviolable and the use of drones across borders challenges traditional notions of sovereignty.

In terms of sovereignty, according to Article 51 in the United Nations Charter, a state cannot get involved in the affairs of another nation unless it is being attacked.⁴⁵ In Article 2 paragraph four, the Charter prohibits the use of force by one state against another. The use of drones appears to be in contravention to this section of the United Nations Charter. The only time the sanctity of sovereignty can be violated is if there is an “imminent threat” to a member state and, in extremely rare circumstances, the potential for genocide within a particular state. None of these circumstances exist with the use of drones.

Critics argue that the U.S. only selectively uses international law. As Murtaza Hussain, a columnist with Al Jazeera, noted:

If the U.S. government feels that impoverished villagers in one of the most isolated regions on the planet are similarly a threat, it can rain missiles onto their homes and murder them and their families in order to pre-emptively neutralise the danger they are claimed to pose.

No evidence is required, and a pre-existing legal expiation of wrongdoing ensures there is no reason for guilt or introspection in the aftermath. In both situations, whom this system of “law” is designed to serve and whom it is designed to grind into oblivion is glaringly obvious.⁴⁶

The administration’s failure to provide a sound legal justification for this seeming violation of international law weakens U.S. credibility. Additionally, it undermines America’s attempts to hold other countries accountable to international norms and treaty obligations.

IMPLICATIONS FOR OTHER NATIONS

By conducting extrajudicial assassinations, the U.S. is setting a negative precedent for the future use of drones. Although the U.S. has pioneered the use of drones, there is a possibility that other countries — such as Russia or China — will begin to use drones to target enemies as well.

The technical capability of countries like China has progressed to the point that they could launch drone strikes against alleged terrorists in other countries in Asia. This is no longer a hypothetical situation, as evidenced by what took place in February 2013. The *New York Times* reported that, “China considered using a drone strike in a mountainous region of Southeast Asia to kill a Myanmar drug lord wanted in the murders of 13 Chinese sailors, but decided instead to capture him alive...”⁴⁷ But why would China risk capturing a dangerous criminal in a remote location, especially when it would be difficult to capture him without a fight? The reason for this was because the Chinese were concerned that using an armed drone might violate international law.⁴⁸ The goal of the operation was to put the drug lord on trial and not to carry out an extrajudicial assassination.⁴⁹



World map. © Nicemonkey

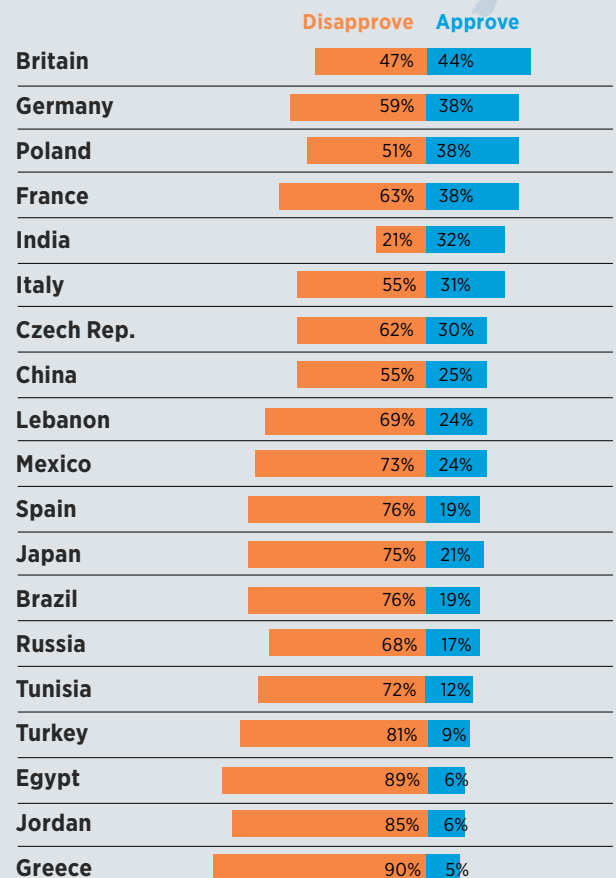
This example highlights two interesting points. First, although the Chinese decided in this case to follow a legal process to prosecute a serious criminal, the door remains open to the possibility that it could use a drone strike abroad against a future enemy. Next, it also highlights an apparent disconnect between authoritarian China being more committed to following a legal process than democratic America, at least with respect to the use of drones. Finally, it demonstrates that other nations may also use drones abroad if they view it as necessary. Therefore, the international legal framework for the use of drones needs to be articulated and justified in order to prevent countries from using drones outside of their sovereign territory.

If the United States — or any other country — cannot be bound by existing international agreements, then there is a need to create a binding international treaty to regulate the use of drones.⁵⁰

Figure 2

Widespread International Opposition to Drone Strikes

Do you approve or disapprove of the U.S. conducting drone strikes to target extremists in countries such as Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia?



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Spring 2012 survey.

Conclusion

The use of drones by the U.S. government to target alleged terrorists has not received the oversight that it needs. There are a number of issues that complicate the use of drones and implications that reach well beyond America's borders. The U.S. government has not thoroughly examined the full scope and implications of drone warfare and there is an urgent need to create a more comprehensive and legally sound approach to authorization and oversight of the drones program.

Above all, the U.S. should carefully articulate its legal justification for using drones in other countries by working within an international legal framework. America has historically championed law and human rights. Yet the drones program potentially undermines its credibility and moral standing in the world. Furthermore, it sets a negative precedent that other states — or non-state actors — may someday emulate with potentially catastrophic consequences. America needs to avoid violating the sovereignty of other nations, minimize the risks to civilians, and create a transparent consensus on its use of drones in other countries. A transparent and legally-sound process will go a long way in rehabilitating the perception of U.S. drone use abroad.

The Executive Branch's current drone policy is opaque and legally questionable. The goals it claims that it is trying to achieve have not been laid out in a transparent manner. The use of drones has come at a high cost to civilians, international public opinion and international law. Therefore, the U.S. needs to systematically reform and rethink the current drone program. Any continued use of drones abroad should be done through sound legal justification and ample oversight.

Policy Recommendations

More needs to be done to regulate America's drone usage overseas.

MPAC's five key policy recommendations are:

1. **Judicial Oversight**
2. **Congressional Oversight**
3. **Greater Transparency and Selective Use of Drones**
4. **International Agreement on Drones**
5. **Congressional Commission on Drones**

1. Judicial Oversight

The current decision making process to use drones is run primarily through the Executive Branch. This does not provide the transparency and openness needed to give the American public and international community confidence in the decision making process. As the *New York Times* editorialized, this situation could be rectified by establishing a court similar to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (F.I.S.A.) Court that provides secret adjudication of drone strikes.⁵¹ While the F.I.S.A. Court has been criticized for a lack of transparency and for not properly overseeing the National Security Agency, the Drone Court could be designed in a more effective way to prevent these types of problems.

For example, the legal rationale for any drone strike approved by the court should be declassified within a reasonable period of time (between 30 and 90 days) so as to provide the public with a better understanding of who is being targeted and why.

This would help prevent the government from conducting unnecessary drone strikes that lack a strong legal rationale, such as “signature strikes.”

2. Congressional Oversight

Congress should be regularly consulted about the use of drones by the Executive Branch. This should be done in two ways.

First, the President or his representative should regularly brief Congress on the effectiveness of using drones to eliminate alleged terrorists.

Next, if the Executive Branch wants to use drone strikes in a particular country, it should first get Congressional approval to do so. Although the Executive Branch claims it has complete authority to use force because of the 2001 Authorization of the Use of Military Force (AUMF), it should still seek Congressional approval if the President plans on using drone strikes in a country for more than 90-days. Senator Bob Coker (R-TN) has called for revising the AUMF to provide for effective oversight of the U.S. drone program.⁵²

This could help ameliorate some of the alleged abuses by the Executive Branch and bring much needed Congressional oversight on the use of drones.



3. Greater Transparency and Selective Use of Drones

If the Executive Branch insists on using drones, it should only go after high value targets and only when all other means of capture have been exhausted. In terms of transparency, the Executive Branch should provide both Congress and the American people justification for the use of drones.

The current approach provides too much leeway for the President to decide who to target and when to do so, which can lead to unnecessary strikes and collateral damage. The Executive Branch should only employ a strike if there is verifiable evidence that the value of the strike supercedes the cost and that there is minimal potential for collateral damage.

Finally, the U.S. must clarify its use of drones in countries that publicly state they are opposed to drones — such as Pakistan — but appear to privately endorse their use.

4. International Agreement on Drones

An international convention needs to be held to discuss the regulation of drones. Throughout history, anytime a new mode of warfare was discovered, it was followed by a period of time when these new weapons were used without any form of regulation.

For example, during World War I, chemical weapons were first created and then used in the trenches of Europe. However, because of the brutality of these weapons, they fell into disuse and international disfavor. Now there is an internationally binding Chemical Weapons Convention that prohibits the stockpiling, use, and development of chemical weapons.

Drone warfare is only in its infancy and has the potential to be used by both state and non-state actors. Therefore, there is an urgent need to create an international agreement that will regulate the use of drones.

5. Congressional Commission on Drones

A Congressional Commission would be useful to provide a more systematic study of the use of drone warfare by the U.S. government. This commission could provide oversight and transparency to a policy that currently lacks both. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), chair of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI), has stated that her committee has overseen the effectiveness of the drone program since 2001.⁵³ Building off the hearings that the SSCI already conducts, a commission could study the use of drones in more depth and provide additional recommendations on the use of drones.

How drones are used and under what circumstances remains an unresolved issue. There is an urgent need to rethink and redirect our current drone program. Internationally, the use of drones has complicated our relationship with Muslim-majority countries at a time when we should be forging closer relations based on mutually beneficial interests. Any future drone usage abroad must come under transparent legal and federal oversight.

Footnotes

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