

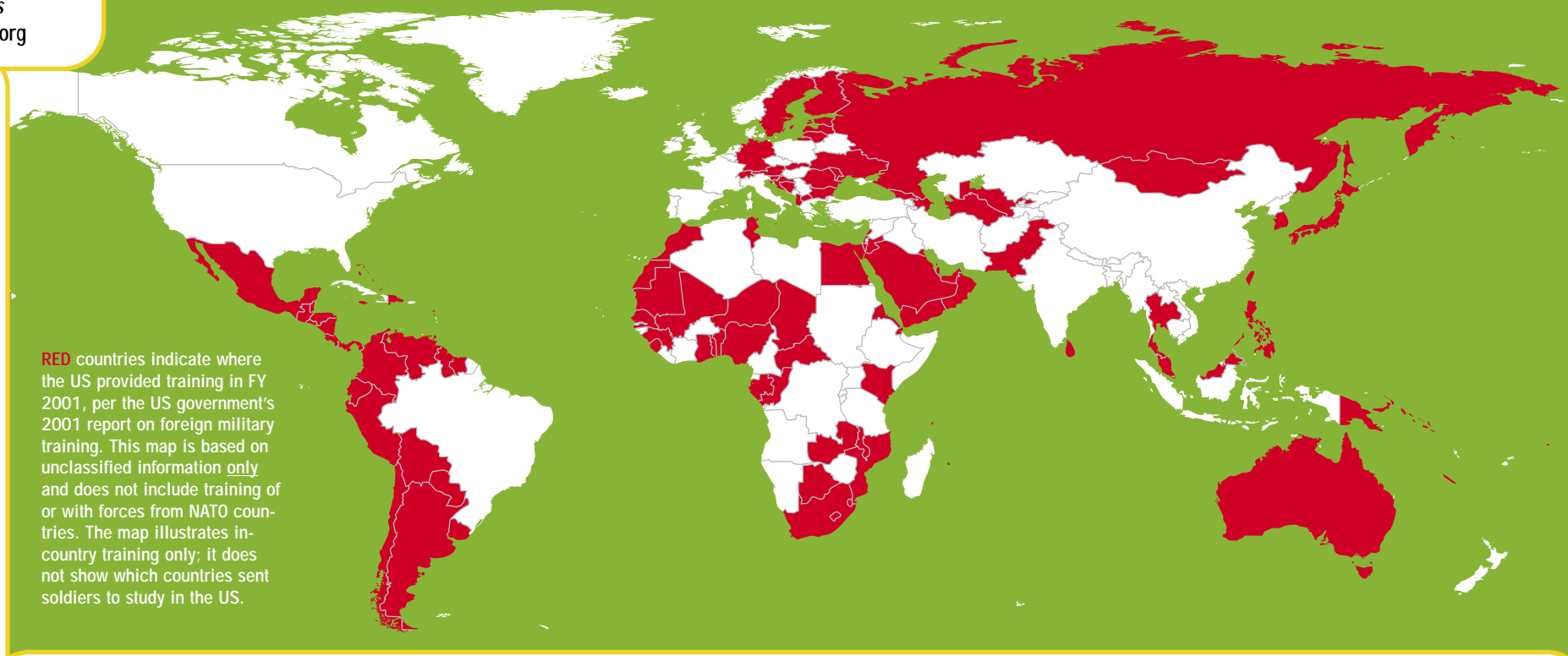


Unmatched Power, Unmet Principles: The Human Rights Dimensions of US Training of Foreign Military and Police Forces
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WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THE US MILITARY? WHO ARE THEY TEACHING WHAT?

It's hard to know what kinds of skills and tactics are being conveyed to which foreign soldiers at the hundreds of military training schools within the United States, but it's practically impossible to monitor US military training activities abroad. An estimated half of all US training of foreign troops takes place overseas, with US soldiers training foreign troops from at least 150 countries annually. This training is provided through a number of programs, including joint combined exercises of US and foreign troops, military unit exchanges, and US Special Operations Forces training. In addition, US intelligence and counternarcotics agencies school undisclosed numbers of government and insurgent forces around the world. Moreover, private American companies are increasingly training foreign security forces in countries with poor human rights records.

All of this activity takes place with scant public awareness and practically no official oversight. Unfortunately, US soldiers are providing in-country training to dozens of government forces with poor records.



RED countries indicate where the US provided training in FY 2001, per the US government's 2001 report on foreign military training. This map is based on unclassified information only and does not include training of or with forces from NATO countries. The map illustrates in-country training only; it does not show which countries sent soldiers to study in the US.

Colombia: Paramilitary groups acting with the active or tacit support of Colombian security forces were responsible for the vast majority of the executions and "disappearances" that took place in Colombia in 2001. Many of their victims were tortured before being killed. During the same year, the United States trained 6,300 Colombian soldiers, including those from several battalions alleged to have committed human rights abuses. Training included the full spectrum of military skills—including intelligence gathering, and patrol and ambush tactics.

Egypt: Four dozen political prisoners remained in prison at the close of 2001, and thousands of suspected supporters of banned Islamist groups remained in detention without charge or trial. Some have been held

for years; others were serving sentences imposed after grossly unfair trials before military courts. Torture of detainees was widespread. During that time, the US trained at least 1,240 Egyptian military officers, in the full range of military skills, including interrogation techniques and psychological operations.

Israel: Israeli military forces killed more than 460 Palestinians during 2001--most were non-combatants, who were killed unlawfully during raids often carried out with US-supplied jets or helicopters. Among the victims were 79 children. Palestinians frequently reported torture during interrogation. The US trained 850 Israeli officers, mostly in helicopter and jet aircraft operation and maintenance and a few in "military operations in urban terrain."

Nigeria: Nigerian security forces reportedly massacred more than 130 civilians in one reprisal attack in 2001. No one was brought to justice for this or for killings perpetrated by the security forces in previous years. Vigilante groups--some with explicit backing by state authorities--continued acts of unlawful detention, torture and killings. Meanwhile, the United States trained more than 60 Nigerian officers.

Philippines: The Philippines' government forces conducted arbitrary arrests, raped and sexually abused women in custody, tortured, executed and "disappeared" people in 2001, mostly in the context of military counter-insurgency operations waged against armed political groups, who themselves engaged in kidnapping, torture and murder. At the same time,

US Special Operations Forces trained at least 570 Filipino soldiers in "unconventional" warfare tactics, and another 200 Filipino officers came to the United States for training in intelligence gathering, interrogation skills and other topics.

Uzbekistan: Uzbek law enforcement officials reportedly tortured supporters of banned Islamist opposition parties in 2001. Several prisoners died in custody, allegedly as a result of torture. Thousands of Muslims and dozens of supporters of banned secular political parties were serving long prison sentences, convicted after unfair trials. In the same year, US forces trained a dozen Uzbek military officers in Special Forces tactics, and 180 officers were to be trained by the US in 2002.

Sources:

- Amnesty International USA, *Unmatched Power, Unmet Principles: The Human Rights Dimensions of US Training of Foreign Military and Police Forces* (New York: Amnesty International USA Publications, 2002).
- Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Annual Report 2002* (New York: Amnesty International Publications, 2002).
- US Department of State and US Department of Defense, *Foreign Military Training and DoD Engagement Activities of Interest: Joint Report to Congress* (Washington, DC: March 2002). The publicly released sections of the report cover unclassified activities in FY 2001. Also, these sections do not list information about any US foreign military training of or with forces from NATO countries.



The US government must improve oversight, transparency, and accountability of US training of foreign forces.

Areas of Special Concern: Special Operations Forces and Private Military Contractors

US Special Operations Forces (SOF)—such as Navy SEALs, Army Rangers, Army Green Berets—provide most of the United States' military instruction abroad. SOF sometimes provide training for humanitarian demining, medical first aid and triage, and veterinarian services, but the centerpiece of most training missions is foreign internal defense—training in counterinsurgency techniques. These forces differ from conventional military forces in that they are specially organized to achieve their objectives through unconventional means, including covert hit and run operations behind enemy lines. Many of the SOF's trainees serve undemocratic governments engaged in fighting internal opposition movements.

Currently the Special Operations Forces' widespread training deployments are shrouded in secrecy. Moreover, questions persist about the skills they are conveying and the impact of this assistance. During the Cold War and throughout the 1990s these troops were revealed to be training foreign units with bloody records, including the Atlacatl Battalion in El Salvador in 1989 (this battalion killed six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her daughter during that same year) and Kopassus units in Indonesia through mid 1998 (these units supported and armed militias in East Timor that brutally attacked and killed citizens and UN officials during the vote for independence in 1999).

Another area of concern is the increased use in recent years of private military consultants to train foreign police forces and military troops. According to an academic authority in private security forces, US companies trained militaries in more than 24 countries during the 1990s. This list includes Angola, Bolivia, Bosnia, Colombia, Croatia, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Haiti, Hungary, Kosovo, Peru, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Taiwan, and Uganda (Sudanese forces).

There is no requirement that the Department of State publish a list of private contractors it has authorized to provide foreign military or security training, for what purpose, where and with which security unit. Nor does Congress know who is training whom, since the Department of State is only required to notify lawmakers of private contracts valued at \$50 million or more—a threshold so high that very few, if any, training operations are likely to surpass it.

In addition, there are no legal or regulatory requirements for the inclusion of any human rights or humanitarian law content in military, security, or police force training contracted privately. Further, the "Leahy Law" requirement that trainees be vetted for prior human rights abuses does not apply to training purchased with the buyer's own money (but it does apply to US taxpayer-funded programs employing private firms).

Taken together, these realities lead many to fear that training by private US security companies might contribute to human rights violations—either by providing sophisticated military training to abusive personnel, by not including any human rights or humanitarian law emphasis in the training, or perhaps even by imparting tactics and doctrine that are not standard for US forces.

Private Training

US corporations also provide military advice and training to dozens of foreign militaries. Among those companies providing training abroad in recent years are:

Cubic
DynCorp
Global Options
Ibis Tek
ICI, Oregon
Logicon
Military Professional Resources Incorporated (MPRI)
Raytheon
Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC)
Vinnell Corp.

Sources:

- Amnesty International USA, *Unmatched Power, Unmet Principles: The Human Rights Dimensions of US Training of Foreign Military and Police Forces* (New York: Amnesty International USA Publications, 2002).
- Deborah Avant, *The Market for Force: Private Security and Political Change*, book manuscript - forthcoming publication.
- US Department of Defense, *US Special Operations Forces Posture Statement 2000*. Available at: <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/sof/>