



ACTION BRIEF

PREVENT UNLAWFUL KILLINGS

SECURITY WITH HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAM

The U.S. must follow international law restricting the use of lethal force

“68-year-old Mamana Bibi was killed in October, 2012, in front of her grandchildren while gathering vegetables in her family’s fields in Northwest Pakistan. She was blasted to pieces by a drone strike that appears to have been aimed at her. The US government has never acknowledged Mamana Bibi’s death, let alone provided justice or compensation for it.”

The use of pilotless aircraft, commonly referred to as drones, has become one of the most controversial human rights issues in the world. More than four thousand people have reportedly been killed since the US government escalated drone strikes in 2009, yet in nearly all cases the US government has refused to describe who has been killed, the justifications for their deaths, or the steps it takes to redress wrongful killings. The Trump administration has expanded the use of lethal strikes, including with drones, even more--endangering many more civilians and increasing the risk of unlawful killings. These killings often happen in secret, outside of traditional battlegrounds and in apparent violation of international law. After reports of large numbers of civilian deaths, including from Amnesty International, President Obama put some policy limits in place to protect civilians. It’s not clear if those limits were followed, and they still failed to meet minimum international legal standards, but they at least signified an attempt to reduce civilian casualties. President Trump has reportedly loosened those restrictions on killing. This will likely lead to the US killing many more civilians, in violation of the most basic international human right: the right to life.

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TAKE ACTION

- 1 Call the White House at 202.456.1414 to tell President Trump to stop unlawful killings with drones and air strikes.
- 2 Call your Senators at 202.224.3121 and urge them to investigate potentially unlawful killings and ensure that the Trump administration complies with international law restrictions on the use of deadly force.
- 3 Tweet @realdonaldtrump: Respect human rights: stop unlawful killings with #drones and air strikes

Please e-mail security@aiusa.org to let us know if you took action so that we can keep a count and use the total number of actions in our advocacy.

CONGRESS MUST ENSURE PRESIDENT TRUMP FOLLOWS THE LAW

“I wasn’t scared of drones before, but now when they fly over I wonder, will I be next?”

- Nabeela, eight-year-old granddaughter of US drone strike victim Mamana Bibi

On July 6, 2012, 18 male laborers, including at least one boy, were killed in a series of US drone strikes in the remote Pakistani village of Zowi Sigi. Missiles first struck a tent in which some men had gathered for an evening meal after a hard day’s work, and then struck those who came to help the injured from the first strike. Witnesses described a macabre scene of body parts and blood, panic and terror, as US drones continued to hover overhead.

This attack, of serious concern to Amnesty, happened under

President Obama and his administration refused to commit to a full, independent and impartial investigation of this killing and many others. President Trump has carried over this disregard for investigations and accountability--while also loosening the U.S. government’s already insufficient protections against unlawful killings and civilian casualties. This is unacceptable. Outside of war zones, lethal force should only be used as a last resort against an imminent threat to life.

In war zones, the use of force must comply with the restrictions of international humanitarian law as well as relevant human rights law. The Trump administration must change course and publicly commit to meeting its obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law--and Congress must ensure that it happens. They can start by investigating cases of potentially unlawful killings and civilian harm.

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