

End Drone Warfare Now!



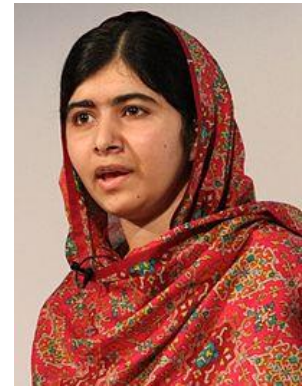
We decry our government's use of unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) as the new face of war.

1. DRONE KILLING IS ILLEGAL. Under the U.N. Charter, which is a binding treaty of the U.S., a member state may use military force only in defense to an armed attack or with the authorization of the Security Council. Drone killings in countries with which we are not at war—including Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, and Syria—violate these standards.¹ U.S. drone policy targets suspected militants who are not attacking the U.S. and who lack the capacity to do so. In many cases (so-called signature strikes and secondary attacks on rescuers and funerals), the U.S. does not even know who the targets are and merely assumes they are “militants.”² Nor has the U.N. Security Council authorized the U.S. to use lethal drones.

2. DRONE KILLING IS IMMORAL. The intended targets of U.S. drone strikes may be alleged “militants,” but the victims have included hundreds of innocent men, women, and children,³ including, e.g., members of a wedding party⁴ and a traditional tribal council.⁵ We are particularly dismayed at reports that the U.S. has used secondary attacks (“double taps”) to kill rescuers responding to initial drone strikes and people attending the funerals of drone victims.⁶ Directly targeting noncombatants is never morally permissible.

3. DRONE KILLING IS COUNTERPRODUCTIVE. Drones terrorize the communities over which they hover, with residents never knowing when or where a deadly attack may come.⁷ And by inflaming the local population, drone killings serve as a potent recruiting tool for extremists.⁸ They perpetuate violence, rather than deterring it.

Malala Yousafzai—winner of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize—said that when she met with President Obama in October 2013, “I also expressed my concerns that drone attacks are fueling terrorism. Innocent victims are killed in these acts, and they lead to resentment among the Pakistani people.”⁹



4. DRONE KILLING LEADS TO A MORE DANGEROUS FUTURE. Drone warfare lowers the costs and risks of launching attacks, making war more likely.¹⁰ And it sets a dangerous precedent for other countries. If we would not accept drone strikes by other countries on U.S. soil, neither should we accept drone strikes by the U.S. on other countries' soil.

President Trump has continued—and in some areas intensified—his predecessor's use of drone strikes.¹¹ We call for an immediate end to the illegal and immoral use of armed drones. Write your elected officials, telling them to end drone warfare now!



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¹ E.g., Mary Ellen O’Connell, “Lawful Use of Combat Drones,” written testimony submitted to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Apr. 28, 2010, https://fas.org/irp/congress/2010_hr/042810oconnell.pdf; Marjorie Cohn, “‘Drone Papers’ Revelations Are a Cry for Ending the Slaughter,” *Truthdig*, Nov. 5, 2015, www.truthdig.com/report/item/drone_papers_revelations_are_a_cry_for_ending_the_slaughter_20151105.

² Glenn Greenwald, “On Media Outlets That Continue to Describe Unknown Drone Victims As ‘Militants,’” *The Intercept*, Nov. 18, 2014, firstlook.org/theintercept/2014/11/18/media-outlets-continue-describe-unknown-drone-victims-militants/.

³ Drone Warfare Database (continually updated casualty estimates), The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, www.thebureauinvestigates.com/projects/drone-war; Alex Ellefson, “The Appallingly High Number of Unidentified People Killed in America’s Drone War,” Dec. 8, 2014, www.alternet.org/world/appallingly-high-number-unidentified-people-killed-americas-drone-war.

⁴ Ahmed al-Haj, “Officials: U.S. Drone Strike Kills 13 in Yemen,” *The Washington Post*, Dec. 12, 2013, www.washingtonpost.com/world/officials-us-drone-strike-kills-13-in-yemen/2013/12/12/3b070f0a-6375-11e3-91b3-f2bb96304e34_story.html.

⁵ Rep. Alan Grayson (D-Fla.) and Robert Greenwald, “Come Clean on Deadly Drone Activities,” *The Hill*, Mar. 27, 2014, thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/homeland-security/201863-come-clean-on-deadly-drone-activities.

⁶ Chris Woods and Christina Lamb, “Obama Terror Drones: CIA Tactics in Pakistan Include Targeting Rescuers and Funerals,” The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, Feb. 4, 2012, www.thebureauinvestigates.com/2012/02/04/obama-terror-drones-cia-tactics-in-pakistan-include-targeting-rescuers-and-funerals/.

⁷ International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic, Stanford Law School, and Global Justice Clinic, New York University School of Law, *Living under Drones: Death, Injury and Trauma to Civilians from US Drone Practices in Pakistan*, Sept. 2012, www-cdn.law.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Stanford-NYU-LIVING-UNDER-DRONES.pdf.

⁸ Jo Becker and Scott Shane, “Secret ‘Kill List’ Proves a Test of Obama’s Principles and Will,” *The New York Times*, May 29, 2012, www.nytimes.com/2012/05/29/world/obamas-leadership-in-war-on-al-qaeda.html?pagewanted=all&r=0.

⁹ Peter Hart, “Missing Malala’s Message of Peace: Drones Fuel Terrorism,” *Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting (FAIR)*, Oct. 14, 2014, www.fair.org/blog/2014/10/14/missing-malalas-message-of-peace-drones-fuel-terrorism/.

¹⁰ Tobias L. Winwright and Mark G. Allman, “Obama’s Drone Wars: A Case to Answer,” *The Tablet*, Aug. 18, 2012, www.exacteditions.com/read/tablet/18-august-2012-32394/3/3.

¹¹ Jessica Purkiss, “Trump’s First Year in Numbers: Strikes Triple in Yemen and Somalia,” The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, Jan. 19, 2018, www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2018-01-19/strikes-in-somalia-and-yemen-triple-in-trumps-first-year-in-office.

Photo credits:

Reaper drone firing missile, Drone Wars UK, <https://dronewars.net/aboutdrone/>.

Malala Yousafzai at Girl Summit 2014, Russell Watkins, Department for International Development, UK, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/dfid/14714344864/>.