

Drone war inquiry -- The UN confirms client status to the US

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After over a decade of illegal Drone strikes against innocent civilians and sovereign states, the UN today announced it will conduct an inquiry into the use of Drones -- it's ten years too late but better late than never if it's a thorough and impartial investigation; yea, that's a big "if" considering that Obama's first signed Drone strike order resulted in the deaths of innocent women and children in Pakistan, a sovereign nation not at war with the US. So numerous were the breaches of international law and war crimes conventions that day one wonders why the UN remained blind to these illegalities for almost a decade. Could it be that the UN is really a client institution to US Imperial ambitions -- it certainly looks that way, doesn't it, Mr Ban Ki 'lackey' Moon?



Finally: The UN Will Investigate Drone Strikes

by Kevin Mathews

the United Nations is set to investigate drone strikes, reports the [New York Times](#). The technologically advanced killing machines have become a staple for developed nations, particularly the United States. However, the lack of oversight and accountability with drone usage has critics wondering whether the robots are successfully combatting the war on terror or merely spreading terror further.

Ben Emmerson, a British lawyer who works for the U.N.'s Human Rights Council, will head a panel for a nine-month investigation. While Emmerson said the findings will pertain to all nations utilizing drone technology, any proclamations the United Nations makes will be most relevant to the United States, the leader in that field by far.

The United Nations's goal is not to eliminate drones altogether, but find acceptable regulations for drone usage. "This form of warfare is here to stay," said Emmerson. "It is completely unacceptable to allow the world to drift blindly toward the precipice without any agreement between states as to the circumstances in which drone strike targeted killings are lawful, and on the safeguards necessary to protect civilians."

The fact that most American citizens know nothing about drone attacks is no accident. Although the White House says that President Barack Obama authorizes many of the drone strikes himself, it does not acknowledge or comment on specific attacks. Names of the targets are not provided - and sometimes not even known by the CIA itself - and the U.S. does not need to provide evidence to

anyone to show that the killings are warranted.

Despite the mystery surrounding this emerging technology, [ProPublica](#) has a great primer explaining the information that is known about the drone warfare. Around 3,000 individuals that the United States suspects of having ties with terrorism have been killed abroad, which includes a few American citizens. The U.S. gives itself the discretion to kill potential terrorists when capture of these individuals appears too difficult, although it now seems to be the primary mode of handling suspects.

Then there's the matter of civilian casualties: though the White House's estimates of bystander fatalities is significantly lower than that of independent journalists, the number of bystander fatalities seems to be at least a few hundred. That's a lot of human lives with no terrorist connections to be chalked up to collateral damage.

Two Americans will serve on the ten-person United Nations panel: Captain Jason Wright, a lawyer for the U.S. Army, and Sarah Knuckey, a human rights lawyer and professor at NYU. They will be joined by a few British professionals as well as a judge from Pakistan and an activist from Yemen, two countries that have been the target of many drone strikes.

Although Emmerson acknowledges that the White House has been extremely secretive about its drone program thus far, he is "strongly optimistic" that the U.S. will adhere to any recommendations developed by the U.N.

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