

End Drone Warfare Now

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

Drone killings in countries with which we are not at war—including Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia—violate international law.¹ The intended targets may be alleged “militants,” but the victims have included hundreds of innocent men, women, and children.² We are particularly dismayed at reports that the U.S. has used secondary strikes (“double taps”) to kill rescuers responding to initial drone strikes and people attending the funerals of drone victims.³

Drones terrorize the communities over which they hover, with residents never knowing when or where a deadly attack may come.⁴ And by inflaming the local population, drone killings serve as a potent recruiting tool for extremists.⁵ They perpetuate violence, rather than deterring it.

Drone warfare lowers the costs and risks of launching attacks, making war more likely.⁶ 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.

The President has made clear his intention to continue using drone strikes, which he claims are legal and moral.⁷ They are neither. We urge our fellow Catholics and the wider faith community to join us in calling for an immediate end to the use of armed drones. Write your elected officials, telling them to end drone warfare now!

¹ Mary Ellen O'Connell, “Drones under International Law,” Washington University Law, Whitney R. Harris World Law Institute, International Debate Series, Oct. 8, 2010, <http://law.wustl.edu/harris/documents/OConnellFullRemarksNov23.pdf>.

² <http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/category/projects/drones/>.

³ 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, <http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/2012/02/04/obama-terror-drones-cia-tactics-in-pakistan-include-targeting-rescuers-and-funerals/>.

⁴ 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, <http://livingunderdrones.org/>.

⁵ Jo Becker and Scott Shane, “Secret ‘Kill List’ Proves a Test of Obama's Principles and Will,” *The New York Times*, May 29, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/29/world/obamas-leadership-in-war-on-al-qaeda.html?pagewanted=all& r=0>.

⁶ Tobias L. Winwright and Mark G. Allman, “Obama's Drone Wars: A Case to Answer,” *The Tablet*, Aug. 18, 2012, <http://www.exacteditions.com/read/tablet/18-august-2012-32394/3/3>.

⁷ Speech on U.S. drone and counterterrorism policy, May 23, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/24/us/politics/transcript-of-obamas-speech-on-drone-policy.html?pagewanted=all& r=0>.