

National Religious Campaign Against Torture

Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

<http://www.nrcat.org/national-security/drone-warfare>

Policy Issue Resources

DRONE WARFARE: An Emerging Technology with Deep Moral Implications

The question of whether to go to war and the question of how warfare is conducted are both profound moral and religious questions. Though there are differences of opinion within the religious community about the morality of going to war, most religions are unified in believing that when and if war occurs, it should be limited. Since NRCAT was founded, the lethal use of armed drones has become increasingly common.

While the United States has led in arming drones and using them to carry out lethal strikes, several other nations and even non-state actors have also begun to use drones to kill people. Although the use of lethal drones is not torture, because the U.S. commonly uses drones to carry out targeted killings of suspected terrorists without charge or trial, and because these attacks have significant impacts on wider communities, NRCAT supports efforts to restrict the use of lethal drones.

Current U.S. policies for lethal drone strikes are unnecessarily opaque, are implicitly biased against efforts to capture those individuals who are targeted, cause an unacceptable number of civilian casualties, allow targeting of unidentified individuals, violate international human rights law, may ultimately risk removing human judgment from drone strike decisions, create long-term hostility in affected communities toward U.S. interests, directly harm attempts to promote human rights and the rule of law, and dangerously reduce the political and psychological costs of using lethal force.

[>> Download our one-pager for more information and to share in your community.](#)

In February 2019, NRCAT joined twenty-five national faith groups to send a letter to the U.S. Congress calling upon Congress to end the CIA's use of armed drones to carry out lethal attacks. The letter states that CIA drone strikes amount to a secret war over which there has never been a robust public or congressional debate. The letter also notes that drone strikes remove Americans from understanding the true moral and emotional costs of taking life. [Read the full letter.](#)

Action Alert: Prevent Civilian Casualties of Drone Strikes

[Reports](#) indicate that President Trump has given the CIA the authority to carry out more drone strikes and that he has relaxed the rule requiring that the Department of Defense and the CIA have a near certainty that they know who they are killing. This is in line with his campaign rhetoric that there is nothing wrong with killing family members of suspected terrorists.

Many Members of Congress - both Democrat and Republican - are concerned about the President's cavalier attitude toward civilian casualties. [Please write to your Members of Congress today!](#)

Educate Your Community

Our friends at the Interfaith Network on Drone Warfare have made a 30 minute film designed to introduce faith groups to the topic of lethal drones: [Moral and Safe? War, Peace, Drone Warfare, and the Religious Community.](#)

Please [take a look at the films trailer](#) and consider whether you can put together a group of interested people from your faith community to watch the film. [Download a study guide for facilitating discussion](#), and use NRCAT's [petition on lethal drones](#) and [fact sheet](#) to begin carrying out advocacy on the issue. *To access this and other films, go to <https://www.interfaithdronenetwork.org/films.html> and click the link in the purple box.*

Gather Petition Signatures

Hold an educational session or a table during coffee hour! [Gather signatures on this petition.](#)

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