

The ethics of warfare part 3: How does drone warfare change the debate?



Professor Stefan Wolff

"Much of the current debate about drones (or unmanned aerial vehicles, UAVs) is about whether their deployment to countries like Pakistan and Yemen is legal or ethical. This debate is predominantly focused on armed drones and their use to carry out targeted and signature strikes against known or suspected terrorists and insurgents."

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This debate has now closed.

Feedback

on 30 September 2013, **Mukesh Patel** wrote

Human life is not a toy to play with and then to discard when not needed. Therefore, if even one innocent person is spared as a direct result of the application of drones, then of course, a part of the world, however infinitesimal, has been proven to be a safer place to live in. To extrapolate this now established fact, if I may directly translate from Sanskrit (which I must admit I am too unintelligent to learn, but which my father related to me), "tipe tipe sarover bharay" = "An ocean fills up drop by drop" - in time, a single saved life will grow into ten saved lives, then hundred, etc. In defining whether drones can contribute to world safety, and to the discouragement of the recent "reverse evolution" of some categories of mankind, where does one draw the line? In my view, a single life saved and/or a single callous, selfish, cowardly, vile terrorist exterminated is a good enough start. Thank you.

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on 26 September 2013, **Alexei Surplice** wrote

Surely we should just treat rules on the use of drones the same way that we treat rules on manned aircraft. They both have human operators afterall.

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on 25 September 2013, **Jason** wrote

Speaking as a former Royal Marine of 13 years service, including numerous deployments to both Iraq and Afghanistan, I can say in all honesty that I believe the use of ordnance carrying UAV's are perfectly legal.

They have been used to stunning effect to save the lives of British, American and allied ground troops in Afghanistan, and I speak from personal, on the ground experience. Indeed, I'm here today because of one such targeted response by a joint British/American UAV strike.

Yes, it's a new, unconventional method of delivering a payload, but no more unconventional than some absolute, psychopathic suicide bomber. Such extremists need to be tackled head on and with all the force we can muster.

It's just unfortunate that much of the bile filled rhetoric spilled by most in opposition is based on "research" or tabloid/newspaper garbage or secondhand knowledge, other than actual experience on the ground.

Perhaps we should be looking at the absolutely indiscriminate methods used by the enemy before we draw our opinions. Unfortunately, I've witnessed that too.

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on 25 September 2013, **Mohammed** wrote

UAV's are illegal, unethical and immoral. We all know this but are too afraid to say anything because Big Bully Uncle Sam (the U.S.) is the superpower as does as he pleases.

If a foreign UAV was used in Britain and killed a member of our OWN family, i'm sure we'd be very quick to speak out!

Hypocrisy of "democracy"!

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