

**Committee: Disarmament and International Security (GA1)**

**Issue: Contemporary Warfare and the Use of Drones**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Warfare is an ever-changing concept. The perception of a digital society has become a reality. The changing of times and the innovation in technology has allowed for warfare to become distant, unconventional and remote. The introduction of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) is a form of technological warfare that has revolutionized the way wars are fought. UAS's have brought the ability to affect the battlefield from thousands of miles away. The systematic use of drones for surveillance or target execution purposes plays a massive role in the tactics of state actors in war torn regions. The introduction of the remote drone allows the state to decrease the size of boots on the ground in theatre while maintaining a military force in the region, and thus minimizing risk to human life for pilots and soldiers.

## **DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

### **Unmanned Aerial System/Unmanned Aerial Vehicle/Drone**

A vehicle that propels itself, controlled by onboard computers or by remote from an alternate location. An example of one of these systems is the American made Predator vehicle; the United States Air Force (USAF) operates the aircraft from Creech Air Force base however the physical entity flies above the deserts of the Middle East. The drone is used in multiple situations within the modern battlefield. Surveillance is the primary role that these aircraft are adapted for however weaponized platforms have been created for these vehicles as a replacement to other forms of military air support.

### **Contemporary Warfare/Modern Warfare**

The act of war using technology, methods and concepts of military nature that have been put into service during or after the Second World War. Contemporary warfare contrary to early modern warfare consists of small scale battles from 10 to 100 men, the range of the engagements between factions can vary from short (2-5 meters) to long (1000+ meters) and can involve multiple forms of weaponry and tactics. In contrast to early modern warfare,

which consisted of large-scale engagements of two factions usually storming enforced cities or battlefield charges.

### **Air Support**

Military air operations in direct support of ground, naval and air forces, consists of surveillance and armed responses.

### **Black operations**

Also, commonly referred to as dark operations, are pseudonyms for clandestine operations carried out by intelligence agencies or military forces outside of the public eye. The knowledge of these operations and their entailing information is compartmentalized to minimize the chances of fallout of international relations should something not run as planned. These operations are often justified by national security or the fighting against the cause of terrorism.

### **Joint Terminal Attack Controllers**

“A certified Service member who, from a forward position, directs the action of combat aircraft engaged in close air support and other offensive air operations. A qualified and current joint terminal attack controller; also referred to as JTAC” (US Department of Defense 2012). This person is the responsible party for controlling military air support from the ground; his or her job consists of calling for permission for air support, laser marking or communicating target location and/or coordinates and confirming the effect of the projectile on target.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

There are 56 different types of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles identified by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), which are owned and operated by eleven different nations. According to IISS there are an estimated 807 active UAV's in active service for military use and intervention. We know that this number is highly underestimated, as the size of the international UAV fleet studies that the IISS has undertaken does not include nations from China, Turkey and Russia. It is unsure what the current death toll that UAV's are responsible for is and how large the percentage of this is collateral damage. It should be noted that in the case of UAV strikes death toll is usually not collected and analyzed as most these strikes take place behind enemy state or defensive lines thus making it impossible for Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) operators to confirm kill counts. The claims made by

the US Department of Defense state that drone attacks are carried out with pinpoint accuracy however acknowledge that the eventual loss of civilian life is inevitable. The trauma and damage that the reported UAV strikes have seen in media sources show the destruction of property and life to innocents. It is important for delegates to note the advantages to the introduction of remote technology to the battlefields to the nation in control. Military casualties are the equivalent of zero due to the lack of human life physically in the aircraft, making UAV's expensive but an option to protect soldiers and pilots from exposure to armed conflict. It is well known that a large percentage of fear and hate towards coalition forces in the Middle East comes from the use of drones in the area. Locals believe that Coalition drones will and can drop bombs whenever and wherever. Despite the efforts in these nations mainly being peacekeeping on behalf of coalition forces, the local population will struggle to see this as truth with the use of drones as they are secretive and extremely deadly.

Contemporary warfare also referred to as modern warfare is an adaptation of early modern warfare. The large changes present with comparison to early modern warfare are the changes in scale of battle, weaponry and the tactics in use. Modern warfare can be broken into four conceptualized generations according to a team of analysts from the United States of America. These generations are as follows: First generation warfare consists of battles fought with large amounts of manpower, making use of common line and column tactics and uniformed soldiers by a nations state. Second generation warfare consisted of tactics, which utilizes the invention of the rifled musket and other forms of breech loading weapons. Third generation warfare consists of the use of speed and pre-emptive (surprise) attacks, also referred to as flanking maneuvers. Fourth generation warfare is defined as the return to decentralized warfare, removing the line between war and politics, combatants and civilians. The loss of monopolization of the state to the power of the combat forces with the introduction of military hardware on the public markets and the private security sector blooming.

To de-conceptualize the idea of fourth generation warfare, it includes any war where at least one faction is not a state but instead is a violent non-state group or terrorist organization. Wars of this nature will usually last long terms, involve complex forms of violence such as genocides or other violent acts against civilian populations. Wars of this nature will also see the common placing of guerilla tactics due to the unstructured nature of the non-state factions involved, notoriously guerilla tactics have proven to be very effective against structured symmetric warfare tactics used by common military forces. With the



acquisition and reconnaissance. Only one of their active duty systems has the ability to carry weapons these. The Army currently operates three of the five types while the Navy and the Royal Air Force (RAF) operate the other two systems. “Most were procured as urgent operational requirements for operations in Afghanistan and have been incorporated into the services core equipment programme. All are flown and operated by trained UK Armed Forces personnel. Reaper, the only armed UAS, is flown by a qualified and experienced RAF pilot”. (British Ministry of Defence 2015)

### **China**

China holds its position as a large contender for the United States drone fleet. The exact number of drones the nation owns is unclear, how many of these are weaponized is also unclear. China is known as a nation to be a leader in the creation of modern technology especially when it comes to military capabilities in the sky, on land and on sea.

### **Israel**

The size of the Israeli drone fleet is unknown with plans to double its size announced to commence end of 2016 and being the only released reference to its size by Israel's ministry of defense, the nation runs one of the most secretive drone programs in the world. It is known that Israel exports over 60% of international drone sales. (Khalek 2015) According to OEC, Israel's export income in 2015 reached just over 55 billion dollars last year, considering almost 10 billion dollars of this makes this almost 20 percent of the nations annual exports it seems as though the military equipment market is a leading party in, the question would be whether the nation is strict enough with its choosing who to sell too?

### **Russian Federation**

“Russia's current drone fleet is around 500 vehicles strong” (Russian Ministry of Defence Media Branch 2014). It is not clear how many are combat ready or capable of carrying out armed attacks and reconnaissance. Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Israel are some of the known providers for drones for the Russian Federation. The locations of the Russian Federations drones and what they are being used for is not public information for security reasons however independent non-governmental organizations like the Red Cross have claimed to have seen operational Russian drones in the skies above Georgia, Ukraine, Syria and even Russia itself.

### **India**

“The Indian military has long operated Israeli Searcher and Heron drones for C4ISTAR roles and even possesses anti-radiation suicide drones from the same source, it does not as yet have missile firing drones such as the Predator its inventory. India is now

looking to change that with its Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) beginning serious work on weaponizing the indigenously developed Rustom-I Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) UAV.” (Jha 2015)

### TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of Event
11 <sup>th</sup> September, 2001	9/11 Terrorist Attacks
16 <sup>th</sup> September, 2011	The unanimous passing of a budget bill aimed at the acquiring of large numbers of UAS's to add to US Air Force's fleet. The Experimental Predator program is activated by the US Department of Defense (DOD).
January 2002 – May 2016	<p>American Drone strikes in Middle Eastern nations death sums:</p> <p><b>Pakistan</b></p> <p>Total strikes: <b>424</b>                      Obama strikes: <b>373</b>                      Total killed: <b>2,499-4,001</b>                      Civilians killed: <b>424-966</b>                      Children killed: <b>172-207</b>                      Injured: <b>1,161-1,744</b></p> <p><b>Yemen:emen</b></p> <p>Confirmed strikes: <b>127-147</b>                      Total killed: <b>552-806</b>                      Civilians killed: <b>65-101</b>                      Children killed: <b>8-9</b>                      Injured: <b>96-228</b></p> <p><b>Afghanistan:</b></p> <p><b>Bureau data</b>                      Total strikes: <b>375-380</b>                      Total killed: <b>1,948-2,475</b>                      Civilians killed: <b>75-121</b>                      Children killed: <b>4-18</b>                      Injured: <b>186-194</b></p>

	<p><b>USAF data</b></p> <p>Missions with at least one weapon release: <b>680</b></p> <p>Total weapons released: <b>1,492</b></p> <p><b>Somalia:</b></p> <p>Drone strikes: <b>21-31</b></p> <p>Total killed: <b>222-386</b></p> <p>Civilians killed: <b>3-10</b></p> <p>Children killed: <b>0-2</b></p> <p>Injured: <b>2-8</b></p>
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### **UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS**

- BEN EMMERSON, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, introduced his report (document [A/68/298](#))
- UN Human Rights Council voted to approve a Pakistan-sponsored resolution ([A/HRC/25/L.32](#)) entitled, “Ensuring use of remotely piloted aircraft or armed drones in counter-terrorism and military operations in accordance with international law, including international human rights and humanitarian law.”

### **PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE**

There have been previous attempts both by non-state actors, nations and the United Nations to create a unilateral code of conduct when it comes to both the fighting of modern warfare and within this the use of drones, it is however hard to do so as it requires to impeach sovereign rights of nations to protect themselves. It is interesting to note the Ben Emmerson report for the United Nations human rights council (specific details can be found in the aforementioned section “UN involvement: relevant resolutions” in which Emmerson suggests the creation of an international program to further drone technology and international transparency between UN nations. The second article mentioned above would be the Pakistani-submitted resolution on the “Ensuring of the use of remotely piloted aircraft or armed drones in counter-terrorism and military operations in accordance with

international law, including international human rights and humanitarian law.” Which gives a very stern outline on how to tackle the situation of the use of drones in black operations. Delegates should be sure to read through these articles as they are not very long but can aid with key ideas for the writing of viable resolutions to debate once in session.

## **POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

The Key brief for delegates in this debate should be to improve relations between nations and through unity and problem solving create a credible and active platform for transparency. Transparency is required surrounding the use of drones in war torn areas. An idea would be to make a form of international legislation in which is required that nations willing to be part of the United Nations should report their use of drones and surrounding statistics (including casualties, faction and intended target/operation goals). Another idea to make the drone users answer for their actions per international law. Lastly delegates could call upon the redefinition of the Rules of Engagement (ROE) meaning that there will have to be certain requirements that would have to be checked before it is possible for nations can make use of the drone or its capabilities (weaponry).

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