

Letter to German Bundestag, re: Military Drones

To the members of the German Bundestag:

I understand that there is a proposal before the Bundestag that will lead to the German government leasing from Israel unmanned aerial vehicles, commonly known as drones, which could be weaponized.

I understand further that Germany may use these drones in Afghanistan.

I am writing you as the Coordinator of the United States website and organizing center KnowDrones.com to urge the defeat of any measure that would authorize the German government to purchase, lease or develop drones that have the capability of carrying weapons of any kind, for the following reasons:

1) Drone stalking and assassination, as undertaken most widely in the world by the United States, violates international human rights law because these practices violate privacy and long-held principles of due process. While Germany might not initially decide to arm its drones, the possession of drones with the capability to be armed will expose Germany to international criticism for being willing to participate in drone killing and will almost inevitably lead to the arming of the drones given the likely pressure by the United States to join it in drone killing.

I say likely pressure because, as you know, the United States is having difficulty keeping drone operators and so is having a hard time meeting the demand for drone attacks in the various theaters in which it has chosen to be at war, now covering at least seven nations.

Even if the German drones do not carry weapons Germany will be under suspicion of drone killing because it will be participating with the United States in drone activities, and the United States is notorious for its failure to tell the truth about its drone operations.

2) The United States first started drone killing in 2001 in Afghanistan. Afghanistan appears to have experienced more U.S. drone attacks than any other nation, according to statistics provided by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism. The Bureau reports that, as of the date of this letter, the minimum number of confirmed U.S. drone attacks there was 2,214 with a total death toll of up to 3,551.

This is a dramatic underestimate of U.S. drone killing in Afghanistan, however, since the Bureau only began keeping these statistics in January of 2015. The German television service ZDF estimated in their 2015 Webstory "Drohnen: Tod aus der Luft" that between 2001 and 2013 no less than 13,026 people were killed by drones in Afghanistan (based on data provided by U.S. Central Command, CENTCOM, and the book "Sudden Justice" by Chris Woods).

3) The United States is presumably conducting drone killings to suppress opposition to the government it has established in Afghanistan. However, judging from the announcement yesterday that the United States will be sending thousands of more troops to Afghanistan, it appears that the military effectiveness of the United States drone surveillance and killing campaign in Afghanistan must be reevaluated. Indeed, it is quite likely that the United States drone attacks have led to an increase in the size of the force opposing it, a concern expressed by the former commander of United States and NATO forces in Afghanistan, General Stanley McChrystal.
<https://www.dawn.com/news/784919/mcchrysal-opposes-drone-strikes>

Germany's use of drones of any kind in Afghanistan will expose it to charges that, rather than simply training Afghan police and troops, it is joining the new United States offensive.

Germany's use of drones, in and of itself, is likely to increase Afghan anger over German presence and increase risk to German soldiers.

4) The United States drone attack campaign, in which Germany will inevitably be seen as participating, is a particularly unsavory part of a larger military campaign to subdue an indigenous force comprised of extremely poor, Muslim people. I respectfully suggest that the German people may not want to increase their level of participation in this ignominious endeavor.

You will find supporting material for the points above at KnowDrones.com.

Thank you very much for considering this letter.

Sincerely,

Nick Mottern – Coordinator – KnowDrones.com
38 Jefferson Avenue
Hastings on Hudson, NY 10706