

Upstate Drone Action Has a Visit in Senator Schumer's Office Then Heads to the Base

UpstateDroneAction.org Syracuse Report Back:

Photos will be posted on our website & the video will be released shortly.

Demanding Justice for the Amadhi Family and Daniel Hale and an End to Drone Warfare

Six Upstate Drone Action members witnessed today against weaponized drones at NYS Senator Chuck Schumer's office in Syracuse, in concert with Ban Killer Drones' (BKD) call for actions at Congress member's offices and drone bases around the country.



Mark Carver at the Mic with Ann Tiffany

We spread out ten pictures of the Amadhi family members who were murdered just two months ago, along a low wall outside the building, and held a brief press conference. Eddie Rodriguez videotaped as four of us read a Statement that included BKD's five demands. (video to be released soon). Ed Kinane read the final statement questioning if the MQ-9 drone

strike that killed the Ahmadi family originated from Hancock Airbase in Syracuse. Pilots are trained to maintain and execute drone strikes in Afghanistan with MQ-9 Reaper drones from Hancock AFB. Ed also spoke of our call for the pardon and release of drone pilot whistleblower, Daniel Hale, who is serving a four year sentence in prison for releasing "*The Drone Papers*" to The Intercept.



Ann Tiffany, Mark Carver, Ed Kinane, John Amidon, Emily Cone

Mary Anne Grady Flores arranged to have Sen. Chuck Schumer's Deputy Regional Director, Emily Cone, attend the press conference and meet with us after to discuss our concerns. We met for 45 minutes at a table in the plaza.

Our group then drove to Hancock Base where three of us walked up to the guardhouse with four pictures of the murdered children clipped to a length of cedar siding and a sign, "*Who killed these children.*" We were met by two guards, who closed the gate as usual. John read an anti-drone statement that was specific to the base and mentioned Daniel Hale. "*We, members of the **Upstate Drone Action Coalition** and **Ban Killer Drones** come today to ask if pilots trained or deployed here participated in the killing of the Ahmadi family members.*" The guards seemed more open to John's personal sharing as a veteran and our feelings about the injustice of all the



Ann Tiffany with photos of the Ahmadi family.

drone murders.

- Ann Tiffany
- Ed Kinane
- Mary Anne Grady Flores
- John Amidon
- Eddie Rodriguez
- Mark Scibilia-Carver

Read at the main gate at Hancock AFB, E. Syracuse, NY:

Greetings, We're from the Upstate Drone Action Coalition. We come in peace to read a short statement. The Ahmadi family – three adults and seven children – were killed in Kabul, Afghanistan, on August 29th, 2021, just two months ago, by an MQ9 Reaper drone.

For over a decade – right here at this base, the 174th Attack Wing of Hancock AFB – Airforce members train MQ-9 Reaper drone pilots for aerial drone strikes in Afghanistan.

We, members of the Upstate Drone Action Coalition and Ban Killer Drones come today to ask if pilots trained or deployed here participated in the killing of the Ahmadi family members.

We're here to give notice to everyone in the chain of command, including the Hancock drone pilots, as they bear responsibility and may yet be held accountable for murders such as these.

We are calling for the immediate release and pardon of drone pilot whistleblower, DANIEL HALE, now serving nearly four years in federal prison.

Mr. Hale's crime: He had the courage to admit the truth in "*the Drone Papers*," that within a 5 month period, 90% of drone victims were innocent.

We demand the immediate cessation of 174th's role in that drone assassination campaign. We further demand an end to the U.S. drone assassination program from all other military bases here and abroad.

###

NEI's Reaction to the Pentagon's Admission of Error in US Drone Strike in Kabul on 8/29/2021

Statement by Nutrition and Education International (Employer of Zemari Ahmadi in Kabul)

In the Pentagon's 9/17 briefing, General McKenzie admitted the 8/29 US drone strike in Kabul that killed Zemari Ahmadi and nine family members was a "*tragic mistake*." We are grateful for their recognition of the mistake. General McKenzie also confirmed that the recent DoD investigation into this strike was unable to establish any connection between ISIS-K and Zemari, his relatives, his Nutrition & Education International (NEI) colleagues, and NEI's Kabul compound. We appreciate that these false accusations have finally been cleared.

The General's statement confirms what was previously reported in the media and what NEI has known all along. We are grateful that the media coverage has been proven accurate and that Zemari's honorable name can be restored. NEI thanks the in-

depth investigative reporting by the Los Angeles Times, New York Times, Washington Post, CNN, ABC, CBS, NPR, Associated Press, as well as many other regional news outlets for bringing these facts to light.

We are pleased that the Department of Defense is exploring ex gratia payments to Zemari's remaining relatives and others involved in this unfortunate incident. General McKenzie says this will be difficult as the DoD has no presence on the ground. NEI is offering to be the DoD's main point of contact with Zemari's family and NEI's Afghan colleagues through its Kabul office. However, we are still waiting to be contacted by the DoD to help facilitate this process.



Source: Nutrition and Education International

At this point, NEI's primary concern is for the safety and welfare of Zemari's remaining relatives in Kabul. Although General McKenzie delivered a general apology for this drone strike, NEI hopes the DoD will also apologize directly to Zemari's remaining relatives. We hope that lifetime financial support will be provided to Zemari's wife and daughter as it will be impossible for them to survive without Zemari and his brothers in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. We also hope the

DoD will expedite processing of P2/SIV visas for Zemari's relatives, as well as provide resettlement support.

NEI is also concerned for the safety of its remaining Afghan colleagues who are now branded as ISIS terrorists. We are hoping the DOD will directly apologize to these colleagues, expedite the processing of their P2/SIV visas, and provide resettlement support.

** This is what they say, whether it is fully in alignment with our stance is not the point. They are standing by the Ahmadi family to the best of their ability.*

In Honor of Zemari Ahmadi, NEI will Continue on in its Vision and Humanitarian Efforts

Due to unsettling recent events, many of our soy farmers, especially in the Northern provinces, have fled their homes to seek refuge in Kabul. These internally displaced refugees, primarily women and children, are suffering from a lack of food, water, and other necessities. To honor Zemari, NEI will continue to work towards eradicating protein-energy malnutrition in Afghanistan. (*Zemari Ahmadi distributing soy-based meals in Kabul, Afghanistan, August 2021.*)

Warrior Connection: Interview on Military Drones

Veteran Doug Rokke produces a radio show called the Warrior Connection that speaks to soldiers about real issues that affect their lives and well being. Judy Bello and Ed Kinane

joined the program to talk about the ways in which military drones are used to violate international law, and the fact that the pilots are put in a position where they subject to severe PTSD, working as executioners at the bottom of a kill-chain with military bosses at the top. Listen to Judy Bello and Ed Kinane talk to Doug Rokke about military drones, drone pilots and international law on *"The Warrior Connection"* radio show:

http://upstatedroneaction.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/Audio/WarriorConnection_091315.mp3

